



College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Nova Scotia

GUIDE TO **Continuing Competence** **Program**

- **Knowledge is our Strength**
- **Excellence is our Commitment**
- **Caring is our Legacy**

August 2010

Our Vision

A dynamically regulated profession committed to excellence

Our Mission

In the interests of the public, CLPNNS regulates the practice of Licensed Practical Nurses in the province.

About the College

The College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Nova Scotia (CLPNNS) is the regulatory body for the province's 3,500+ Licensed Practical Nurses. Members of the College play a significant and vital role in Nova Scotia's health care system. LPNs provide professional health care services in a variety of settings and contexts of practice including, but not limited to acute care, long term care, community, continuing care, clinics, mental health, obstetrics and paediatrics.

CLPNNS regulates the profession in the best interests of the public by setting entry level practice requirements and establishing, monitoring and enforcing standards of practice and standards of professional conduct. CLPNNS also ensures the enhancement of care provided by members through the Continuing Competency Program.

CLPNNS supports members in meeting their professional responsibilities through our quarterly newsletter, the College Reporter, hosting of the AGM, our website www.clpnns.ca and numerous practice consultations via phone, email and in person/on-site.

Continuing Competence Requirements for Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs)

Why must I meet Annual Continuing Competence Requirements?

This is a short guide to help you meet the CLPNNS Continuing Competence requirement for annual renewal of registration. It is designed to remind you about the requirements and to help you develop your annual learning plan.

To be eligible to renew, or reinstate to active practicing registration, you must meet the following:

- **Practice Hours (1000 hours in any five (5) year period)**
- **Completion of health assessment and medication administration programs by 2013, if applicable**
- **Personal professional practice review.**

By meeting CLPNNS' annual Continuing Competence requirements, you are maintaining your competence to practice and you are taking your professional development obligation seriously. Meeting this obligation is an important step to maintain the public's trust in licensed practical nurses.

Most LPNs are lifelong learners who continually assess and improve their practice. Meeting CLPNNS' CCP requirements each year provides an opportunity for nurses to document what they are already doing.

Keep this guide as a handy reference and as part of your continuing competence record keeping. You must maintain and retain records of your practice hours and personal practice review(s) for at least five years.

To maintain the confidentiality of others, do not document any information that could be used to identify clients, family members or colleagues. Do not send this guide or any supporting documents to CLPNNS

Beliefs and Guiding Principles

The CLPNNS Continuing Competence Program (CCP) supports the beliefs and guiding principles about continuing competence and continuing competence programs. They are as follows:

Continuing Competence

1. The nursing profession as a whole, through its professional and self-regulatory organizations, promotes the advancement of nursing practice, identifies standards of practice, and promotes professional development.

2. Licensed practical nurses are competent, self-regulating professionals and are committed to life-long learning.
3. Continuing competence is essential to professional nursing practice. It promotes good nursing practice, assists in preventing poor practice, and contributes to the quality of nursing practice and best possible client outcomes.
4. Competence is continually maintained and acquired through reflective practice, life-long learning, and integration of learning into nursing practice.
5. The individual nurse has a professional obligation and the primary responsibility for maintaining and continually acquiring competence.
6. Maintaining and continually acquiring competence requires support from others, including colleagues, employers, professional and regulatory nursing organizations, and government.
7. An individual's ability to continually maintain, acquire or demonstrate competence is influenced by the practice setting. Continuing competence can be facilitated or hindered by the environment in which individuals practice.
8. Nursing colleagues, through their normal commitment to their profession and to one another, support each other in demonstrating, developing, and maintaining competence.

"I maintain my continued learning and professional development through self evaluation, yearly re-certifications, reading nursing related articles, attending in-services provided by my employer, along with education sessions hosted by the college."

Christine, LPN

"As part of my commitment to foster my lifelong learning, I attend information sessions provided by my employer and I stay involved with CLPNNS through various functions and committees."

