

Expansion of Post-Basic  
Competencies for Licensed  
Practical Nurses in Regional  
Health Authority Settings

March 2023



COLLEGE OF  
LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSES  
OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR  
LPNS - A PRACTICAL APPROACH TO QUALITY CARE

## EXPANSION OF POST-BASIC COMPETENCIES FOR LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSES IN REGIONAL HEALTH AUTHORITY SETTINGS

The College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Newfoundland and Labrador (CLPNNL) is responsible to set the scope of practice for Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs). CLPNNL supports the expansion of post-basic competencies for LPNs employed in Regional Health Authorities (RHAs) for activities not identified in the *CLPNNL Competency Profile*, when the RHA employer follows the CLPNNL required processes identified in this document.

The *Competency Profile* contains a listing of activities currently taught in the practical nursing education program. As well, the *Competency Profile* lists many activities currently practiced by LPNs that require additional education beyond entry level, and these are referred to as post-basic competencies. While the *Competency Profile* is extensive, it is not possible to capture every activity that LPNs are, or can be, educated and authorized to perform. Therefore, outlining a process which authorizes RHA employers to expand the scope of practice for LPNs in their employ provides a safe mechanism for RHAs to address the current and emerging care needs of their client populations.

RHA employers must use the CLPNNL required process (outlined in this document) prior to authorizing LPNs to expand their practice to include activities not already identified in the *CLPNNL Competency Profile* that will be expectations of practice<sup>1</sup> for LPNs, and that are part of nursing practice for other regulated nurses (e.g., Registered Nurses) in those settings.

Activities previously authorized in RHA settings via an established *delegation*<sup>2</sup> through CLPNNL, and that are part of nursing practice for other regulated nurses in that setting, may now be considered for approval via this process.

Authorization of competencies not listed in the *Competency Profile* for LPNs practicing outside of a Health Authority may require a *delegation*. Non-RHA employers and LPNs are advised to consult with CLPNNL regarding *delegation*.

### Assumptions

The CLPNNL required process is supported by the following assumptions:

- The decision to include any activity into the scope of practice of an LPN is in response to an identified client need.
- The responsibility to establish the extent of the scope of practice for LPNs lies with the College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Newfoundland and Labrador.
- The Licensed Practical Nurses Act, 2005, and the Licensed Practical Nurses Regulations, 2011, provide authority for the CLPNNL Board to identify requirements for LPN practice.

<sup>1</sup> Expectations of practice are dynamic and are based on what constitutes regular practice. They evolve as a function of emerging knowledge, technologies, and practices that enable a profession to address patient need.

<sup>2</sup> Delegation is a formal authorizing mechanism. See the CLPNNL's *Competency Profile*, Appendix B *Delegation to a Licensed Practical Nurse*.



- The individual LPN is responsible and accountable for their practice.
- The expansion of post-basic competencies build upon the LPNs existing nursing knowledge.
- The RHA employers have resources to identify:
  - o best practices;
  - o required education;
  - o the activities they will authorize, and in what practice areas; and,
  - o required supports and resources to safely expand competencies.

### **The CLPNNL Required Process**

The CLPNNL authorizes RHA employers to expand post-basic competencies for LPNs in their employment settings when the RHA completes the following steps:

1. Contacts CLPNNL to:
  - o discuss the proposed expansion;
  - o confirm appropriateness, and/or necessity of utilizing the expansion process;
  - o identify the anticipated timeline before implementation; and,
  - o determine the method for notifying CLPNNL when the expansion is implemented.
2. Identifies a process for the submission, review, and approval of expansion of post-basic competency requests within the RHA.
3. Validates there is an identified client need for the competency.
4. Confirms that the competency is not restricted in legislation from inclusion in LPN scope of practice.
5. Confirms that the competency is currently authorized to be performed by other regulated nurses (e.g., registered nurses) in the practice area.
6. Identifies the required education<sup>3</sup>, including theory and practice.
7. Validates that the required education builds on the body of nursing knowledge of the LPN.
8. Identifies a mechanism for the LPN to obtain the required education.
9. Identifies a method to evaluate that the competency has been attained, and/or maintained by the LPN.
10. Identifies required clinical supports (e.g., human, technical).
11. Identifies the plan for the LPN to manage the anticipated and unexpected outcomes of care.
12. Provides authorization and support for the LPN to include the competency into their scope of practice in the employment setting.
13. Identifies the mechanism to evaluate the effectiveness of this intervention being carried out by LPNs.

And

14. As the final step of implementation, the RHA must notify CLPNNL when the new competency has been added to an LPN's scope of practice via this process. The notification process will be determined in step #1. (E.g., Nursing Professional Practice to e-mail the CLPNNL Practice Consultant to indicate that the competency discussed in #1 above has been implemented).

Questions related to the process to advance post-basic competencies for LPNs should be directed to the CLPNNL Practice Consultant.

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<sup>3</sup> CLPNNL reserves the right to specify required education.





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