

Saskatchewan Association of  
Licensed Practical Nurses



**STANDARDS FOR BASIC PROGRAM APPROVAL  
OF PRACTICAL NURSE EDUCATION**

**April 26, 2017**

The Saskatchewan Association of Licensed Practical Nurses (SALPN) would like to acknowledge the expertise shared by the College of Licensed Practical Nurses Alberta, during the completion of these Program Approval Standards.

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## **STANDARD 1: MISSION/GOALS, ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE**

The administration of the educational institution has a statement of mission and goals for the Practical Nurse Education Program, demonstrates ongoing planning, and has explicit policies that describe the organizational structure and governance processes.

### **1.1 Strategic/Organization Planning and Ongoing Quality Improvement**

The Practical Nurse Education Program participates in strategic/organization planning and ongoing quality improvement processes to address immediate and long-term program goals/objectives that ensure there are adequate human, operating and capital resources to support the development and continued operation of the program.

### **1.2 Clinical Placement Agreements**

Formal clinical placement agreements are in place identifying the responsibilities of the educational institution and the clinical placement sites. Written agreements define the relationships between the Practical Nurse Education Program and clinical placement sites, specifying that the students are to remain under the responsibility and direction of the program's appointed faculty members. At a minimal, clinical placement/partnership agreements are to include:

- 1.2.1 Mutual responsibility of the clinical placement site and education faculty members for creating and maintaining an appropriate environment conducive to learning and resolution of any conflicts.
- 1.2.2 Provisions for student and faculty access to resources to meet education requirements.
- 1.2.3 Recognition of the authority of the faculty members to oversee the academic expectations for the clinical placement program of studies.
- 1.2.4 Methods are in place to archive all permanent records of course descriptions, including clinical and classroom hours.

### **1.3 Partnership Agreements**

Formal partnership agreements are in place identifying the responsibilities of both educational institutions when they form brokering partnerships or other types of partnerships.

- 1.3.1 Program contracts and authority matrixes are in place and current for all brokering arrangements and partnerships.
- 1.3.2 There is a documented process for conflict resolution between parties to any brokering or partnership agreement.

#### **1.4 Terms of References and Policy/Procedure Statements**

The Practical Nurse Education Program disseminates terms of reference or policy/procedure statement documents that define the roles and responsibilities of the administration, faculty, students, and program committees.

#### **1.5 Maintenance of the Practical Nurse Education Program Standards Requirements**

The education institution ensures that the Practical Nurse Education Program meets and maintains the standards requirements of the SALPN for basic Practical Nurse Education Programs. The SALPN takes seriously its obligation to recommend approval of Basic Practical Nurse programs as legislated by the Licensed Practical Nurses Act (2000).

### **STANDARD 2: NURSING LEADERSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION**

The educational institution has the number of nursing faculty members in leadership/senior management positions with the knowledge, skills, and administrative support needed to achieve the goals and maintain the integrity of the Practical Nurse Education Program.

#### **2.1 Leader Qualifications**

The lead of the Practical Nurse Education Program meets the education and training qualifications and years of related experience to provide effective leadership and to meet the academic and administrative demands of the education program.

#### **2.2 Access and Authority of the Practical Nurse Education Program Leadership**

The organization and committee structure of the educational institution defines the lines of authority and communication between the program and the educational institution. The leadership of the Practical Nurse Education Program has sufficient access to the institutional authority to achieve the mission and mandate of the education program.

#### **2.3 Sufficient Senior Administrators**

The Practical Nurse Education Program consists of sufficient numbers of qualified, senior administrators required to meet the mission/goals of the education program.

#### **2.4 Efficient Faculty Integration**

The faculty members of the Practical Nurse Education Program are integrated into the operations and maintenance of the program quality and efficiency through administrative responsibilities such as committees, shared governance and decision-making processes.

