

DISCOVERY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES

Practical Nurse Program

CURRICULUM GUIDE

Development Date: February 2012.

Recent revisions: June 2020; November 2021; January 2022; August 2022; February 2023.

Current revision: December 2024.

PROGRAM PURPOSE

The provincial practical nursing education program is designed to provide learners with the knowledge, skills, judgments, and attitudes to perform to the full range of competencies as identified by the British Columbia College of Nurses and Midwives (BCCNM).

The curriculum provides a learning experience that is integrated, professional, collaborative, and culturally sensitive with an aim to prepare graduates to care for individuals (and by extension, families of individuals) at multiple life stages and in a variety of practice settings. Consistent with the *Entry to Practice Competencies for Licensed Practical Nurses* (© 2013 CCPNR), the focus is on the competencies that describe the knowledge, skill, judgment, and attitude required of beginning practitioners to provide safe, competent, and ethical nursing care. Additionally, upon successful completion of the program, learners will possess the competencies to successfully complete the Regulatory Exam – Practical Nurse (REx-PN). (This statement of program purpose is taken from the provincial practical nursing education program curriculum of August 2011, with amendments to reflect recent changes).

The philosophy of this program reflects Discovery Community College's commitment to hands-on training and graduating work ready students who are sought after by employees.

Upon completion of the program and successful completion of the REx-PN, graduates are prepared to "...work as health care professionals. Most work as frontline nurses caring for a wide range of clients at all stages of life. LPNs provide nursing services ranging from health promotion to acute care, to long-term and palliative care", (this statement is taken from the BCCNM website "types of nurses" June 2020).

PROGRAM Methods of Delivery

This program is offered in these delivery models:

- In person in the classroom and simulation centre at a DCC campus for theory and practice courses with work experience placements in the community.
- Combined in person in the classroom and in person online (using MS Teams) for theory courses (synchronous) and in the simulation centre at a DCC campus for practice courses with work experience placements in the community.

All online delivery of courses is synchronous – students attend scheduled classes virtually with instructor(s) and classmates. Whether courses are to be delivered in class or online will be described in the student contract and schedule.

PROGRAM DESIGN

The program learning outcomes will be accomplished as students' progress through four levels of learning, each of which includes a practice experience.

Course name	Hours	Delivery method
<i>Level one</i>		
DCC Orientation Week	20	In class or online
CPR C	6	In class
PN 137 Human Anatomy and Physiology	72	In class or online
PN 130 Professional Practice 1	28	
PN 131 Professional Communication 1	36	
PN 132 Variations in Health 1	40	
PN 133 Health Promotion 1	32	
PN 134 Pharmacology 1	32	
PN 135 Integrated Nursing Practice 1	136	In class or online; and in class simulation centre
PN 139 Consolidated Practice Experience 1	90	On site
<i>Total</i>	<i>492</i>	
<i>Level two</i>		
PN 230 Professional Practice 2	20	In class or online
PN 231 Professional Communication 2	32	
PN 232 Variations in Health 2	48	
PN 233 Health Promotion 2	32	
PN 234 Pharmacology 2	32	
PN 235 Integrated Nursing Practice 2	180	In class or online; and in class simulation centre
PN 239 Consolidated Practice Experience 2	120	On site
<i>Total</i>	<i>464</i>	
<i>Level three</i>		
PN 330 Professional Practice 3	20	In class or online
PN 331 Professional Communication 3	20	
PN 332 Variations in Health 3	48	
PN 333 Health Promotion 3	36	
PN 335 Integrated Nursing Practice 3	140	In class or online; and in class simulation centre
PN 339 Consolidated Practice Experience 3	68	On site
<i>Total</i>	<i>332</i>	
<i>Level four</i>		
PN 430 Professional Practice 4	20	In class or online
PN 431 Professional Communication 4	20	
PN 432 Variations in Health 4	52	
PN 433 Health Promotion 4	24	
PN 435 Integrated Nursing Practice 4	180	In class or online; and in

		class simulation centre
PN 439 Consolidated Practice Experience 4	200	On site
<i>Total</i>	<i>496</i>	
<i>Final Practice Experience</i>		
PN 538 Transition to Final Practice Experience	32	In class or online
PN 539 Final Practice Experience	180	On site
<i>Total</i>	<i>212</i>	

