



COLLEGE OF
LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSES
OF ALBERTA

CLPNA Operational Policy

Establishment of a New Practical Nurse Program

Approved: March 3, 2023





This document is linked to legislation:

[Health Professions Act](#)

This document is linked to related supportive documents:

[Education Program Review Policy](#)

The legislative mandate of the College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta (CLPNA) is to serve and protect the public by ensuring its registrants deliver safe, competent, and ethical nursing care. A CLPNA Operational Policy is a clear and concise statement outlining requirements and expected behaviours of CLPNA staff, committee members, or external stakeholders.

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Approver Executive Team

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Establishment of A New Practical Nurse Program

Introduction

The *Health Professions Act* (HPA), section 3(1)(f), allows the Council of the College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta (CLPNA) to approve any proposal to establish a new practical nurse program in Alberta. The CLPNA has the legislative authority and responsibility, through the HPA, to carry out our activities in a manner that serves and protects the interest of the public.

The CLPNA program review team conducts reviews of any proposed new programs and presents their findings to the Education Standards Advisory Committee (ESAC). ESAC reviews the findings from the program review team and makes a recommendation for program approval to CLPNA's Council via the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to explain the requirements and process for establishing a new Practical Nurse (PN) program. This policy outlines the processes, phases, timelines, and outcomes of establishing a new program.

Overview of Program Approval Process

Any new PN program must be approved by the CLPNA's Council prior to program implementation. This includes but is not limited to:

- a new program from an institution or agency that has previously brokered an approved PN program;
- a new program offered by an institution or agency not previously offering a PN program in Alberta; or
- a new program arising from a new brokering arrangement or a new partnership arrangement.

An institution or agency that seeks to have a new PN program approved by the CLPNA Council must demonstrate adherence to the standards for approval for the PN diploma, advanced practice, or refresher program throughout the 4 phases of establishing a program. It is advised that the institution or agency review the standards prior to the submission of a letter of intent for establishing a new program. Institutions or agencies requiring additional clarification or support should contact programreview@clpna.com with their enquiries.

Process of Establishing a New Practical Nurse Program

Phases of Establishing a New Practical Nurse program

The process of establishing a new PN program can be broken into 4 phases. Each phase has distinct milestones and times. The phases are as follows:

1. Notice of Intent
2. Program Review
3. Post Implementation Review
4. Cohort Review

Each phase has its distinct period. The time limits for the later phases will vary depending on the type and length of program being proposed.



Notice of Intent

Institutions or agencies are required to submit a Notice of Intent 18-24 months prior to the first planned intake of students to allow for sufficient time to complete the first two phases. During the Notice of Intent phase, the institution or agency is assessed on their capacity to support a new program in accordance with the critical elements outlined in the Notice of Intent application. Both Alberta Health and Advanced Education are consulted during this initial phase. The CLPNA's Council decides whether a new program will be permitted to progress to the next phase. Please see the visual workflow (section below) for more details.

Program Review

Program review begins after the institution or agency pays the application fee. This phase typically takes 9 months from the collection of the program fee to Council's decision. This timeframe allows for the institution or agency to collect the necessary information to demonstrate how the new program adheres to the approval standards. During this time, a review team will assess the submission and present findings to ESAC who will make recommendations for program approval to the CEO. The CEO will then bring the recommendations forward to CLPNA's Council for program approval.

The possible categories for ESAC to recommend to Council at this phase are outlined below.

- **Approved to Implement Program:** This status means that the program meets the crucial elements for successful implementation and authorizes the implementation of a new program.
- **Approval to Implement Program Denied:** This status indicates that the submission for a new program approval did not meet the crucial elements that are essential for successful implementation. This rating prohibits the implementation of a new program.

This phase is complete once the CEO or designate communicates the approval decision from CLPNA's Council back to the institution or agency. For more information about the review process please see the *Education Program Review Policy* and the visual workflow (section below).

Post Implementation Review

All PN programs are required to undergo a post implementation review to report on new program delivery and continued progression towards meeting all the approval standards.

During the post implementation review phase, a new program with standards/indicators which had been assessed as "unmet" or "met with follow up" during the program review phase, will report on the adherence to the approval standards as well as on the progress of the first intake of students. PN diploma programs will complete this phase of the review mid-way through the delivery of the program to the first cohort of students. Refresher and advanced practice programs will complete this phase of the review at the end of delivery of their first year of operation.

