



Practical Nursing Program Standard

*The approved program standard for
Practical Nursing program of
instruction leading to an Ontario
College Diploma delivered by Ontario
Colleges of Applied Arts and
Technology (MTCU funding code 51407)*

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities
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I. Introduction

This document is the Program Standard for the Practical Nursing program of instruction leading to an Ontario College Diploma delivered by Ontario colleges of applied arts and technology (MTCU funding code 51407).

Development of System-Wide Program Standards

In 1993, the Government of Ontario initiated program standards development with the objectives of bringing a greater degree of consistency to college programming offered across the province, broadening the focus of college programs to ensure graduates have the skills to be flexible and to continue to learn and adapt, and providing public accountability for the quality and relevance of college programs.

The Program Standards and Evaluation Unit of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities has responsibility for the development, review, and approval of system-wide standards for programs of instruction at Ontario colleges of applied arts and technology.

Program Standards

Program standards apply to all similar programs of instruction offered by colleges across the province. Each program standard for a postsecondary program includes the following elements:

- **Vocational standard** (the vocationally specific learning outcomes which apply to the program of instruction in question),
- **Essential employability skills** (the essential employability skills learning outcomes which apply to all programs of instruction); and
- **General education requirement** (the requirement for general education in postsecondary programs of instruction).

Collectively, these elements outline the essential skills and knowledge that a student must reliably demonstrate in order to graduate from the program.

Individual colleges of applied arts and technology offering the program of instruction determine the specific program structure, delivery methods, and other curriculum matters to be used in assisting students to achieve the outcomes articulated in the standard. Individual colleges also determine whether additional local learning outcomes will be required to reflect specific local needs and/or interests.

The Expression of Program Standards as Vocational Learning Outcomes

Vocational learning outcomes represent culminating demonstrations of learning and achievement. They are not simply a listing of discrete skills, nor broad statements of knowledge and comprehension. In addition, vocational learning outcomes are interrelated and cannot be viewed in isolation of one another. As such, they should be viewed as a comprehensive whole. They describe performances that demonstrate that significant integrated learning by graduates of the program has been achieved and verified.

Expressing standards as vocational learning outcomes ensures consistency in the outcomes for program graduates, while leaving to the discretion of individual colleges curriculum matters such as the specific program structure and delivery methods.

The Presentation of the Vocational Learning Outcomes

The **vocational learning outcome** statements set out the culminating demonstration of learning and achievement that the student must reliably demonstrate before graduation.

The **elements of the performance** for each outcome define and clarify the level and quality of performance necessary to meet the requirements of the vocational learning outcome. However, it is the performance of the vocational learning outcome itself on which students are evaluated. The elements of performance are indicators of the means by which the student may proceed to satisfactory performance of the vocational learning outcome. The elements of performance do not stand alone but rather in reference to the vocational learning outcome of which they form a part.

The Development of a Program Standard

In establishing the standards development initiative, the Government determined that all postsecondary programs of instruction should include vocational skills coupled with a broader set of essential skills. This combination is considered critical to ensuring that college graduates have the skills required to be successful both upon graduation from the college program and throughout their working and personal lives.

A program standard is developed through a broad consultation process involving a range of stakeholders with a direct interest in the program area, including employers, professional associations, universities, secondary schools, and program graduates working in the field, in addition to students, faculty, and administrators at the colleges themselves. It represents a consensus of

participating stakeholders on the essential learning that all program graduates should have achieved.

Updating the Program Standard

The Ministry Colleges and Universities will undertake regular reviews of the vocational learning outcomes for this program to ensure that the Practical Nursing Program Standard remains appropriate and relevant to the needs of students and employers across the Province of Ontario. To confirm that this document is the most up-to-date release, contact the ministry:

pseu@ontario.ca

II. Vocational Standard

All graduates of the Practical Nursing program of instruction have achieved the nine vocational learning outcomes listed in the following pages, in addition to achieving the essential employability skills learning outcomes and meeting the general education requirement.

