

# Licensed Practical Nurse

## Acute Care Medical Surgical Environment

### Purpose of this Document:

A key deliverable of the Model of Care Initiative in Nova Scotia is the establishment of province-wide standardized roles to enable more consistent work practices at full scope of practice. The purpose of this document is to describe the intent of a standardized/ consistent role for a ***Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)*** in an acute care medical surgical environment.

The following table identifies those role functions of the *Licensed Practical Nurse* that are expected to have a renewed emphasis and be optimized in the new Collaborative Care Model, as well as tasks that can be safely transferred out of the role, either to another role within the profession or to other members of the care team. It is expected that all *Licensed Practical Nurses* in Nova Scotia practice according to the standards defined by the *College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Nova Scotia* and no attempt was made to replicate these expectations in this document. The *Competency Profile for Licensed Practical Nurses in Nova Scotia (2008)* was relied on in the development of this role description.

Renewed Emphasis	Optimized	Transferred
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Collaborates in the admission process</li> <li>➤ Collaborates in the development of the plan of care</li> <li>➤ Implements the plan of care</li> <li>➤ Collaborates in the review and revision of the plan of care based on reassessment of the patient's condition and progress.</li> <li>➤ Accountable for all patient care she/he provides</li> <li>➤ Performs tasks within own level of competence and scope of practice including administration of medications, treatments, wound care, etc.</li> <li>➤ Assess and access appropriate services and resources for the patient.</li> <li>➤ Provides nursing services <i>independently</i> for patients considered stable with predictable outcomes</li> <li>➤ Provides nursing services <i>under the guidance or direction</i> of a Registered Nurse, medical practitioner, or other health care professional authorized to provide such consultation, guidance or direction for patients considered unstable with unpredictable outcomes.</li> <li>➤ Communication and team collaboration</li> <li>➤ Patient education</li> <li>➤ Participates in interprofessional team and family meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Administration of medications and other treatment procedures as per district policy</li> <li>➤ Monitor, maintain, regulate and evaluate peripheral infusion therapy. Note: IV initiation is considered a post entry level competency.</li> <li>➤ Perform technical skills for which the LPN has achieved competency.</li> <li>➤ Provide guidance and direction to the Unlicensed Assistive Roles as appropriate to ensure patient care tasks are completed.</li> <li>➤ Collaborates in admission assessments of new patients</li> <li>➤ Participates in discharge planning and patient/family education</li> <li>➤ Provides health promotion, disease prevention teaching</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Selected patient support activities – some bed baths, feeding, support for toileting, vital signs, etc.</li> <li>➤ Selected patient management activities – housekeeping support</li> <li>➤ Unit support activities – stocking carets, supplies.</li> <li>➤ Clerical duties such as answering phones and calling-in staff</li> </ul>

## **Role Summary:**

The *Licensed Practical Nurse* is a one of the collaborators in the Collaborative Care Model, participating in the provision of holistic, comprehensive care to meet the needs of individuals, families and groups.

As a member of the team, the *Licensed Practical Nurse* applies practical nursing theory in the assessment of patients, collaboration in the development of the nursing care plan, implementation of the care plan and ongoing evaluation of the patient.

The *LPN* provides nursing services independently for patients considered stable with predictable outcomes and under direction or guidance of a registered nurse, medical practitioner, or other health care professional authorized to provide such consultation, guidance or direction for patients considered unstable with unpredictable outcomes.

## **Key Responsibilities:**

### **I. COMPETENT PRACTICE**

#### **Assessment:**

1. Performs relevant initial and ongoing physical, social, emotional and spiritual assessments using appropriate sources specific to the clinical practice setting.
2. Recognizes deviation from normal health status; communicates assessment to the Registered Nurse and/or other appropriate interprofessional team members and takes appropriate action if required.
3. Recognizes the transition from a stable to unstable health status and takes required action.
4. Documents and communicates pertinent patient information in a timely manner.

#### **Planning:**

1. Collaborates with the Registered Nurse to develop the plan of nursing care.
2. Identifies priorities for care in collaboration with the RN.
3. Participates in the establishment of short and long term care goals.
4. Identifies patient's learning and discharge planning needs and communicates same to the Registered Nurse/Charge Nurse.

#### **Implementation:**

1. Participates as a member of the interprofessional team in the implementation of the patient's plan of care.
2. Accesses appropriate team member(s) for guidance/direction/consultation on patient care needs.
3. Collaborates and communicates effectively with appropriate interprofessional team member(s) and internal/external resource personnel.
4. Coordinates patient care/services with the appropriate interprofessional team members.
5. Fosters patients and family's independence and reintegration into their community.

6. Provides care appropriate to the patient's situation, and in accordance with district health authority policies and procedures, best practice and established standards.
7. Interacts with patient/client and families in a respectful manner.
8. Communicates with patients, families, and interprofessional team members using active listening skills and communicating directly.
9. Independently provides nursing care to stable and predictable populations in a safe, competent, and ethical manner.
10. Provides safe, competent, and ethical nursing care to unstable and/or unpredictable patients under the direction or guidance of a registered nurse, physician, and /or other appropriate health care provider.
11. Ensures the goals and needs of the patient and family are prioritized
12. Administers treatments, procedures, and medications as defined by district health authority policies and procedures.
13. Advocates for the rights of the patient and family and for provision of their unique care requirements.
14. Provides accurate and consistent patient teaching in a flexible and creative manner.
15. Articulates rationale for decisions that are based on current theory and research.
16. Maintains an accurate account of care given through clear and concise verbal communication and documentation.
17. Processes physician's orders and seeks verification of orders from the ordering physician, nurse practitioner or other health care provider if needed.

