

DISCOVERY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

CURRICULUM GUIDE

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SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES

Health Care Assistant Program

PURPOSE

Discovery Community College's Health Care Assistant Diploma Program is designed to provide students with the opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to function effectively as front-line care-givers and respected members of the healthcare team, in community and facility settings. Under the direction and supervision of a health professional, graduates provide person-centred care aimed at promoting and maintaining the physical, emotional, cognitive, and social well-being of clients/residents.

Upon completion of the program, graduates are prepared to work in any level of continuing care, including: home support, adult day care, assisted living, and complex care (including special care units).

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the HCA program, graduates will be able to:

- Provide person-centred care and assistance that recognizes and respects the uniqueness of each individual resident or client
- Use an informed problem-solving approach to provide care and assistance that promotes the physical, psychological, social, cognitive, and spiritual well-being of clients/residents and families.
- Provide care and assistance for clients/residents experiencing complex health challenges.
- Provide care and assistance for clients/residents experiencing cognitive and/or mental health challenges.
- Interact with other members of the healthcare team in ways that contribute to effective working relationships and the achievement of goals.
- Communicate clearly, accurately, and in sensitive ways with clients/residents and families within a variety of community and facility contexts.
- Provide personal care and assistance in a safe, competent, and organized manner.
- Recognize and respond to own self-development, learning, and health enhancement needs.
- Perform the care provider role in a reflective, responsible, accountable, and professional manner.

PROGRAM OUTLINE

The above learning outcomes will be achieved as students' progress through the program courses. Classroom learning and clinical experiences are presented in an integrated manner throughout the program. Knowledge, skills, and behaviours are learned and practiced and reinforced until each student is competent and confident.

As students progress through the program they will begin to take responsibility for their knowledge and application of that knowledge, for the caring practice they provide to their clients, for identifying and suggesting remedies for either making further progress in their own development or overcoming deficits, and for all professional and ethical aspects of their behaviour in all areas of the program.

The program is organized into these courses and clinical experiences (in approximate order of presentation):

- Health Care Assistant: Introduction to Practice [30 hours]
- Health and Healing: Concepts for Practice [70 hours]
- Health 1: Interpersonal Communications [50 hours]
- Health 2: Lifestyle and Choices [30 hours]
- Healing 1: Caring for Individuals Experiencing Common Health Challenges [116 hours]
- Foodsafe Level 4 [8 hours]
- Standard First Aid with CPR “C” [16 hours]
- Healing 3: Personal Care and Assistance [120 hours]
- Healing 2: Caring for Individuals Experiencing Cognitive or Mental Challenges [60 hours]
- Practice Experiences:
 - Practice placement in Home Support and/or Assisted Living (preceptorship) [60 hours]
 - Practice placement in a Multi-level or Complex Care facility (clinical) [220 hours]

ADMISSION PREREQUISITES

Applicants must meet all of these entry requirements:

- Submission of completed application forms, including a self-declaration confirming level of English proficiency.
- A satisfactory interview with a College official.
- Graduated from BC secondary school (grade 12) or equivalent from another school system OR be a mature applicant (19 years of age on the first day of class).
- Mature applicants (19 years of age on the first day of class) who have not graduated (as described above) must demonstrate an ability to speak, read, comprehend, and write English at a BC secondary school grade 10 level (see note [1] below).
- Mature applicants for whom English is not their first language must be assessed to ensure they have a level of English ability (reading, writing, speaking, listening) that would offer them a reasonable chance of success in the HCA program (see note [2] below).
- Provide a signed consent for a criminal records check under the Criminal Records Review program (CRRP).

[1] Provide a BC secondary school transcript, or equivalent from another school system, showing satisfactory completion of English grade 10, or complete one of the assessments listed on the BC CACHWR minimum English language competency requirements for native English speakers.