Preamble

Practical Nursing programs comply with legislation, the practice standards and guidelines of the College of Nurses of Ontario and its *Entry to Practice Competencies for Ontario Registered Practical Nurses (2011)*.

Through achievement of the program standard, the graduates, as entry-level workers, will have the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and professional judgment that are necessary to perform their role within the scope of nursing practice. Entry level practice is with clients* with less acute conditions. The level of acuity* of the client* and the appropriateness of an assignment to an entry level Registered Practical Nurse (RPN) must be established by someone with the experience and competence to make that determination, prior to the Registered Practical Nurse initiating care. New graduates are expected to be competent in the consistent application of the Three-Factor Framework* to ensure they are working within their scope of practice*. They are always expected to recognize their own knowledge and practice boundaries and when and how to seek out the expertise of other nurses and team members and, as appropriate, to consult and/or collaborate regarding proposed client* care.

Practical nursing is a profession with its foundation in caring, nursing theory, health related theory*, including the biopsychosocial sciences, and research. Graduates of Practical Nursing programs carry out nursing interventions* that promote health and rehabilitation; prevent injury and disease; maintain and restore health; and provide palliation. Given the serious and challenging nature of this career, graduates have completed a program that has been informed by the theory, principles, practices, and values needed to practice* as a Registered Practical Nurse. Through continuous learning and experience, graduates will be able to build on this foundation to deliver care to increasingly complex* clients*.

Upon completion of this program, graduates, as part of their nursing practice, work together with clients, families, groups and communities in a variety of practice settings. Graduates demonstrate strong interpersonal and communication skills and respect for the uniqueness of clients* and colleagues. Graduates use reflective practice*, critical-thinking*, problem-solving, and decision-making strategies competently to provide nursing care and to promote optimal health and well-being of individuals, families, groups and communities.

Graduates are expected to act always within the legislated scope of practice* and according to practice standards and expectations.

Graduates demonstrate the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and clinical judgment needed to be competent entry-level practitioners. As independent practitioners, in collaboration* and in consultation* with other nursing professionals and inter-professional team members, graduates demonstrate leadership within their own practice* role. Graduates work with individuals, families, groups, communities (autonomously or in collaboration* with nursing and other team members, as appropriate) to assess, plan, implement, and evaluate outcomes-based nursing care, services, and programs. Nursing, as a regulated health profession, requires registrants to engage in quality assurance practices including reflective practice* and ongoing learning as the basis of their continued competence.

Graduates of practical nursing programs have employment opportunities in practice settings such as hospitals, community, long-term care, residential settings and other health care facilities, services, and programs. In addition, they may find employment opportunities within other organizations and agencies that require nursing competence.

After successful completion of an approved program of practical nursing and of the national registration examination, graduates are eligible for registration by the College of Nurses of Ontario, under the *Nursing Act (1991)*. Following registration by the College of Nurses of Ontario and by maintaining and improving competence and by the payment of annual fees, the registrant is entitled to use the professional designation of Registered Practical Nurse (RPN).

There are opportunities for graduates to pursue further education, qualifications (or professional certification) or degree completion.

* See *Glossary*

Synopsis of the Vocational Learning Outcomes Practical Nursing (Ontario College Diploma)

The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to

- 1. communicate therapeutically with clients* and members of the health care team*.**
- 2. assess clients* across the life span, in a systematic and holistic manner.**
- 3. plan safe and competent nursing care, based upon a thorough analysis of available data and evidence-informed practice* guidelines.**
- 4. select and perform nursing interventions* using clinical judgment, in collaboration* with the client* and, where appropriate, the health care team*, that promote health and well-being, prevent disease and injury, maintain and/or restore health, promote rehabilitation, and/or provide palliation.**
- 5. evaluate the outcomes resulting from all interventions in the nurse-client* interaction and modify the plan of care as required.**
- 6. act equitably and justly with clients* and members of the health care team*.**
- 7. adapt to a variety of health care settings, using different leadership skills and styles as appropriate to each setting.**
- 8. contribute to creating a healthy and safe work environment in a variety of health care settings.**
- 9. practise in a self-regulated*, professional and ethical manner, complying with relevant legislation and with the standards of both the regulatory body and the practice setting to provide safe and competent client* care.**

