

PRACTICE GUIDELINE



CENTRAL VENOUS CATHETERS/ CENTRAL LINES/ INFUSION THERAPY

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Practice Guidance

The Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) profession in Saskatchewan is regulated by the Saskatchewan Association of Licensed Practical Nurses (SALPN). The purpose of professional regulation is to protect the public from risk and reduce harm to those a profession serves. LPNs are regulated because the service LPNs provide can pose a risk to the public if performed incompetently, unethically, or by unqualified individuals.

SALPN Practice Guidance documents are intended to address additional risks associated with aspects of practice, practice roles, or provide information about new or emerging practices. SALPN Practice Guidance documents provide information that enable LPNs to make informed decisions based on the best available evidence. These documents support nursing judgment and help LPNs meet expectations of professional behaviour and requirements for practice as set out in legislation, regulation, Standards of Practice, Code of Ethics, and Practice Policies.

SALPN Practice Guidance documents are not intended to provide all the information that may be required to inform decision making within practice. Each situation is unique and information must be sought accordingly.

LPN practice is guided by professional scope of practice (legislation and regulation), individual competence and employment role (employer policy).

The **context of practice** determines the appropriate application of LPN practice with the collective consideration of conditions or factors affecting the status and needs of the patient, the abilities and attributes of the individual LPN, and the characteristics and resources of the environment. The **context of practice** guides individual LPN decision-making within the professional scope of practice.

Professional Scope of Practice: Authorization

Infusion therapy, which includes many aspects of Central Venous Catheter (CVC) care is authorized by the SALPN as a basic competency for Licensed Practical Nurses.

Basic Competencies are knowledge, skill, and abilities authorized by the SALPN as appropriate in LPN practice and taught in the basic Practical Nursing program.

The specific competencies required for infusion therapy/ CVC care are further detailed in the SALPN Competency Profile can be found [here](#).

Additional Competencies are the observable knowledge, skills, and abilities authorized by the SALPN as appropriate in LPN practice that are developed through education, training, and practice experience.

The following aspects of CVC care are authorized by the SALPN as additional competencies:

1. Maintain central venous pressure
2. IV push – direct (bolus medication administration)
3. Manage patient controlled analgesia pump (PCA pump)
4. Withdraw blood
5. Removal of non-tunneled peripherally inserted central venous catheters (PICC)

Practice Guidance

Achieving and Maintaining Competence

The LPN maintains competence in basic competencies with ongoing education and practice experience. The LPN must complete additional education beyond the basic practical nursing education program to develop individual competence to apply additional competencies. Individual competence to apply additional competencies can be achieved with completion of education, training and practice experience. Individual LPNs may need to develop and achieve competence with a single additional competency or several additional competencies to meet the specific needs of a specific patient, patient population, and practice environment or to address the specific risks within a specific patient, patient population, and practice environment.

Because the purpose of the education and training is to develop individual competence, the method of education delivery and the depth and breadth of the education required will vary. The education and training must address the needs of and the risks associated with the patient population and/or practice environment. Some situations may require a combination of both formalized and informalized preparation.

Application of Competencies

Before an LPN can consider providing CVC care, they need to be aware of the following additional information:

Medication delivery through the IV route, if given as a large-volume (medications diluted in 500-1000ml of compatible IV fluid) or volume-controlled infusion (medications diluted in 50-250ml of compatible IV fluid) administered separately from the primary IV bag and infused over at least 30 minutes is also a basic competency whether given via peripheral access or a central venous catheter.

Medication delivery through the IV route done as IV push (also called IV direct or IV medication bolus), is an additional competency.

References:

Government of Saskatchewan (2000). The Licensed Practical Nurses Act, 2000. Sask. Queen's Printer.

Saskatchewan Association of Licensed Practical Nurses. (2017). 2017 SALPN Competency Profile, 3rd Edition.

Saskatchewan Association of Licensed Practical Nurses (2019). LPN Practice in Saskatchewan.

Saskatchewan Association of Licensed Practical Nurses (2019). Additional Competencies

Canadian Fundamentals of Nursing, 6th Edition (2019). p 1038-1052.