### **STANDARD 3: SUFFICIENT INFRASTRUCTURE AND EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES**

The educational institution has sufficient teaching faculty, administrative staff, financial resources, education facilities, equipment, and clinical, instructional, informational, technological, and other resources available and accessible to meet its program needs.

#### **3.1 Viability of Financial Resources**

The immediate and long-term financial resources of the Practical Nurse Education Program result from secure and ongoing sources of funding that are sufficient to maintain consistent organizational and Practical Nurse Education Programs goals/objectives.

#### **3.2 Leader Authority/Resources for Practical Nurse Education Program Management**

The administrators of Practical Nurse Education Program has appropriate finances and budgetary authority/resources to manage and evaluate the educational aspects of the program (e.g., curriculum, teaching and assessment).

#### **3.3 Sufficient Facilities, IT Services and Equipment Infrastructure**

The Practical Nurse Education Program has the use and access to sufficient administrative and education facilities, Information Technology services, and equipment infrastructure to achieve the program's educational goals/objectives.

#### **3.4 Clinical Placement and Instructional Resources**

The Practical Nurse Education Program access to instructional resources, while also ensuring students receive experience with a variety of diverse client encounters during clinical placement in designated ambulatory and inpatient settings.

#### **3.5 Library Staff and Services**

The Practical Nurse Education Program has access to library materials and electronic resources that are comprehensive and current to meet the program's educational requirements. Library services meet the needs of the students and faculty members of the educational institution through the maintenance of a comprehensive inter-library loan collaboration.

#### **3.6 Study/Lounge Areas and Safe/Secure Environments**

The Practical Nurse Education Program ensures that students have adequate study and lounge areas and safe/secure environments both on campus and during clinical placements.

### **3.7 Required Notice of Planned Change to the Program**

The education institution notifies SALPN of changes;

- In the planned number of enrolled Practical Nurse students (decreases or increases of 10%)
- Major planned reduction in available resources for the Program (infrastructure, finances, faculty support)
- Major modifications planned for curriculum or educational initiatives
- Anticipated changes in the affiliation status of the Program's clinical facilities.

\*\*Notification is also required if the Practical Nurse Education Program plans to increase student enrollment on existing or new campuses above 10% in any one academic year.

## **STANDARD 4: TEACHING AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS**

The educational institution ensures that its Practical Nurse Education Program provides a respectful, professional, and engaging academic and learning environment that promotes students' attainment of competencies through recognized and effective instructional methods and teaching strategies.

### **4.1 Focused Instruction in Healthcare**

The faculty members of the Practical Nurse Education Program ensure that instruction provided includes hands-on or simulated exercises whereby students demonstrate safe patient care practice in a safe learning environment. Instructional strategies support learning environments in the basic scientific and ethical principles of clinical, best-practice and patient safety in healthcare practice.

### **4.2 Clinical Placement Supervision/Education**

The Practical Nurse Education Program ensures that supervision, instruction, and learning experiences of students during the clinical placements are the ultimate responsibility of the designated instructor(s) or preceptor(s). Consideration of appropriate feedback provided by other identified healthcare members from the placement site.

### **4.3 Clinical Supervision of Students**

The Practical Nurse Education Program faculty members ensure that students in clinical placement learning situations that involve patient care are appropriately supervised at all times to ensure patient and student safety, and that the level of responsibility given to the students reflects their level of training and scope of practice.



#### **4.4 Variety of Student Achievement Measures Used**

The Practical Nurse Practical Nurse Education Program ensures that there is a variety of measures used consistently for the assessment of students' achievement (beyond written examinations) that include students' acquisition of the knowledge, clinical skills, behaviors, and attitudes as specified in the Practical Nurse Education Program curriculum.

#### **4.5 Formative Feedback/Summative Assessment**

The Practical Nurse Education Program has in place a system of fair and timely formative and summative assessment of student achievement in each course and clinical placement. The Practical Nurse Education Program ensures that all students are assessed and provided with formative and summative evaluations during their program that supports student success, positive student outcomes, and application of theory to practice.