**See Glossary*

Note: The learning outcomes have been numbered as a point of reference; numbering does not imply prioritization, sequencing, nor weighting of significance.

The Vocational Learning Outcomes

1. *The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to*

communicate therapeutically with clients* and members of the health care team*.

Elements of the Performance

- establish, maintain, and bring closure to nurse-client* relationships, using theory and evidence-informed* practices of therapeutic communication and interpersonal, family, group dynamics and community theory
- observe, monitor and interpret client* communication, applying principles of therapeutic communication and family and group interaction
- distinguish between social interactions and professional communication
- engage in relational practice* appropriately
- adopt a supportive, client*-centered approach
- interact with the client*, incorporating professional intimacy*, and appropriate use of the power inherent in the care provider's role
- adopt relational practice* to establish and maintain partnerships with the client* which support achievement of the client's** expected health outcomes
- use appropriate communication techniques to facilitate clients'* understanding of health-related information
- assist client* to understand how to access and interpret health care information and how to navigate within the health care environment
- use communication and conflict resolution skills appropriately to participate in health care team* interactions
- use terminology, abbreviations and symbols (as approved by the organization or practice setting) accurately in all communication
- document clear, concise, accurate, and timely records using both paper-based and electronic methods, in accordance with relevant legislation, nursing standards and practice setting policies
- maintain all information, records, and files according to relevant legislation, nursing standards and the practice setting's policies
- evaluate effectiveness of therapeutic communication techniques and modify as needed

* See Glossary

2. *The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to*

assess clients* across the life span, in a systematic and holistic manner.

Elements of the Performance

- apply relevant nursing and health-related theory* when assessing clients*, and when interpreting the results of nursing and other health-related assessments
- individualize assessment and data collection strategies and techniques, using relevant research, literature, resources, best practice guidelines and input from experienced colleagues
- assess the impact of the determinants of health* on the client*
- identify population risk factors that pose a threat to the client's* health and well-being
- collect, analyze, document and communicate assessment information from a variety of sources correctly, accurately, autonomously, and, where appropriate, in collaboration* with the inter-professional* team
- assess completeness of data and then collect further assessment data if needed, including the inter-professional* team, if appropriate
- identify actual and potential problems, using critical-thinking* skills, to determine appropriate action

* See Glossary

3. *The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to*

plan safe and competent nursing care, based upon a thorough analysis of available data and evidence-informed practice* guidelines.

Elements of the Performance

- access, assess and use relevant evidence-informed practice* resources and agency policies and procedures to develop a plan of care
- analyze assessment findings to develop a comprehensive plan of care, in collaboration* with the client* and the health care team*, as appropriate
- consider the client's* acuity*, personal and cultural needs, expected outcomes and the availability of resources to establish priorities when providing care
- incorporate the determinants of health* in all aspects of care
- document the plan of care accurately and in a timely manner

* See Glossary

4. *The Graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to*

select and perform nursing interventions* using clinical judgment, in collaboration* with the client* and, where appropriate, the health care team*, that promote health and well-being, prevent disease and injury, maintain and/or restore health, promote rehabilitation, and/or provide palliation.