Upon successful completion of the review, a program that received approval for implementation will retain the previously assigned approval status.

For more information about the review process or the indicators scoring (e.g., met with follow up and unmet), please see the *Education Program Review Policy*.



Cohort Review

The cohort review phase is similar in structure to the program review phase. The new program will again undergo a complete review of its adherence to the approval standards. Upon graduation of the first cohort of students, the new PN diploma program will undergo a cohort review. Refresher and advanced practice programs will undergo a cohort review at the end of their second year of operation. A review team will assess the submission and present findings to ESAC who will make recommendations for program approval to the CEO. The CEO will then bring the recommendations forward to CLPNA's Council for program approval.

Minimum Criteria for Full Approval

The minimum criteria rubric is used to determine the approval level of a PN program undergoing cohort review and ongoing scheduled review.

- PN Diploma Nurse Program: The program has met 80% of the critical indicators and 80% of the remaining indicators.
- Advanced Practice Education Program: The program has met 87% of all indicators.
- PN Refresher Program: The program has met 90% of all indicators.

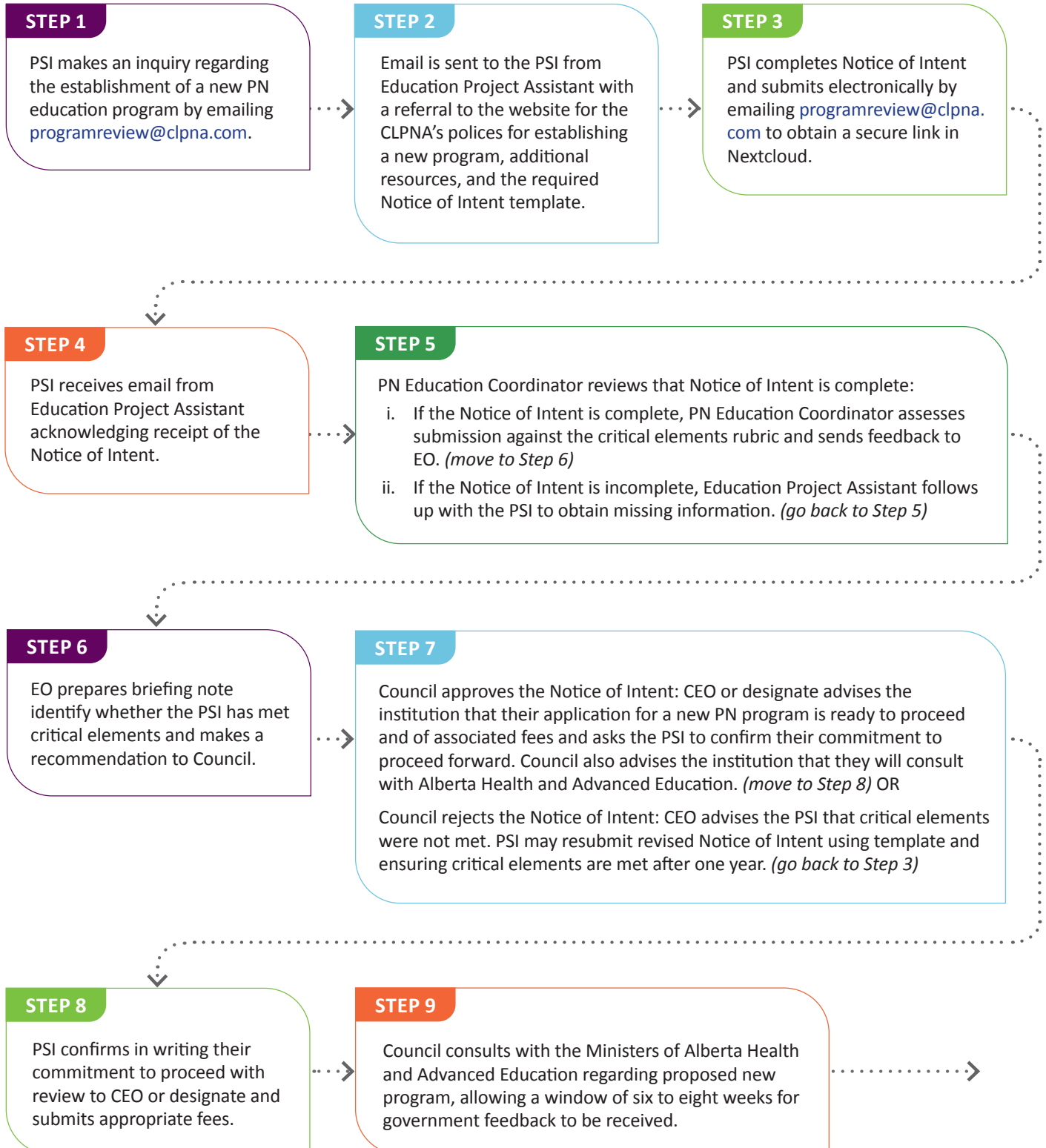
Based on the criteria assessment, ESAC will recommend one of the following approval categories to Council for consideration:

