

Additional Competencies

Additional Competencies: Knowledge, skill and abilities acquired beyond the basic education of the LPN via formal or informal education, workshops, or inservice. Additional competencies are acquired to meet the care needs often pertaining to a specialized area of care.

The Licensed Practical Nurses Act, 2000 defines practise as a licensed practical nurse as “means to provide services, within the education and training of licensed practical nurses, for the purposes of providing care, promoting health and preventing illness;” Therefore in order to comply with legislation the LPN must ensure additional competencies are supported with education and training.

The SALPN Regulatory Bylaws provide the following:

20. All members shall ensure that they work within their educational preparation, level of competence and scope of practice and comply with the standards of practice set out in the *Standards of Practice for Licensed Practical Nurses* approved and adopted by Canadian regulatory agencies as of April 1, 2013.

21. All members shall conduct themselves in an honorable and ethical manner, upholding the values of truth, honesty, and trustworthiness, and shall observe the standards of conduct set out in the *Code of Ethics for Licensed Practical Nurses in Canada* approved and adopted by Canadian Regulatory Agencies as of April 1, 2013.

Decision Making

The LPN is accountable and responsible for the utilization of additional competencies in addition to all basic competencies. The LPN is responsible to reflect on his or her own practice in order to ensure safe, ethical, and competent practice.

Obtaining Competence

1. Am I, or have I, obtained and participated in education inclusive of the knowledge, skill, ability, judgement and critical thinking required to safely and ethically perform the competency?
2. Does the education include all aspects of the nursing process: Assessment, Planning, Implementation and Evaluation?
3. Does my basic knowledge support the implementation of the competency? (ie: anatomy, physiology, and pathophysiology of systems involved or affected)
4. Does the education include a supervised or guided certification process?

Utilizing Competence

1. Am I confident in my abilities and prepared to be fully accountable for my competence?
2. Is my education or training recent enough to ensure use of current best evidence informed practice?
3. Am I prepared to apply the nursing process and can I meet SALPN Standards of Practice?

4. Have I assessed the patient to determine if the patient is appropriate for my competency level?
5. Is there an order from a physician or nurse practitioner where required?
6. Does agency policy support my practice and are procedures clearly provided to safely utilize the additional competency?
7. Are there sufficient resources to safely implement an additional competency? (ie: devices, tools, access to other professionals)
8. Is there a policy and procedure in place in the event of an adverse or unexpected outcome?

Maintaining Competence

1. Have I continuously assessed my competence?
2. Does agency policy require recertification of the additional competency?

Additional competencies are needed to develop the knowledge, skills, and abilities of LPN practitioners in order to suit the needs of an area of practice. It is not only supported, but is also encouraged, that required additional competencies are deemed mandatory by the employer. An LPN who cannot meet those requirements is responsible to address those needs and seek assistance and education. An LPN who is not competent to safely utilize an additional competency must not attempt to do so.

Education

The SALPN acknowledges that three additional competencies will require education delivered by a formal educational institution. The SALPN has determined the following competencies must be provided by a formal education provider:

- a. IV initiation
- b. Administration of Medication
- c. Intramuscular Injection

The SALPN acknowledges that several additional competencies may be required in various settings in order to professionally develop LPN staff. Education can be provided with a less formal delivery method, but must safely prepare the LPN to utilize the additional competency and assume accountability for the same. The education may be delivered with a workshop, inservice, or learning session /package.

Education could include, but not be limited to:

- Increased depth and breadth of knowledge pertaining to an area of practice or body system affected
- Specialized assessments and testing pertaining to the area of practice
- Use of equipment or technology required for an area of practice
- Safe administration of medications or treatments used in an area of practice
- Life saving measures or devices used in an area of practice
- Forms of documentation or legalized reporting methods
- Official certifications including, but not limited to CPR, WHIMIS, TLR, NRP, ACLS, PALS, ITLS, etc.

LPNs, or those who manage LPNs, are encouraged to contact the SALPN for further information or guidance regarding additional competencies.

References

College of Licensed Practical Nurses of British Columbia. (2010) Professional Standards of Practice for Licensed Practical Nurses. Burnaby

Saskatchewan Association of Licensed Practical Nurses. (2010) Advanced Practice Position Statement. Regina

Saskatchewan Association of Licensed Practical Nurses. (2012) Standards of Practice Code of Ethics 2012. Regina

The Statutes of Saskatchewan. (2000) The Licensed Practical Nurses Act, 2000. Regina.