#### **4.6 Learning Environment/Professionalism**

The Practical Nurse Education Program ensures that the learning environment is conducive to the ongoing development of appropriate and respectful professionalism for all students, faculty, and staff on campus and at clinical placement sites. The faculty members of the Practical Nurse Education Program are responsible for identifying and reporting violations of professional behaviors or unsafe learning environments to the practical nurse program chair or head.

#### **4.7 Student Expectations/Calendar and Handbook**

The institution will outline student expectations and provide each student with a Calendar that includes a code of professional conduct for students, faculty-student relationships, and stipulates written policies that address violations of the code.

#### **4.8 Diversity Programs and Policies**

The Practical Nurse Education Program has in place policies, practices, and ongoing recruitment and retention activities that support diversity for students, faculty members, senior administrators, administrative staff, and other members engaged in the Practical Nurse Education Program.

## STANDARD 5: CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES AND COMPETENCY PROFILE

The Practical Nurse Education Program designs curriculum objectives and content that outlines the knowledge, skills, behaviors, attitudes and judgments required by students to achieve upon graduation, and meets the expectations to practice in accordance with the Licensed Practical Nurse Act<sup>1</sup>, SALPN Regulatory Bylaws, and other SALPN Competency documents.<sup>2, 3, 4</sup>

### 5.1 Intent of Education Program's Curriculum

The Practical Nurse Education Program includes a comprehensive curriculum that:

- 5.1.1 Reflects the vision, mission statement and philosophy of the educational institution.
- 5.1.2 Has a stated purpose and goals and objectives or learning outcomes.
- 5.1.3 Has a clearly stated conceptual framework.
- 5.1.4 Uses an overall framework to organize and guide the curriculum.

### 5.2 Curriculum Design of the Education Program

- 5.2.1 Is structured in such a way as to allow for progression and consolidation of knowledge, skills, behavior, attitudes and judgments
- 5.2.2 Demonstrates that key concepts and processes are threaded throughout the program. These include but are not limited to the following: nursing process; professionalism; problem solving; critical thinking; critical inquiry; communication; diversity; inter-professional collaboration; safety and leadership.
- 5.2.3 Has a program length that is pedagogically and androgogically congruent with the achievement of identified program outcomes and consistent with the policies of the educational institution, provincial standards, and evidence informed practice.

### 5.3 Curriculum Implementation

- 5.3.1 Program objectives and learning outcomes are clearly stated and measurable.
- 5.3.2 Course content reflects current trends in health care delivery, nursing practice and nursing education and prepares practitioners to adapt to future demands of the health care system.

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<sup>1</sup> Government of Saskatchewan. (2000). Licensed Practical Nurses Act, 2000. Regina, SK: Saskatchewan Queen's Printer. Retrieved from <http://www.qp.gov.sk.ca/documents/English/Statutes/Statutes/L14-2.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Saskatchewan Association of Licensed Practical Nurses. (2017). *Competency Profile for Licensed Practical Nurses of Saskatchewan* (3rd ed.). Regina, SK: Author. Retrieved from [http://www.salpn.com/images/Member/SALPN\\_Compentency\\_Profile/2017-Saskatchewan-Competency-Profile-3rd-Edition-Final--January-16-2017.pdf](http://www.salpn.com/images/Member/SALPN_Compentency_Profile/2017-Saskatchewan-Competency-Profile-3rd-Edition-Final--January-16-2017.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Canadian Council for Practical Nurse Regulators. (2013). *Standards of Practice for Licensed Practical Nurses in Canada*. Author. Retrieved from [http://www.salpn.com/images/Member/Standars\\_of\\_Practice/IJLPN\\_Standards\\_of\\_Practice.pdf](http://www.salpn.com/images/Member/Standars_of_Practice/IJLPN_Standards_of_Practice.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Canadian Council for Practical Nurse Regulators. (2013). *Code of Ethics for Licensed Practical Nurses in Canada*. Author. Retrieved from [http://www.salpn.com/images/Member/Code\\_of\\_Ethics/IJLPN\\_Code\\_of\\_Ethics.pdf](http://www.salpn.com/images/Member/Code_of_Ethics/IJLPN_Code_of_Ethics.pdf)