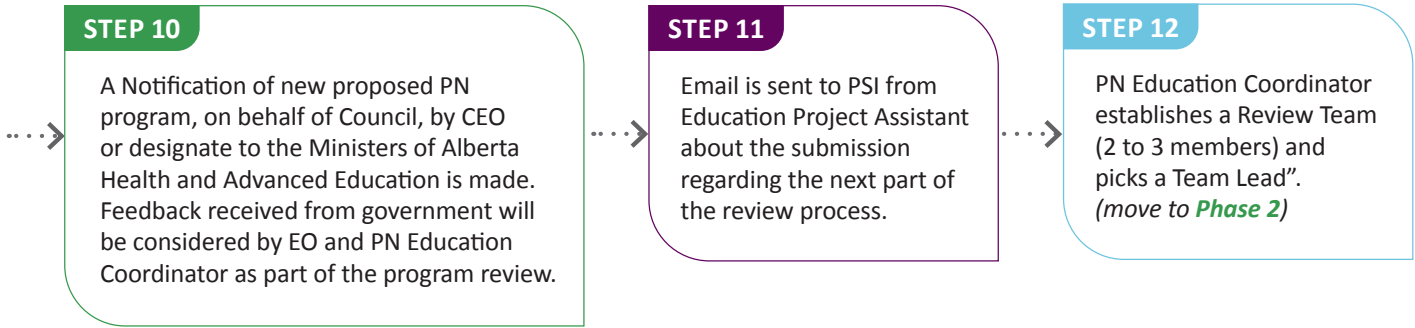
- **Full Approval:** PN programs that meet the minimum criteria as listed above may be awarded full approval (4 years) by Council. A program with full approval is expected to continue to maintain or work towards meeting all indicators.
 - Full approval may not be granted despite achieving percentages of compliance if non-attainment of any indicator may have detrimental effects on students or compromises delivery of the PN education program.
- **Conditional Approval:** This rating indicates that the program has not met the minimum criteria for full approval. The conditional approval letter will specify the length of approval and timelines for compliance. The program can achieve full approval upon meeting all conditions stipulated in their conditional approval letter with supporting evidence in the timeline specified. This phase is complete once Council communicates the approval decision back to the institution or agency. For more information about the review process please see the *Education Program Review Policy*.

If you have any questions about the information found in this document, please email programreview@clpna.com