Elements of the Performance

- identify the intent of the nursing intervention* in relation to promotion of health, prevention of disease and injury, maintenance and restoration of health, promotion of rehabilitation or provision of palliation for the client*
- select and use the appropriate helping method* required by the client's* needs/characteristics
- assess the appropriateness of a nursing intervention* prior to carrying it out, using knowledge of nursing theory, evidence-informed* practice and best practice guidelines
- use time management skills to organize workload, including clustering and carrying out multiple nursing interventions*
- seek out and use resources appropriately and in a self-directed manner
- provide information to the client* about health care resources and the means of access, as required
- provide safe and organized nursing practice, performing a range of nursing interventions* for clients* across the life span and in a variety of practice settings
- perform nursing interventions* consistent with plans of care according to nursing standards, the policies and procedures of the practice setting, best practice guidelines, the determinants of health* and in collaboration* with the client*
- use professional judgment to revise the established plan, where appropriate
- select appropriate technology and use it safely and accurately to perform nursing interventions*
- document client* care and its results clearly, concisely, accurately and in a timely manner
- collaborate with other nursing professionals to attain a healthier population

* See Glossary

5. *The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to*

evaluate the outcomes resulting from all interventions in the nurse-client* interaction and modify the plan of care as required.

Elements of the Performance

- collect data during all phases of the nursing interventions* and evaluate the outcomes achieved
- modify the plan of care based upon the evaluation findings, in collaboration* with the client* and, where appropriate, the interprofessional* team
- communicate changes to the client* and interprofessional* and health care teams* accurately and in a timely manner
- respond appropriately to rapidly changing events in the health care environment

* See Glossary

6. *The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to*

act equitably and justly with clients* and members of the health care team*.

Elements of the Performance

- explain how sociocultural differences impact human behaviour
- assess the impact of individual client's* and team members' cultural beliefs and values on the delivery of care
- respond appropriately to prevailing differences in verbal and non-verbal communications when dealing with diverse* populations
- promote an understanding of beliefs, values, and practices of various cultures
- explain and manage the impact that interactions with the health care system may have on the client*
- adopt therapeutic communication techniques to interact accurately and sensitively with diverse* populations
- use culturally appropriate strategies in the delivery of client* care
- assist the clients* to develop new health behaviours while respecting their values and beliefs
- display sensitivity and respect for the client's* choices based on personal, cultural and/or religious values and beliefs
- advocate for systems and resources that support the practical nurse's ability to provide culturally appropriate care

* See Glossary

7. *The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to*

adapt to a variety of health care settings, using different leadership skills and styles as appropriate to each setting.

Elements of the Performance

- identify and describe the appropriate leadership skills and styles for differing situations in various health care environments
- use the most appropriate leadership skills and style for the presenting scenario
- describe the organization of the health care system at all levels (organizational, municipal, provincial, national and international)
- assess the impact of organizational culture* on nursing practice
- identify and respond to trends in research* and the health care environment that impact client* care
- assess the competence of Unregulated Care Providers (UCP)* to safely perform specific procedures in given situations
- teach, delegate, assign and /or supervise Unregulated Care Providers* as appropriate to the client* situation, in a practice setting
- evaluate care provided by Unregulated Care Providers* in a practice setting
- assess the health care environment for evidence of potential risks and/or sources of harm for both clients* and the health care team* and report if necessary
- contribute to the selection, formulation and/or implementation of strategies to support risk management and harm reduction for the client* and members of the health care team*
- facilitate the empowerment of the client* and, where appropriate, act as a client* advocate
- evaluate changes in the resources and the organization of the health care environment as well as trends in nursing research*, and respond appropriately to provide safe client* care
- evaluate the impact of one's own leadership style on colleagues and clients* and modify style as required
- assess the impact of technology on nursing practice*

* See Glossary

8. *The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to*

contribute to creating a healthy and safe work environment in a variety of health care settings.