[2] Complete one of the assessments listed on the BC CACHWR minimum English language competency requirements for non-native English speakers.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS for PRACTICE EDUCATION PLACEMENTS

Prior to being placed in an agency or facility for the required program practice experiences, students must:

- Have successfully completed a Standard First Aide course

- Have successfully completed CPR Level C
- Have successfully completed FoodSafe Level 1
- Provide evidence of up-to-date immunization status as required by the regional Health Authority (refer to guidelines below)
- Present documentation of an acceptable criminal record check (refer to guidelines below)

Discovery Community College will provide the First Aide, CPR, and FoodSafe training during the first few weeks of the program. Applicants already having any of these certifications must provide the originals to a College official so that a copy may be made and witnessed and placed in the student file.

Immunization Guidelines

Discovery Community College refers to the Practice Education Guidelines for BC (www.hspscanada.net/managing/content-management.asp) for guidance on immunization requirements in Regional Health Authorities. All health care staff (including students and PSI educators) should be protected against vaccine preventable diseases. Health care organization (HCO) immunization guidelines and policies are based on the Communicable Diseases and Immunization Guidelines from the BC Centre for Disease Control and the Canadian Public Health Agency.

The Practice Education Guideline 1-3 (PEG 1-3) outlines the immunizations required for students and onsite PSI educators for experiences in practice education settings, including the requirements for maintaining current records of immunizations.

Practice Standards Guidelines – immunizations:

Tetanus/diphtheria/pertussis

Basic immunization series plus booster / reinforcement dose within the last ten years.

Poliomyelitis

Basic immunization series plus single booster dose 10 years after primary series.

Measles/mumps/rubella

Those born prior to 1957 are considered to have acquired natural immunity.

Those born on or after January 1, 1957 require proof of two doses of MMR vaccine or reactive serological test for immunity. Please review the PEG 1-3 for more detailed information.

Hepatitis B

Recommended for those who may be exposed to blood or body fluids, or who are at increased risk of sharps injury, bites, or penetrating injuries.

Varicella (chicken pox)

Required for those individuals with negative titers or those with no history of the disease.

Influenza

Required annually as per BC Provincial policy. Individuals who choose not to receive vaccination must wear a surgical procedure mask at all times in the practice education setting.

Tuberculin status

Negative skin test dated within six months of the first practice education placement within a receiving agency. For those with a positive skin test (10 mm of induration or greater) at the last test, a negative chest x-ray within one year of the first practice education placement within the receiving agency.

All students and on site PSI educators must meet the HCA immunization guidelines and policies in order to engage in a practice education experience.

Immunization records for students and PSI educators must be maintained and stored by the PSI. Proof of immunization must be available upon request by the HCO; the HCO may request these records at any time in preparation for, or during the placement.

Students and PSI educators with a positive test for a blood borne communicable disease are not required to disclose this information.

Any student whose immunization status does not meet these guidelines before the first practice education placement may not be accepted by the receiving agency. Students who cannot be placed in the practice education cannot graduate from this program and will be withdrawn.

Applicants and/or students who are unable to comply with these immunization guidelines cannot be accepted into the HCA program.

Criminal Record Check Guidelines

There are two types of criminal record check (CRC):

- A CRC with the local police
- A CRC with the Criminal Record Review Program (CRRP) of BC

Because graduates of the HCA program must register with a governing body (the BC Care Aide & Community Health Worker Registry – refer to www.cachwr.bc.ca), only criminal record checks completed through the Criminal Record Review Program (CRRP) will be accepted for entry into the HCA program.

To accomplish the CRC under the CRRP applicants must provide a signed consent for a CRC before the start of their program. Discovery Community College will submit each applicant's criminal record check (CRC) on-line to the Criminal Record Review Program (CRRP).

The status of the CRC does not automatically prevent an applicant from attending this program. However, any CRC that reveals "relevant" offences may make it difficult or impossible to place the student in a practicum or clinical. Students who cannot be placed in a practicum or clinical cannot graduate from this program and will be withdrawn.

