

## Additional Competency - Central Venous Lines

### Introduction

As client complexity increases and advances in technology occur the use of central venous lines has become more prevalent. For years a mainstay of treatment in critical care units, central venous lines are now being used with increasing frequency in many other practice areas. Licensed Practical Nurses are regularly asked to care for clients with a central venous line.

As in all other practice areas, when assigning the appropriate health care provider, consideration must be given to the care required by the client, the education and competence of the care provider and the supports available. Consideration must also be given to ensuring appropriate facility policies are in place.

The purpose of this position statement is to provide guidelines for LPNs caring for clients with a central venous line.

### Guidelines

It is within the scope of practice of LPNs with additional education and employer certification to care for a client with a central venous line. Caring for central venous lines is considered an additional competency for LPNs.

The employer and the LPN should work together to determine his/her educational requirements. It is the responsibility of both the LPN and the employer to ensure safe and competent care.

Sections 20 and 21 of the SALPN Regulatory Bylaws provide as follows:

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.

For the LPN to care for the client with a central venous line the LPN must:

- have attained the IV Therapy module through SIAST or equivalent
- participate in employer certification in care of central venous lines

Yearly re-certification is required to ensure competency in this skill.

Care of central venous lines includes:

- dressing changes
- cap / tubing changes
- flushing heparin / saline locks
- withdrawing blood
- administration of fluids and medications

## Conclusion

Both the employer and the Licensed Practical Nurse are responsible to ensure that the education provided meets an adequate competency level. Licensed Practical Nurses are responsible for attaining and maintaining competence required in their practice area and are accountable to provide the care for which they have achieved and maintained competence.

Licensed Practical Nurses are responsible and accountable for their own actions and decisions; for adhering to the Standards of Practice adopted by the SALPN; and for ensuring they deliver safe, competent and ethical care. They are obligated to identify when direction or assistance is necessary or the competency level required exceeds their experience and ability.

## References

- Government of Saskatchewan. (2000) The Licensed Practical Nurses Act, 2000, Queen's Printer, Saskatchewan*
- Saskatchewan Association of Licensed Practical Nurses. (2005) Competency Profile for Licensed Practical Nurses of Saskatchewan*
- College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Manitoba, (2006) Infusion Therapy and IV Medication Administration: Regulatory Bulletin. Manitoba*
- College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta. (2008) Competency Profile, 2nd edition. Alberta*