Elements of the Performance

- assess the workplace environment for evidence of healthy work practices
- identify indications of increasing stress levels and sources of conflict for staff and clients*
- identify, describe and report workplace bullying*, horizontal violence* and client*-nurse abuse* appropriately
- use conflict resolution strategies appropriately and in a timely manner
- collaborate with the health care team* to create a supportive work environment
- evaluate the use of conflict resolution skills and modify as needed
- identify and present professional development activities to enhance the quality of the workplace environment
- advocate for workplace policies/practice that create a safe work environment

* See Glossary

9. *The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to*

practise in a self-regulated*, professional and ethical manner, complying with relevant legislation and with the standards of both the regulatory body and the practice setting to provide safe and competent client* care.

Elements of the Performance

- explain the role and responsibility of regulatory bodies in protecting the public
- explain the role of professional associations in promoting the profession of nursing (Registered Practical Nurses Association of Ontario; Registered Nurses Association of Ontario)
- explain professional self-regulation* and its implications for the individual practitioner's responsibilities and accountability*
- discuss the implications that legislation, the professional standards, and the practice expectations have on nursing practice
- comply with established standards, policies and procedures, and relevant legislation in the practice setting
- work within one's own scope of practice*, independently and/or collaboratively* as appropriate to the situation
- recognize that the need may arise at any time to seek out consultation*, as required
- accept accountability* for own decisions and actions
- practise within an ethical framework and apply the ethical decision-making model appropriately when ethical distress* and dilemmas arise
- recognize the effect that personal belief systems, cultural/ethical values, and assumptions have on nursing practice*
- promote public recognition and understanding of the role of the practical nurse
- model professionalism in appearance and demeanour and in all interactions with clients*
- assess one's own competence using the Standards of Practice of the College of Nurses of Ontario and in accordance with its Quality Assurance program
- seek out, respond to and provide constructive feedback, as appropriate
- identify and propose professional development activities, based upon self assessment of competency
- recognize and respond appropriately to unclear/inappropriate orders and directives, unprofessional behaviours and/or unsafe situations
- participate in the practice setting's quality improvement processes and advocate for these processes if they are not in existence
- interact with the client* in a manner that displays respect for right to confidentiality, privacy, dignity and self-determination

- support clients'* right to make informed decisions about their plan of care
- describe the roles and responsibilities of each member of the inter-professional* health care team
- work collaboratively* with the inter-professional* team to develop a collegial and evidence-informed* support network
- discuss local, national and global trends and issues that influence nursing practice
- collaborate* with the inter-professional* team to assess the influence that government has on health care and work together to promote a more efficient health care system
- use nursing research to keep current on new trends in nursing practice* and act upon these trends in daily client* care, evaluating outcomes and sharing with members of the inter-professional and health care teams* as appropriate

* See Glossary

Glossary

All terms are referenced to/adapted from the Entry to Practice Competencies for Ontario Registered Practical Nurses as of 2011, College of Nurses of Ontario (September 1999), unless otherwise acknowledged.

Abuse - The misuse of the power imbalance intrinsic in the nurse-client relationship. It can also mean the nurse betraying the client's trust, or violating the respect or professional intimacy inherent in the relationship, when the nurse knew, or ought to have known, the action could cause, or could be reasonably expected to cause, physical, emotional or spiritual harm to the client. Abuse may be verbal, emotional, physical, sexual, financial or take the form of neglect. (Adapted from Practice Standard: Therapeutic Nurse-Client Relationship, Revised 2006, College of Nurses of Ontario, reviewed 2009.)

Accountability - The obligation to answer for the professional, ethical and legal responsibilities of one's activities and duties.

Acuity - The degree of severity of a client's condition and/or situation. (College of Registered Nurses of British Columbia, 2012.)

A client's acuity level is based upon the type and number of nursing interventions required for providing care in a 24-hour period.

Bullying - Any act or verbal comment that could isolate or have negative psychological effects on a person. Bullying usually involves repeated incidents or a pattern of behaviour that is intended to intimidate, offend, degrade or humiliate a particular person or group of people. (Klass, 2006 as quoted in *Practice Standard: Conflict Prevention and Management*, College of Nurses of Ontario, 2009.)