5.3.3 Course hours are identified as theory, laboratory/simulated practice and clinical practice.

5.3.4 Nursing courses comprise at least 60% of the curriculum.

**5.3.5 (C) Theory and clinical learning activities are structured to provide opportunity for students to meet the designated program outcomes and SALPN entry-level competencies.**<sup>5</sup>

5.3.6 The curriculum plan includes instructor-led and preceptored clinical experiences.

5.3.7 Clinical placements provide a broad range of learning activities in a variety of health care settings, working with clients who span the life cycle, have a variety of health problems and varying levels of illness.

5.3.8 The Practical Nursing program ensures safety during practicum experiences with supervision provided by faculty.

5.3.9 There is a method of tracking and scheduling clinical hours and placements for each student to ensure that all students have clinical practice with clients across the lifespan and in a variety of clinical settings.

5.3.10 A concentrated clinical practice experience occurs at the end of the program to allow for consolidation of theory and transition to the graduate practical nurse role.

5.3.11 There is evidence that the student clinical experiences at all sites are evaluated on a regular basis to ensure the clinical placement enables students to meet program outcomes.

5.3.12 The educational institution has documented criteria for preceptor selection.

5.3.13 Orientation, material and resources are available for the preceptors that include but are not limited to specific descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of the student, preceptor and faculty advisor/liaison.

5.3.14 Teaching, learning and assessment strategies contribute to active learner participation in the learning process, development of critical thinking/critical inquiry, problem solving skills and enhancement of student self-assessment.

#### **5.4 Curriculum Evaluation Methods**

5.4.1 Formative and summative evaluation methods are used to evaluate the program and evidence is presented to show that the outcomes of evaluations are used in program maintenance and updating.

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<sup>5</sup> Indicators marked with a (C) are Critical Elements of program performance.

**5.4.2 (C) Students are partners in the teaching and learning process and provide formal feedback on the quality of the teaching and learning experience.<sup>6</sup>**

**5.5 Social/Cultural Awareness**

The Practical Nurse Education Program curriculum provides opportunities for students to learn about common social and diverse cultural health related issues, and recognize and address intercultural competency in themselves, others, and in the delivery of health care.

**5.6 Healthcare Ethics**

The Practical Nurse Education Program includes content on healthcare ethics and societal values before and during the care of patients and while communicating with patients' families and other healthcare team members.

**5.7 Effective Communication/Interprofessional Collaboration**

The Practical Nurse Education Program curriculum includes content developing effective communication and collaboration skills as they relate to interactions with patients, their families, colleagues, and other healthcare professionals.

**5.8 Self-Directed/Continuous Learning**

The Practical Nurse Education Program curriculum includes content that promotes self-directed/continuous learning experiences and scheduled time for independent study to promote the development of ongoing/continuous learning.

**STANDARD 6: CURRICULUM REVIEW, EVALUATION, AND IMPROVEMENT**

The Practical Nurse Education Program participates in regularly scheduled curriculum reviews and course/program evaluation activities to verify currency and quality of the program. This provides opportunity for students to successfully achieve curriculum objectives and meet entry-level requirements for practice.

**6.1 Education Program/Curriculum Management**

The Practical Nurse Education Program adopts a methodology to review and evaluate the Practical Nurse Education Program in order to achieve improvement of the organization and quality of the curriculum.

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<sup>6</sup> Indicators marked with a (C) are **Critical Elements** of program performance.

## **6.2 Curriculum Design, Development, Implementation**

The Practical Nurse Education team members are responsible for the design, development, and implementation of all curriculum components of the Practical Nurse Education Program including the learning objectives for each course/clinical placement requirement, use of appropriate instructional and assessment methods to demonstrate achievement of curricular objectives, and ongoing review and evaluation of curriculum delivery.