### **Evaluation:**

1. Evaluates, reports, and documents according to district health authority standards, patient/client response to care.
2. Collaborates in the review and revision of the plan of care based on reassessment of the patient's condition and progress.
3. Recognizes trends in health care needs within the patient/client groups served, and involves the patient/client in planning mutually expected outcomes where possible and appropriate.

## **II. EXCELLENCE AND LEADERSHIP**

1. Achieves and maintains proficiency in practice.
2. Identifies own professional development needs and competencies, seeks appropriate learning opportunities and evaluates own learning.
3. Mentors colleagues in areas of expertise and seeks mentorship to achieve full potential in professional development.
4. Disseminates current best practice and research findings and their use to improve the outcomes of nursing.
5. Uses human and material resources effectively and efficiently.
6. Functions as a change agent by thinking reflectively, questioning assumptions, assessing alternatives, and supporting change.

### **III. SAFETY**

1. Promotes a safe working environment by identifying and resolving potential risk issues.
2. Participates in quality improvement activities.
3. Recognizes patient safety issues and reports appropriately.
4. Collects and analyzes quality improvement data in collaboration with consumers and colleagues
5. Demonstrates ability to use equipment and supplies according to established standards and procedures.
6. Implements safety measures to protect self and others from injury.
7. Protects individual and family confidentiality and creates an overall environment that is safe and secure.

### **IV. PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE**

1. Maintains awareness of own values and ethical priorities and how they may impact their practice.
2. Develops therapeutic professional relationships with individuals/families/communities, displaying appropriate use of communication skills, respect, empathy and an understanding of the unique values of each individual.
3. Displays a collaborative attitude of mutual respect and valuing of others in interactions with individuals/families/communities and members of the interprofessional healthcare team.
4. Appropriately advocates on behalf of the patient/client/family including:
  - providing patient/client/family access to information in consultation and collaboration with other team members
  - promoting patient/client/family comfort and safety
  - facilitating patient/client/family participation in decisions affecting care
  - intervening effectively in situations where safety or well-being of the patient/client/family may be compromised; and
  - respecting individual rights and diversity.
5. Ensures ongoing development and maintenance of own knowledge, skills and abilities through self evaluation, feedback from colleagues, and identification of learning needs and seeking appropriate learning opportunities
6. Demonstrates accountability for practice using strategies such as providing rationale for decisions and actions, acknowledging errors, taking corrective action, recognizing own limitations, and consulting with others as necessary.
7. Demonstrates commitment to continuous learning through participation in activities such as inservice programs, conferences, and continuing nursing education.
8. Participates actively in the development of peers using methods such as sharing knowledge and resources, providing feedback, precepting, role modeling, mentoring and coaching
9. Contributes to the development of professional nursing practice within the district health authority and the community through participation and leadership in care team, program, organizational, and professional activities/committees.
10. Collaborates in the ongoing development of appropriate learning materials.
11. Maintains knowledge of current issues and trends in health care.

12. Mentors colleagues in areas of expertise and seeks mentorship to achieve full potential in professional development.
13. Demonstrates accountability for own nursing practice by understanding and complying with:
  - Legal requirements of licensure
  - The Licensed Practical Nurses Act and Regulations
  - The CLPNNS Code of Ethics
  - CLPNNS Standards for Nursing Practice
  - CLPNNS Continuing Competency Program
  - Relevant legislation, as required in the practice setting

## **V. WORKLIFE AND RELATIONSHIPS**

1. Promotes a positive work environment by:
  - Respecting other's opinions, judgments and abilities
  - Using proper channels of communication
  - Managing conflict effectively
  - Demonstrating flexibility and reliability
  - Recognizing when to seek assistance.
2. Assigns care to unregulated health care team members according to their scope of employment and the district health authority policies and procedures.
3. Provide guidance and direction to assistive personnel as appropriate to ensure patient care tasks are completed.
4. Identifies system issues (e.g. environmental/unit) and offers recommendations for change.
5. Appears professionally attired with proper identification at all times.
6. Guides and supports students and other personnel as appropriate.

## **Appendix I**

Excerpt  
Licensed Practical Nurses Act

from

In the Act:

(ae) "nursing services" means the application of practical nursing theory in the

- (i) assessment of clients,
- (ii) collaboration in the development of the nursing plan of care,
- (iii) implementation of the nursing plan of care, and
- (iv) ongoing evaluation of the client,

for the purpose of

- (v) promoting health,
- (vi) preventing illness,
- (vii) providing palliative and rehabilitative care, and
- (viii) assisting clients to achieve an optimal state of health;

(ah) "practice of practical nursing" means the provision of nursing services

- (i) independently, for clients considered stable with predictable outcomes, and
- (ii) under the guidance or direction of a registered nurse, medical practitioner or other health care professional authorized to provide such consultation, guidance or direction, for clients considered unstable with unpredictable outcomes;

(ai) "predictable" means the extent to which one can identify in advance a client's response on the basis of observation, experience or scientific reason;

(az) "unpredictable" means that a client's health outcome cannot reasonably be expected to follow an anticipated path;

(aw) "stable" means a situation in which the client's health status can be anticipated with predictable outcomes;

(ba) "unstable" means a situation in which a clients' health status is fluctuating with atypical responses, the care is complex requiring frequent assessment of the client and modification of the care plan and the client is managed with interventions that may have unpredictable outcomes or risks;