Workplace bullying is repeated, unreasonable or inappropriate behaviour directed towards a worker, or group of workers, that creates a risk to health and safety. (Canadian Mental Health Association, 2012)

Client/s - Individual/s, family/ies, group/s or entire community/ies across the lifespan who require nursing expertise. In some clinical settings, the client may be referred to as a patient or resident.

Collaborate - Work together with one or more members of the health care team who each make a unique contribution to achieving a common goal. Each individual contributes from within the limits of her or his scope of practice.

Community/Unique Community - An organized group of people bound together by ties of social, ethnic, cultural or occupational origin, or by geographic location. A community can be face-to-face or virtual.

Complexity - The degree to which a client's condition and/or situation is characterized or influenced by a range of variables (e.g., multiple medical diagnoses, impaired decision-making ability, challenging family dynamics). (College of Registered Nurses of British Columbia, 2011)

The College of Nurses of Ontario includes complexity in the Three Factor Framework:

- the degree to which a client's condition and care requirements are identifiable and established
- the sum of the variables influencing a client's current health status, and
- the variability of a client's condition or care requirements.

(RN and RPN Practice: The Client, the Nurse and the Environment, 2011.)

Consultation - The act or an instance of seeking information or advice from a reliable resource (person, policy, guideline, etc.)

Critical Thinking - Reasoning in which one analyzes the use of language, formulates problems, clarifies and explains assumptions, weighs evidences, evaluates conclusions, discriminates between pros and cons, and seeks to justify those facts and values, which results in credible beliefs and actions. Critical thinking is performed by the entry-level RPN at a level that is consistent with her or his educational preparation and scope of practice.

Determinants of Health - The complex interaction among social and economic factors, the physical environment and individual behaviour. These factors do not exist in isolation from one another, but rather combine to influence health status. The key determinants are income and social status, social support networks, education, employment or working conditions, social environments, physical environments, personal health practices and coping skills, healthy child development, biology and genetic endowment, health services, gender and culture.

Diversity/Diverse - The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that each individual is unique, and recognizes individual differences. These can be along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs or other ideologies. It is the exploration of these differences in a safe, positive and nurturing environment. It is about understanding one another and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity contained within each individual.

Evidence Informed Practice - Practice that is based on successful strategies that improve client outcomes and are derived from a combination of various sources of evidence, including client perspective, research, national guidelines, policies, consensus statements, expert opinion and quality improvement data.

The identification, evaluation and application of nursing experience and current research to guide practice decisions. (College of Licensed Practical Nurses of British Columbia, *Professional Standards of Practice for Licensed Practical Nurses, 2010*).

A more inclusive view of 'evidence' has prompted the use of the term evidence - 'informed' rather than evidence-'based'. Evidence may be contextually bound and also individually interpreted and particularized within a certain context. Thus research evidence is not static. (Rycroft-Malone, J., "Evidence-informed practice: from individual to context". *Journal of Nursing Management* 16, 404-408, 2008.)

Ethical Distress - A feeling of discomfort that arises in situations where nurses know or believe they know the right thing to do but for various reasons (including fear or circumstances beyond their control) do not or cannot take the right action or prevent a particular harm. (*Code of Ethics for Registered Nurses, Canadian Nurses' Association, 2008*.)

Health Care Team - An inter-professional group of individuals who are either directly or indirectly involved in a client's care. Depending on the practice environment, the composition of the team will vary. The team includes the client and the family. (College of Nurses of Ontario, *RN and RPN Practice: The Client, the Nurse and the Environment, 2011*.)

Health related theory - The foundational knowledge for practical nursing that is based on nursing theories and the biopsychosocial sciences. Depending on the situation, the entry-level practical nurse may use health related theory independently, collaboratively, or in consultation to consider, frame, implement, and evaluate client outcomes and nursing care. (Adapted from College of Nurses of Ontario, 2011.)