## **6.3 Evaluations to Enhance Practical Nurse Education Program**

The Practical Nurse Education Program uses a regularly scheduled and formal evaluation method to collect data on the quality of the Practical Nurse Education Program and a process to use this information to enhance the program and balance student workload.

## **STANDARD 7: STUDENT SELECTION AND ADMISSION PROCESS**

The educational institution implements and publishes the admission requirements for applicants to the Practical Nurse Education Program, and incorporates effective policies and procedures for the selection and admission process.

### **7.1 Pre-Education Program Requirements**

The Practical Nurse Education Program outlines its requirements for admission, and has methods in place to assess academic and experiential prior learning.

- 7.1.1 Student policies and procedures are clearly stated and published in the educational institution Calendar and/or the Student Handbook.
- 7.1.2 Admission requirements (e.g., GPA, English language proficiency) and selection process are clearly stated and communicated to applicants.
- 7.1.3 Policies and procedures are in place to ensure students entering clinical experience meet all agency requirements for immunizations, Criminal Record Check (and vulnerable sector checks), and safety (infectious and environmental hazards) policies.
- 7.1.4 Students have access to resources including but not limited to counseling, learning resources and financial aid.

### **7.2 Authority of Admission Committee**

The lead of the Practical Nurse Education Program sets the admission requirements as part of the curriculum planning process. The procedures for admission to the Practical Nurse Education Program are governed by specified terms of references or other program or institutional policies.

### **7.3 Student Selection/Progress Policies**

The Practical Nurse Education Program has established policies and procedures for student admission and selection, assessment and academic progress, promotion, and graduation. The Practical Nurse Education Program makes this information available to stakeholders, including the criteria used to set these standards, policies, and procedures. The Practical Nurse Education Program ensures a formal and timely process for an appeal, with procedures for the disclosure of the evidence to allow the student an opportunity to defend decisions the student deems to be unfair, unreasonable, or arbitrary related to grades, academic suspension and other decisions that impact on a student's continuation in his/her program of studies.

### **7.4 Program Informational Materials**

The Practical Nurse Education Program information, calendar, and other content materials used in advertising and recruiting, represent an accurate representation of the mission and objectives of the practical nurse education program, and describe all required courses offered by the program.

### **7.5 Students' Assignment/Placement**

The Practical Nurse Education Program facilitates the placement of students to clinical experiences in a variety of health care settings. Where feasible, efforts will be made to have student input into assigned clinical area selection, particularly in areas such as Senior Practicum.

## **STANDARD 8: STUDENT PROGRESS RECORDS AND ACADEMIC SUPPORT**

The educational institution provides appropriate and ongoing records of student progress throughout their education program, and provides all students with the same access to academic support services to assist in achieving the Practical Nurse Education Program objectives.

### **8.1 Advancing Student Progress**

Policies and procedures pertaining to student evaluation, progression and graduation are in place and communicated to staff and students. These mechanisms provide evidence of student progress toward meeting program outcomes.

#### **8.1.1 (C) Records regarding student enrollment, transfers, re-admissions, attrition and program completion are recorded and accessible.<sup>7</sup>**

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<sup>7</sup> Indicators marked with a (C) are **Critical Elements** of program performance.

## **8.2 Academic Advising/Counseling**

The educational institution has an appropriate process and resources in place for providing academic advising/counseling for students.

## **8.3 Career Advising/Counseling**

The educational institution has appropriate processes and resources in place for advising/counseling students in choosing career options, and options available for post-graduation Practical Nurse positions.

## **8.4 Confidentiality of Student Records**

The educational institution ensures that all students' personal and educational records are confidential and available only to designated faculty members and administrative staff, unless released in a written request by the student or as stipulated by confidentiality laws.

## **8.5 Student Access to Review Educational Records**

The educational institution has policies and procedures in place that allow students to review and potentially challenge their educational records, if they deem the information or evaluation to be inaccurate or incorrect.