Level One provides the foundation for the development of nursing practice and introduces the learner to the healthy adult. Level Two explores the older adult and concepts related to ageing and chronic illness in various settings. Level Three examines a continuum of care in community care and applies concepts from level one, two and three in the management of stable clients across the lifespan. Level Four integrates knowledge from previous levels and examines concepts related to the care of the client with acute presentation or exacerbation of chronic illness. Each level is supported by a Consolidated Practice Experience (CPE). The program culminates in a Final Practice Experience (FPE) to prepare the learner as an entry to practice graduate.

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

The following program outcomes describe what learners are expected to achieve by the end of their educational program and describe key professional abilities, incorporate the curricular philosophical approach, and highlight the core concepts.

Upon successful completion of the Provincial Practical Nursing Program (PPNP), graduates will:

- Apply the *Entry to Practice Competencies for Licensed Practical Nurses (2013)* to provide safe, competent, culturally safe, and ethical care.
- Practice within relevant legislation, scope of practice standards, Professional Standards, and Practice Standards as set out by the Health Professions Act and the BCCNM.
- Value and engage in continuous learning to maintain and enhance competence.
- Practice in collaboration with other members of the health care team to meet the collective needs of their clients.
- Participate in interprofessional problem solving and decision-making processes.
- Advocate for and facilitate change reflecting evidence-informed practice.
- Make practice decisions that are client specific and consider client acuity, complexity, variability, and available resources.
- Use critical thinking, clinical judgment, and knowledge of assessment to plan, implement, and evaluate the agreed upon plan of care.
- Develop a collaborative relationship with clients by connecting, sharing, and exploring with them in a caring environment.
- Provide culturally safe, person-centred care across the lifespan that recognizes and respects the uniqueness of each individual and is sensitive to cultural safety and diversity.
- Provide leadership, direction, assignment, and supervision of unregulated care providers as appropriate.
- Identify one's own values, biases, and assumptions and the influence of these on interactions with clients and other members of the health care team.

Career Occupation

The Practical Nurse program prepares students for career occupations as licensed practical nurses. They provide nursing care usually under the direction of medical practitioners, registered nurses, or other health team members. Licensed practical nurses are employed in hospitals, nursing homes, extended care facilities, rehabilitation centres, doctors' offices, clinics, and a variety of institutional and community settings (NOC 2021 code 32101).

PROGRAM DESIGN AND ACTIVITIES

This program is offered over 94-weeks (1,996 hours) and will include 478 hours of consolidated practice experience, and 212 hours of final practice experience (including transition). This program may be offered in three delivery models:

- In person in the classroom and simulation centre at the DCC campus with practice experience placements in the community.
- Online scheduled classes for classroom courses and in person in the simulation centre at the DCC campus with practice experiences in the community.
- A blend of the two models with some in person in the classroom and some online scheduled classes for classroom courses, plus in person in the simulation centre at the DCC campus with practice experience placements in the community.

Class schedules (days of the week and time of day) vary, and applicants will be given this information during their admission process. Students are in class a minimum of 20 hours each week (emergencies excepted). Schedules while on consolidated practice experience and final practice experience will vary depending on facility and/or host requirements. Schedules are subject to change; including weeks allocated to classroom and practice experience, days of the week used, and class times.

The instructor will use various strategies including lectures, group discussion, student practice, videos, and guest speakers. Opportunities may arise for the students to use computer software to design and make presentations and to complete assignments.

Consolidated Practice Experiences and Final Practice Experience

Practice experience placements will be at a variety of sites in a Regional Health Authority. Students may have to travel outside of their home community to attend practice experience placements. All placement schedules are subject to the capacity available in the host facility and students may be required to work variable shifts (including 12-hour shifts). Students must be able to attend their scheduled practice experience placements; it is important to know that these may be scheduled on days, evenings, weekends, and statutory holidays. Students will be required to supply their own transportation to their placements and to assume other related costs.