Helping Method - A term used to describe the roles of the nurse - including collecting data and evaluating the accomplishment of client care objectives, supporting the client, encouraging client expression of discomfort, questioning personal convictions, teaching and educating, referring clients to other professionals, encouraging the client if necessary, advocating for the client and promoting a safe environment.

Dorothea Orem (1991) identifies five (5) helping methods: acting for and doing for others, guiding others, supporting another, providing an environment that promotes personal development in relation to meeting future health demands and teaching another.

Holistic - The collection, organization and analysis of client information as an integrated whole. A holistic approach considers the client's biopsychosocial, cognitive, cultural, developmental, emotional, and spiritual dimensions in addition to taking into account the client's health, determinants of health, values, beliefs and goals. (Adapted from Canadian Nurses' Association, 2011 and College of Nurses of Ontario, 2011.)

Horizontal Violence - Interpersonal conflict among colleagues that includes antagonistic behaviour such as gossiping, criticism, innuendo, scapegoating, undermining, intimidation, passive aggression, withholding information, insubordination, bullying, and verbal and physical aggression. It has also been called lateral violence. (Baltimore, 2006, as quoted in *Practice Standard: Conflict Prevention and Management*, College of Nurses of Ontario, 2009.)

Interprofessional - The integration of concepts across different professions. An inter-professional team is a team of people with education in varying fields; such teams are common in complex environments such as health care (e.g., social workers, dieticians, nurses, physicians).

Leadership - Process of influencing people to accomplish common goals. The attributes of leadership include self-awareness, commitment to individual growth, ethical values and beliefs, presence, reflection and foresight, advocacy, integrity, intellectual energy, being involved, being open to new ideas, having confidence in one's capabilities, and a willingness to make an effort to guide and motivate others. Leadership is not limited to formal leadership roles.

Nursing Interventions - The safe and competent performance of actions, treatments, and techniques by a practical nurse that are directed toward supporting clients' achievement of their health outcomes. These include interventions that address clients' health and wellness; self-care; safety; function and mobility; management of airway, nutrition, elimination, fluid and electrolytes, infusion therapy, medication, wounds; aseptic technique; therapeutic relationships; mental health; and promotion of health. Nursing interventions are performed by entry-level practical nurses at a level consistent with their educational preparation. (Adapted from materials from College of Nurses 2011.)

Nursing Practice - The promotion of health and the assessment of, the provision of, care for, and the treatment of, health conditions by supportive, preventive, therapeutic, palliative and rehabilitative means in order to attain or maintain optimal function.
(*Nursing Act, 1991.*)

Organizational culture - The character of the organization. Culture is comprised of the assumptions, values, norms and tangible signs (artifacts) of organization members and their behaviours.

Partnership - Refers to situations in which the nurse works with the client and other members of the health care team to achieve specific health outcomes for the client. Partnership implies consensus-building in the determination of these outcomes.

Professional Intimacy - Professional intimacy is inherent in the type of care and services that nurses provide. It may relate to the physical activities, such as bathing, that nurses perform for, and with, the client that create closeness. Professional intimacy can also involve psychological, spiritual and social elements that are identified in the plan of care. Access to the client's personal information, within the meaning of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, also contributes to professional intimacy. (College of Nurses of Ontario, *Therapeutic Nurse Client Relationship*, 2006.)

Reflective Practice - A process involving assessing personal ability to carry out nursing care; obtaining peer input to determine strengths and areas for improvement; and developing learning goals. (Adapted from College of Nurses of Ontario, *Quality Assurance Program*, 2012.)

Relational Practice - An inquiry that is guided by conscious participation with clients using a number of relational skills including listening, questioning, empathy, mutuality, reciprocity, self-observation, reflection and a sensitivity to emotional contexts. Relational practice encompasses therapeutic nurse-client relationships and relationships among health care providers.