Justin, LPN

Continuing Competence Programs

1. The public has the right to expect that licensed practical nurses demonstrate continuing competence throughout their careers. The role of regulatory bodies is to establish mechanisms that promote the delivery of safe, ethical, and competent care by licensed practical nurses throughout their careers.
2. Continuing competence programs should be developed in a manner to facilitate mobility of licensed practical nurses in Canada.
3. A continuing competence program is assumed to be an essential support to licensed practical nurses in their professional practice whether or not it is required by legislation.
4. Provincial and territorial codes of ethics and standards of practice for licensed practical nurses provide the foundation for continuing competence programs.
5. Continuing competence programs should be:
 - A - Available
 - A - Affordable
 - A - Accessible, most importantly, credible.
6. A continuing competence program must be flexible, applicable to practice in a variety of settings, provide members with a choice of options for demonstration of continuing competence, and be clearly communicated to all stakeholders.
7. The confidentiality of information gathered for continuing competence purposes should be safeguarded to the extent possible within the legislative mandate of the jurisdiction.

Definitions

The CCP supports the following definitions:

Competence – The ability of a licensed practical nurse to integrate and apply the knowledge, skills and judgment, required to practice safely and ethically in a designated role and practice setting and includes both entry level and continuing competence.

Competencies: The specific knowledge, skills and judgment, required for a licensed practical nurse to be considered competent to practice safely and ethically in a designated role and practice setting.

Continuing Competence: The ongoing ability of a licensed practical nurse to integrate and apply the knowledge, skills and judgment, required to practice safely and ethically in a designated role and practice setting. Maintaining this ongoing ability involves a continual process linking the code of ethics, standards of practice and life-long learning. The licensed practical nurse reflects on his/her practice on an ongoing basis and takes action to continually improve that practice.

Continuing Competence Program: A program that focuses on promoting the maintenance and enhancement of the continuing competence of licensed practical nurses throughout their careers.

Competence Assessment: An external evaluation of the licensed practical nurse's ability to integrate and apply the knowledge, skills and judgment, required to practice safely and ethically in a designated role and practice setting. The tools/methods used may include, but are not limited to interviewing, verification of documents, reflective practice, self assessments or testing.

CCP Licensure Renewal Requirements

All registrants applying for renewal of an LPN license regardless of their work position or practice setting must provide proof of having met new mandatory CCP requirements in addition to the current licensure requirement, i.e., proof of hours of practice. The new CCP requirements will require **LPNs** to sign a declaration on the license renewal form that they have:

- completed a self-assessment using the CLPNNS Standards for Practice/ Competency Profile;
- identified standard/indicators to be strengthened over the coming year;
- developed a learning plan for the standard/indicators that they would like to strengthen over the coming year;
- evaluated the effects of their learning, (reflective learning) completed over the past 12 months for an identified standard/indicator on outcomes of their care/service provided.

If a member reports or demonstrates non-compliance at time of licensure renewal or following verification of compliance, the member will be given three months to meet the continuing competence requirements. If at the end of three months, the member continues to be non-compliant, the practicing license will revert to non-practicing. Any acts of member dishonesty on a LPN license renewal form including on the declaration for having met CCP requirements will be referred to the CLPNNS Continuing Competence Committee for review and recommendations.

Continuing Competence Components

The CLPNNS CC Program has three components:

PART 1: SELF ASSESSMENT – CREATING MY LEARNING GOALS FOR THE COMING YEAR

Part 1 includes self-assessment, reflection and development of a learning plan for the coming year.

Self Assessment: All LPN members are required to complete an assessment using the CLPNNS Standards for Practice and CCP Profile. The context of the assessment is the member's current role and practice setting. Through self-assessment the member will be able to identify personal strengths and areas the member would like to strengthen.

Reflection: Reflection provides nurses with an opportunity to review the results of their self-assessment and to consider new/emerging trends/issues that influence or may influence their practice. Through reflection, the member will make a decision about their learning focus for the coming year. All LPNs must select at least one CLPNNS standard/indicator as the focus of learning.

“Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans.” Author unknown.

Learning Plan: The member develops a detailed learning plan for the coming year to strengthen professional performance in regard to the identified standard/indicator. It is important for you to carefully consider the following as you complete your learning plan:

I have committed this year to _____
by participating in the following professional development activities:

Tim Porter O'Grady (Nursing Leadership Conference 2008)

PART 2: KEEPING TRACK THROUGHOUT THE YEAR:

Part 2 includes acting on the identified learning need(s).