Students are expected to come prepared to provide nursing care to the clients assigned to them by their instructor or supervisor. This preparation is of paramount importance to your success in this program, to your career as a nurse, and to the provision of safe care to clients assigned to you. Students who come to their practice experience unprepared may be asked to leave the practice area. While on their practice experiences students must portray a professional image and maintain standards of safety.

The activities that the student will undertake during the work experience are described in the work experience course outline, the instructor guide, and in other resource documents available from the instructor.

There may be off-site field trips arranged during the program as opportunity and resources allow. Students will be required to supply their own transportation for these.

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. The passing grade for each course is 70% except pharmacology (refer to course outline).

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

Students are required to pass all courses and consolidated practice experiences at each level of the program before moving on to the next level. Students unable to proceed to the next level will be withdrawn from the program.

Rewrites of Assignments, Tests, and Exams

Students who have failed a course but who have satisfactory attendance in that course (90%) may be given the opportunity to resubmit up to two assignments or to rewrite up to two exams. Before resubmitting or rewriting the student will be required to follow the instructor's directions for remedial study of theory and/or practice of skills.

Regulatory Exam – Practical Nurse (REx-PN)

As of January 4, 2022, all graduates of PN programs in British Columbia will be required to sit the REx-PN. Previously, graduates sat the *Canadian Practical Nurse Registration Exam* (CPNRE).

Comprehensive information is available at the BCCNM website: [Exam \(REx-PN\) \(bccnm.ca\)](https://www.bccnm.ca). Information includes (this may change and is for information purposes only):

- How to apply (there are several steps).
- Exam format (uses a computer-adaptive test format).
- Fee.
- Locations and dates (available year-round in some locations e.g., Victoria; on specific dates in others e.g., Nanaimo).
- Preparing for the REx-PN (materials are available to help prepare).
- Exam results.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must meet these admission requirements prior to beginning their program:

- Grade 12 graduation, or equivalent*, or mature student status (19 years of age as of program start date)
- Math 11 Foundations with a minimum grade of 60% or equivalent*
- English 12 with a minimum grade of 65% or English First Peoples 12 with a minimum grade of 65%, or equivalent*
- Anatomy and Physiology 12 with a minimum grade of 60%, or equivalent*

DCC also requires applicants to:

- Submit completed DCC application forms

- Complete an entrance interview with a DCC official
- Sign and date consent for a criminal record check under the Criminal Records Review Program (refer to notes under “Criminal Records Checks” below)
- Sign and date the *Requisite Skills and Abilities* document (provides applicants with information that may be helpful in deciding if the program is suited to them)

***Equivalent:**

For detailed information about equivalencies please speak with your DCC Admissions Advisor. Entrance requirements may be met with evidence of secondary and post-secondary studies at an equivalent level, and/or with successful assessment testing.

Applicants must complete this requirement prior to starting the courses listed:

- Human Anatomy and Physiology for Practical Nurses with a minimum grade of 70% must be achieved before taking: Variations in Health 1, Health Promotion 1, Pharmacology 1, Integrated Nursing Practice 1, and Consolidated Practice Experience 1
 - DCC schedules Human Anatomy and Physiology for Practical Nurses prior to the listed courses

English as an Additional Language

Revised: 2023-02-08

As English is the language of study in BC, students must meet English language proficiency at an appropriate level to be accepted into the provincial Practical Nursing program. These requirements can be satisfied through three years of full-time, face-to-face secondary or post-secondary education at an accredited institution where English is the language of instruction and is also one of the country’s official languages. English as a Second Language / Additional Language courses are not included in this three-year calculation. Applicants not meeting this requirement must achieve scores identified in one of the two tests below:

1. International English Language Testing System (IELTS) with minimum scores of:
 - Reading 6.5
 - Listening 7.0 (previously 7.5)
 - Writing 6.5 (previously 7.0)
 - Speaking 7.0
 - Overall Band Score 7.0
2. Canadian English Language Benchmarks Assessments for Nurses (CELBAN) with minimum scores of:
 - Reading 8.0
 - Listening 9.0 (previously 10.0)
 - Writing 7.0
 - Speaking 8.0

In addition to meeting English language requirements for the Practical Nursing program, graduates must be able to demonstrate a level of proficiency required to be performance ready as a condition for registration and practice in British Columbia. See the BCCNM’s website for details.