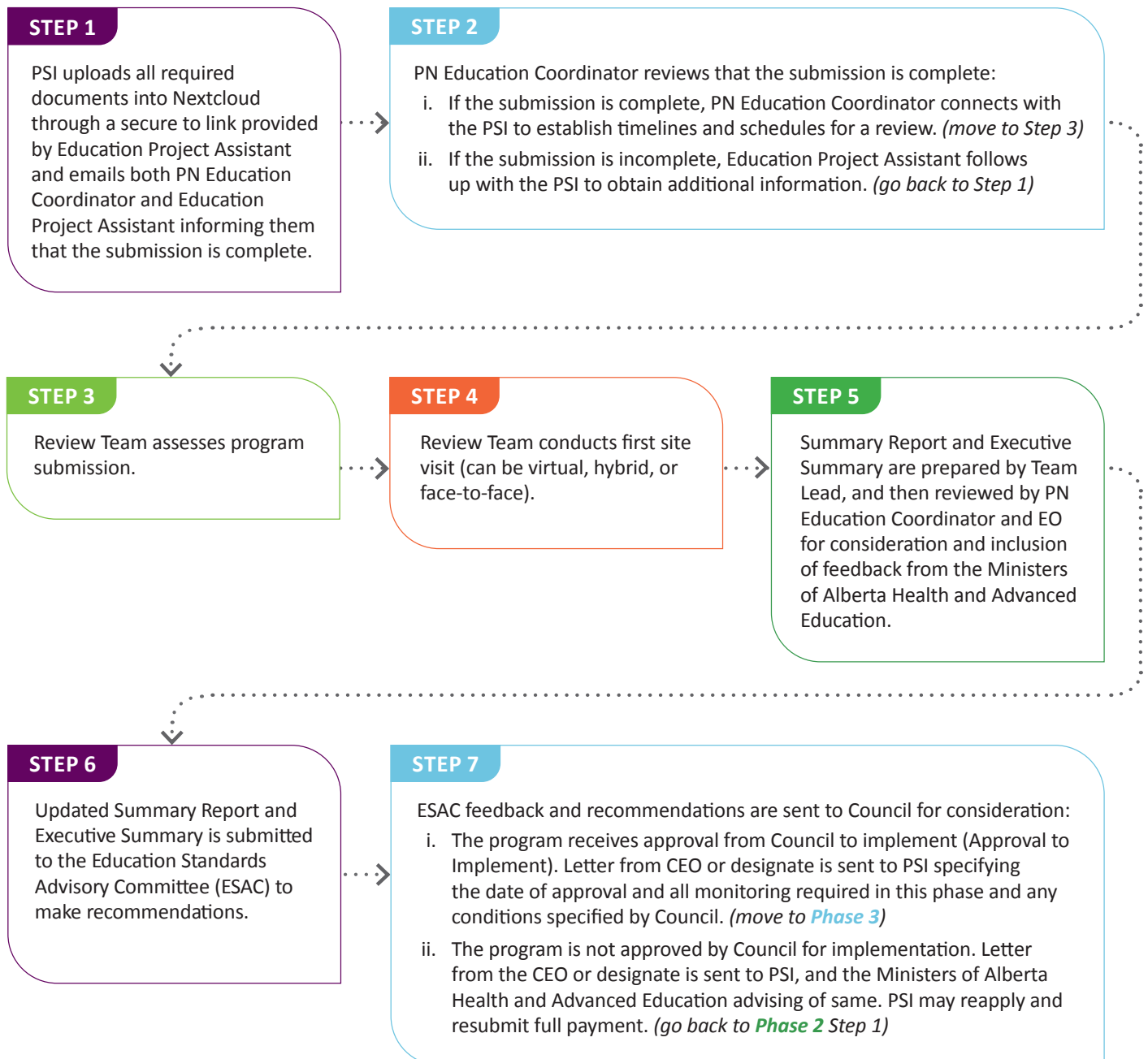


> PHASE 1: Notice of Intent

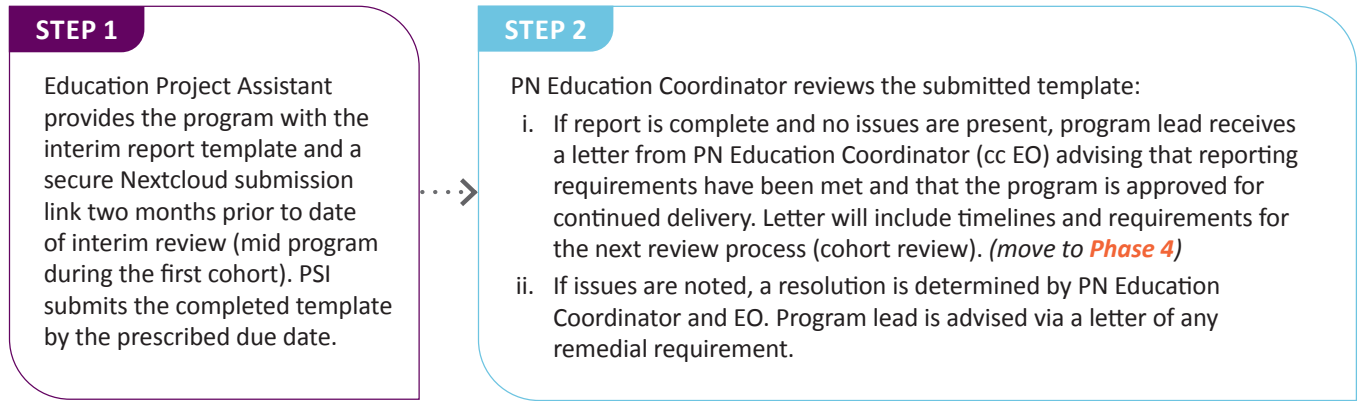




➤ PHASE 2: Program Review



> PHASE 3: Post Implementation or Interim Review



> PHASE 4: Cohort Review