Implement Learning Plan: The member's learning plan is carried out during the licensure year. As the plan is implemented, it will be acknowledged that sometimes unexpected events happen which may require the member to re-think the plan. Perhaps there is an unexpected change in the services provided in the practice environment or in the member's role which precipitates another CLPNNS standard/indicator rising to a higher priority level. It is acceptable in these situations to rethink, revise, and implement the revised learning plan.

Each member will be required to maintain their own personal records pertaining to their learning plan used towards meeting their CCP requirements.

PART 3: EVALUATION

Part 3 includes reflection on your accomplished goals and the impact on your practice.

Members continuously evaluate the effects of their learning. Evaluation will focus on how the results of learning are applied in nursing practice to create a difference in nursing outcomes of care/service. As you complete your evaluation it is important for you to carefully consider the following:

Because of my learning, there is a difference in the nursing care/nursing service that I now provide as demonstrated by: _____

Tim Porter O'Grady (Nursing Leadership Conference 2008)

At license renewal time, each member will be required to evaluate the effects of the learning plan that was implemented over the past year for a particular CLPNNS standard/indicator and to identify how the learning has made a difference in the outcomes of their nursing care/service.

The member will not be required to submit their self-assessment, learning plan, or other personal CCP records at licensure renewal time. However, these records may be requested during formative CCP evaluation activities (e.g., annual validation of a random number of member’s documents) implemented with the goal of evaluating the CC program’s quality and integrity.

TABLE 1: CONTINUOUS LEARNING ACTIVITIES

<p>FORMAL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACADEMIC (for example) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - University/College programs/courses - Post-basic diplomas/courses • SPECIALTY CERTIFICATION (for example, Foot care, Immunization) • COURSES LEADING TO CERTIFICATE OR DIPLOMA (for example): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wound care - QI/Risk Management - Diabetes Education - Lactation Consultant - Skills enhancement - Leadership course • CONFERENCES/TELECONFERENCES/ SEMINAR/WORKSHOPS (for example): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual Nursing Leadership Conference - AGM Professional Development Day - Telehealth Sessions • EMPLOYER PROVIDED (for example) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employer Orientation Program - ACLS, CPR, Safety Education etc. • PROFESSIONAL COMMITTEES (for example) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Professional Practice Councils - CLPNNS Committees - CLPNNS Ad-hoc Group Committees - CLPNNS Board Member 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PROGRAM/UNIT BASED ACTIVITIES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nursing Rounds - Journal club - Modules (IV, foot care, and various other clinical focused modules) - Short in-services (e.g. new equipment, positive patient identification) - Clinical skills day - Presentations to team members • PRECEPTORSHIP AND OR MENTORSHIP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nursing Student - Re-entry Student <p>SELF-DIRECTED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CONDUCTING RESEARCH OR PARTICIPATING IN RESEARCH • VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES (for example) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentations on health related topics outside job such as seniors groups on medication use; cancer screening - Health Promotion Activities • INDEPENDENT LEARNING (for example) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading professional journals to enhance patient care outcomes - Searching reputable internet sites, such as www.nurseone.ca for patient teaching materials, best practices, e-therapeutics) - Researching a topic to enhance personal and professional performance (for example, stress/time management)
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"I maintain and expand my competencies through various seminars, workshops, as well as work place in-services provided through my employer and through opportunities that arise as our role continues to expand."

Gail, LPN

"As a part of my requirement to meet professional practice standards, I maintain my competencies by attending in-services through my employer, attending the Nursing Leadership Conferences that are held annually as well as by sitting on various committees of CLPNNS"

Nancy, LPN

Conclusion

You are now ready to start your Self Assessment and Develop Your Learning Plan(s).

If you have questions, please contact the CLPNNS at 1(800) 718-8517 or visit the website at www.clpnns.ca.

"Strive for progress and self-satisfaction not constant perfection."

Author unknown

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REMINDER: Keep your annual continuing competency records for at least five years.



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