## **8.6 Financial Aid Counseling**

The educational institution provides students with financial aid counseling.

## **8.7 Student Access to Health Care Services**

The educational institution ensures student access to personal counseling for the students that includes promotion of well-being; facilitate adjustment to the demands of the program, and timely access to medical and health services.

## **STANDARD 9: FACULTY EFFECTIVENESS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The faculty members of the educational institution are qualified through their educational credentials, clinical training, and practice experience, and ongoing professional development to provide the leadership and program support necessary to attain the institution's administrative, teaching, and service expectations.

### **9.1 Faculty Numbers and Qualifications**

- 9.1.1 All faculty members teaching courses, designated as nursing courses, are committed to the role and scope of practice of the Licensed Practical Nurse and have a full knowledge of the Licensed Practical Nurses Act (2000), SALPN Regulatory Bylaws, the Standards of Practice for Licensed

Practical Nurses in Canada (2013) and the other documents guiding Licensed Practical Nurses in Saskatchewan.

9.1.2 The person with direct responsibility for the Practical Nurse Education Program (the lead) has current registration with a Saskatchewan professional nursing regulatory body and relevant educational preparation.

9.1.3 Clinical instructors, and all faculty members teaching courses designated as nursing courses, have theoretical nursing knowledge and clinical skills consistent with their teaching responsibilities. They have relevant nursing experience and hold current registration in a Saskatchewan professional nursing regulatory body.

9.1.4 Institutional policies and procedures related to selection, evaluation, licensure and professional development of faculty members are in place.

9.1.5 Processes are in place for initial and ongoing verification of registration status of nursing faculty members with their appropriate licensing College.

## **9.2 Sufficient Faculty**

The Practical Nurse Education Program has in place a sufficient number of qualified faculty members and time required to provide instruction that meets the curriculum objectives.

## **9.3 Faculty Appointment Policies**

The Practical Nurse Education Program has clear policies and procedures in place for faculty appointment, renewal of appointment, promotion, remediation, and dismissal.

## **9.4 Faculty Feedback**

The Practical Nurse Education Program provides faculty members with regular and timely feedback from the lead (or designate) of the program on their academic performance (including student evaluation feedback) and progress toward promotion.

## **9.5 Faculty Professional Development**

The Practical Nurse Education Program provides opportunities for faculty professional development in the areas of curricular content and instructional methods, student assessment and evaluation methods, and mentoring and leadership abilities.



## **STANDARD 10: ONGOING STUDENT AND GRADUATE ASSESSMENT, AND CLIENT SAFETY**

The educational institution ensures that comprehensive, and consistent formative and summative measurement processes exist throughout the program and that no evaluation process will be used if it compromises clients' safety.

### **10.1 Graduates of the Practical Nurse Education Program achieve the program outcomes.<sup>8</sup>**

**10.1.1 (C) Processes are in place to map student progress and to verify that the student has completed the curriculum and achieved the outcomes for graduation.**

**10.1.2 (C) Program success rates for first time writers of the Canadian Practical Nurse Registration Examination (CPNRE) must meet or exceed the national average over the five-year approval period.**

**10.1.3 (C) Annual feedback from new graduates indicates they are prepared to meet requirements for practice as outlined in the Licensed Practical Nurses Act (2000), the Standards of Practice for Licensed Practical Nurses in Canada (2013) and other documents guiding Licensed Practical Nurses practice in Saskatchewan.**

**10.1.4 (C) Annual feedback from employers indicates new graduates meet service sector needs and possess the knowledge, skills, behaviors, attitudes and judgments addressed in the Licensed Practical Nurses Act (2000), the Standards of Practice for Licensed Practical Nurses in Canada (2013) and other documents guiding Licensed Practical Nurses in Saskatchewan.**

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<sup>8</sup> Indicators marked with a (C) are **Critical Elements** of program performance.