Some practicum or clinical hosts may require their own criminal record check. It is the Student's responsibility to provide this directly to the host. If the criminal record check reveals information that raises concerns relevant to the placement the host may decline the placement. Students who cannot be placed in a practicum or clinical cannot graduate from this program and will be withdrawn.

A criminal record check is a requirement for registration with the BC Care Aide & Community Health Worker Registry (BCCACHWR). The Registry may not register any applicant who has a relevant criminal record. We strongly recommend that applicants who are concerned about their criminal record complete both their CRC through the CRRP and their CRC through the RCMP before they begin the Health Care Assistant program.

RECOMMENDED STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Before applying for this program, applicants should learn as much as possible about this career. Successful care aides and community health workers are genuinely interested in caring holistically for the elderly in either long term care facilities or in their homes. You should be respectful, sensitive, and responsive to the needs of the frail elderly. You should also be mindful of the need to take care of your own health and safety needs.

Students with the following characteristics can anticipate success in the program and in their future career:

- Be in good health with an ability to work physically hard
- Have excellent interpersonal skills
- Enjoy being with and have a strong sense of compassion for the frail elderly
- Be able to give very personal care and be tolerant of unpleasant odors
- Maintain a responsible attitude with high standards of personal and professional integrity
- Be able to communicate clearly in writing
- Be able to work effectively as part of a team
- Maintain a professional appearance and adhere to the dress code standards of the facility

Students must be willing to conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner at all times. As part of your preparation for work in the profession of health care, instructors and staff will apply the principals of the profession to their expectations of your conduct. This will be a supportive process.

Students will be required to adhere to a clinical dress policy designed to portray the same professional image that is required in any health care facility.

Students should be interested in the complex tasks required of a health care assistant, with a special emphasis on the skills, knowledge, and behaviours needed in a health care setting. You should also possess a deep sense of compassion for and caring towards all people but especially towards the elderly and infirm.

Students should be willing to engage in class discussion and debate, enjoy reading, research, and study, and be able to write and record their thoughts and information gathered.

PROGRAM DESIGN AND ACTIVITIES

This program will normally be offered over 39 weeks. Total program hours are 780; 500 hours of course theory and laboratory/facility learning and 280 hours of applied practice experiences. This program will be offered in various formats including Monday to Wednesday, Wednesday to Friday, and weekends (Saturday to Monday).

Schedules do vary and students must be prepared to attend classes as scheduled e.g. some classes begin at 6:45 a.m. Schedules for classroom and clinical learning will be distributed at the beginning of each program. You will be in class 20 hours each week (statutory holidays and emergencies excepted). Class times may be subject to change.

This is a hands-on immersion program where practice education takes place in the care facility. Classroom learning may take place at the care facility or in a college classroom. Students will be required to supply their own transportation.

Practice education placements will be at a variety of sites in the provincial health authority region where your program is delivered. Students must be able to attend practice education placements which may be scheduled on days, evenings, and weekends. Students will be required to supply their own transportation.

The instructor will use various strategies including lectures, demonstrations, group discussion and/or presentations, student practice, videos, and guest speakers. There may be field trips arranged during the program as opportunity and resources allow. Students will be required to supply their own transportation for these.

Information contained in this curriculum guide is correct at the time of publication. Content of courses and programs is revised on an ongoing basis to ensure relevance to changing educational, employment, and marketing needs. The instructor will endeavour to provide notice of any changes to students as soon as possible.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Student progress and success will be assessed regularly throughout the program. This will be accomplished using a variety of evaluation tools.

The passing grade for all programs is 70%. A minimum of 70% is required on each course. Students will be required to pass all assignments, exams, and practice education experiences at each level of the program before moving on to the next level. A minimum attendance of 80% is required to graduate.

Final transcripts will record all marks for courses within the program. Course marks are weighted so that their contribution to the final program mark reflects the hours allocated to each course. A separate certificate will be awarded to each student attaining 100% attendance. Letter grades for each course will be posted, according to student number, three working days after each course completion and three working days after the program end date.