Transfer Credit

Discovery Community College will consider prior academic work for transfer credit. Transfer credit is granted at the sole discretion of the College. Some important points:

- Applications should be received at least thirty (30) days prior to a program start
- An official (original) transcript will be required
- Other documents will be required

The Director of Education, in collaboration with the Registrar and the Practical Nurse Program Nurse Educator, will determine transfer credit eligibility. College personnel will refer to the DCC Transfer Credit Policy.

PRACTICE EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements are not within the control of Discovery Community College. They may change at any time, including between enrollment in the program and participation in any of the practice experiences that each student must complete. Participants in the program must comply with these requirements as described at the time their practice experience is scheduled.

Applicants must complete these requirements prior to starting Consolidated Practice Experience 1:

- Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) as outlined in the *Practice Education Guidelines 1-6 Orientation – Students*
 - DCC requires completion of CPR level C, and it must be valid until program end date
 - DCC will arrange this workshop during Level 1
- Criminal Record Check under the terms of the Criminal Records Review Act and the Ministry of Justice process for educational institutions (refer to notes under “Criminal Record Check Guidelines” below)
- Immunization as outlined in the *Practice Education Guidelines 1-3 Communicable Disease Prevention* and/or as required by the regional Health Authority and/or by sites of practice education (refer to guidelines below)
- Negative TB skin test or chest x-ray (refer to guidelines below)

The activities that the student will undertake during the work experience are described in the work experience course outline, the instructor guide, and in other resource documents available from the instructor.

Immunization Guidelines

Discovery Community College refers to the *Practice Education Guidelines for BC* for guidance on immunization requirements in Regional Health Authorities. All health care staff, including students and post-secondary institution (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 (BCCDC) (www.bccdc.ca) – on their website is an “immunization manual” in which they post information updates. PHO orders are also posted at <https://www2.gov.bc.ca>. Note that information obtained via these links is for reference purposes only and may change at any time.

The *Practice Education Guideline 1-3 Communicable Disease Prevention* (July 2021) describes in detail the immunizations required for students and on-site PSI educators for experiences in practice education settings, including the requirements for maintaining current records of immunizations. Here is the link:

[PEGs | HSPnet \(hspcanada.net\)](#). Applicants to the PN programs must also be aware that immunization requirements may be changed at any time by Public Health Order (PHO).

All students and on-site PSI educators must meet the PN 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.

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 a practice education experience 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 Practical Nurse program.

Criminal Record Checks Guidelines

Revised: September 2024.

To accomplish the criminal record check (CRC) with the Criminal Record Review Program (CRRP) of BC, DCC will provide the link for the applicant to log in to the CRRP to complete their criminal record check request, as well as instructions to complete the next steps.

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 practice experience. Students who cannot be placed in a practice experience cannot meet the learning outcomes for that experience; therefore, they 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 British Columbia College of Nurses and Midwives (BCCNM). The BCCNM may not register or license 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 Practical Nurse program.

RESOURCES

The required textbooks and e-books for this program will be distributed as needed during the program. The instructor will supply other resources as needed.

Classes will take place either in the virtual online classroom or in a campus classroom. DCC uses Office 365 Teams environment as the online platform. All students will receive a free license and access to student software while enrolled in this program.

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 or tablet. We strongly recommend that students have these devices for in-class learning as well.

The College may provide some technical support to students as needed. Access to DCC computers may be available. Students will be learning in a well-equipped classroom and nursing skills simulation centre.

NOTICE

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.
