

# DISCOVERY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

## SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES

### Health Care Assistant Program

#### CURRICULUM GUIDE

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#### PURPOSE

Discovery Community College's Health Care Assistant Diploma Program is designed to provide students with opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to function effectively as front-line caregivers and respected members of the health care team. 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.

Upon completion of the program, graduates are prepared to work in a variety of practice settings including home support, assisted living, residential/complex care, special care units, other home and community care settings, and acute care.

#### 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 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 and families.
- Provide care and assistance for clients experiencing complex health challenges.
- Provide care and assistance for clients experiencing cognitive and/or mental health challenges.
- Interact with other members of the health care team in ways that contribute to effective working relationships and the achievement of goals.
- Communicate clearly, accurately, and in sensitive ways with clients 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. 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 consists of these courses and practice education experiences:

- Orientation Week: online learning, DCC policy and procedure, financial literacy [20 hours]
- Workshops: First Aid (16 hours) and Foodsafe (8 hours) [24 hours]
- Health and Healing: Concepts for Practice [70 hours]
- Health Care Assistant: Introduction to Practice [30 hours]
- Health 1: Interpersonal Communications [50 hours]
- Health 2: Lifestyle and Choices [30 hours]
- Healing 1: Caring for Individuals Experiencing Common Health Challenges [120 hours]
- Healing 2: Caring for Individuals Experiencing Cognitive or Mental Challenges [60 hours]
- Healing 3: Personal Care and Assistance [120 hours, minimum of 78 hours at campus simulation centre]
- Practice Experiences:
  - Practice placement in a Multi-level or Complex Care facility (clinical 160 hours and preceptorship 60 hours) [220 hours]
  - Practice placement in Home Support and/or Assisted Living (preceptorship) [60 hours]

**Orientation and Workshop classes = 44 hours**

**Theory and Simulation Centre classes = 480 hours**

**Practice Education classes = 280 hours**

**Total program = 804 hours delivered over 40 weeks**

## **PROGRAM DESIGN AND ACTIVITIES**

This program is offered in two delivery models:

- In person in the classroom and simulation centre at a DCC campus for theory and practice courses
- In person online for theory courses and in the simulation centre at a DCC campus for practice courses

Schedules may vary, and students must be prepared to attend in person and online classes as scheduled e.g. some practice education classes begin at 6:45 a.m. Schedules will be distributed at the beginning of the program. Class times may be subject to change.

Students must be able to attend all classes: in the campus classroom, in the online classroom, in the campus simulation centre, and at a facility for clinical/preceptorship. The practice education (clinical and preceptorship) takes place in the care facility. Students will be required to supply their own transportation to all locations.

Practice education placements will be at a variety of sites in the provincial health authority region where your program is based (for online programs this will be where your instructor is based); however, this may vary. 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 and accommodation.

For online learning students will require a suitable device such as a laptop computer (preferably using Windows operating system), and access to internet services. We recommend a laptop with a keyboard (not just touch screen) and additional devices such as a cell phone.

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.

## **ADMISSION PREREQUISITES**

Applicants must meet these entry requirements:

- 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 a proficiency to speak, read, comprehend, and write English at a BC secondary school grade 10 level (see note [1] below).
- All applicants whose first language is not English must be assessed to ensure they have a level of English proficiency (reading, writing, speaking, listening) that offers them a reasonable chance of success in the HCA program (see note [2] below).
- Submit completed application forms, including a self-declaration confirming level of English proficiency.
- Provide a signed consent for a criminal record check from the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General (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 English language competency requirements for applicants whose first language is English.

[2] Complete one of the assessments listed on the BC CACHWR English language competency requirements for applicants whose first language is not English.

The English language competency requirements are described here:

[https://www.cachwr.bc.ca/Documents/Educators/English-Language-Competency\\_HCA-Program-Entry\\_2018.aspx](https://www.cachwr.bc.ca/Documents/Educators/English-Language-Competency_HCA-Program-Entry_2018.aspx)

Applicants must meet with a DCC official and complete required documents.

## **MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS for PRACTICE EDUCATION PLACEMENTS**

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

- Provide proof of meeting current immunizations / vaccinations as per health care organization policies / guidelines and/or as required by the regional Health Authority (refer to guidelines below)
- Present documentation of an acceptable criminal record check from the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, including clearance to work with vulnerable adults (refer to guidelines below)
- Have successfully completed a First Aid course
- Have successfully completed CPR Level “C” or “HCP”
- Have successfully completed Foodsafe Level 1 (or a course deemed equivalent)
- Have completed Provincial Violence Prevention Curriculum (PVPC) e-learning modules

Discovery Community College will provide the First Aid, CPR/HCP, Foodsafe, and PVPC training. 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.

A list of courses deemed equivalent to BC Foodsafe Level 1 is provided here: <http://www.bccdc.ca/our-services/programs/food-protection-services>

International students must provide a police certificate from their country of origin (HCA program students will be providing care to vulnerable clients within the practice education components of the program). Please refer to information provided at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/application/medical-police/police-certificates/how.html>

### **Immunization Guidelines**

Discovery Community College refers to the Practice Education Guidelines for BC ([www.hspscanada.net/managing/content-management.asp](http://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 always wear a surgical procedure mask 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 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 an oversight body (the BC Care Aide & Community Health Worker Registry – refer to [www.cachwr.bc.ca](http://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 practice experience 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 practice experience 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 always be willing to conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner. 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.

**ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION**

Student progress and success will be assessed regularly throughout the program. This will be accomplished using a variety of evaluation tools; these are fully described in course outlines.

Final transcripts will record all marks for courses within the program.

The passing grade for each course is 70%. Each course within the program must be passed to graduate and each course must be successfully completed before moving on to the next course.

A separate certificate will be awarded to each student attaining 95% or better attendance.

**REVISIONS**

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. Students will be given notice of any changes as soon as possible.