Research - Systematic inquiry that uses orderly scientific methods to answer questions or solve problems. Conducting research involves formulating a research question, designing the research project, implementing the project, and analyzing and presenting results. A nurse who assists in a research project by collecting information/data may be "participating" in research, but is not "conducting" research.

Safety - Freedom from danger, harm or risks; freedom from psychological and/or physical harm. Within the health care system, safety refers to both staff and patient safety. Client* safety is the state of continuously working toward the avoidance, management and treatment of unsafe acts. Staff safety includes, but is not limited to, prevention of musculoskeletal injury, prevention and management of aggressive behaviour, and infection control. Client* and staff safety can only occur within a supportive and non-blaming environment that looks at systems issues rather than blames individuals. The health and well-being of all clients and staff is a priority in a culture of safety environment.

Scope of practice - The scope of practice for nursing in Ontario is set out in the *Nursing Act, 1991*. "The practice of nursing is the promotion of health and the assessment of, the provision of care for, and the treatment of health conditions by supportive, preventive, therapeutic, rehabilitative and palliative means in order

to attain or maintain optimal function.”

Self Regulation - The individual professional assumes primary responsibility and accountability for practicing in accordance with the standards of practice and ethics established by the regulatory body. (College of Registered Nurses of British Columbia, 2012.)

The College of Nurses of Ontario engages in self regulation by establishing standards, setting criteria for becoming a nurse in Ontario, administering a Quality Assurance program and enforcing standards of practice and conduct.

Therapeutic Relationship - A professional association between the practical nurse and the client that contributes to the client's* well-being, and provides for the client's* needs being first and foremost. The relationship is based on trust, respect and intimacy and requires the appropriate use of the power inherent in the health care provider's role. The professional relationship between RPNs and their clients is based on a recognition that clients (or their alternative decision-makers) are in the best position to make decisions about their lives when they are active and informed participants in the decision-making process.

Three Factor Framework - Tool created by the College of Nurses of Ontario to assist nurses make effective decisions about which nursing category (RN or RPN) to match with client needs. The three factors are of equal importance: the client, the nurse and the environment. (Adapted from College of Nurses of Ontario, 2011. *RN and RPN Practice: The Client, the Nurse and the Environment.*)

Unregulated care provider (UCP) - Paid providers who are neither registered nor licensed by a regulatory body. They have no legally defined scope of practice. Unregulated care providers do not have mandatory education or practice standards. Unregulated care providers include, but are not limited to, personal support workers, resident care attendants, home support workers, mental health workers, teaching assistants and community health representatives. They are accountable to their employers.

The College of Nurses of Ontario also considers family and members of the client's household as UCPs.

III. Essential Employability Skills

All graduates of the Practical Nursing program of instruction have reliably demonstrated the essential employability skills learning outcomes listed on the following pages, in addition to achieving the vocational learning outcomes and meeting the general education requirement.

Context

Essential Employability Skills (EES) are skills that, regardless of a student's program or discipline, are critical for success in the workplace, in day-to-day living, and for lifelong learning.

The teaching and attainment of these EES for students in, and graduates from, Ontario's colleges of applied arts and technology are anchored in a set of three fundamental assumptions:

- these skills are important for every adult to function successfully in society today;
- our colleges are well equipped and well positioned to prepare graduates with these skills;
- these skills are equally valuable for all graduates, regardless of the level of their credential, whether they pursue a career path, or they pursue further education.

Skill Categories

To capture these skills, the following six categories define the essential areas where graduates must demonstrate skills and knowledge.

- Communication
- Numeracy
- Critical Thinking & Problem Solving
- Information Management
- Interpersonal
- Personal

Application and Implementation

In each of the six skill categories, there are a number of defining skills, or sub skills, identified to further articulate the requisite skills identified in the main skill categories. The following chart illustrates the relationship between the skill categories, the defining skills within the categories, and learning outcomes to be

achieved by graduates from all postsecondary programs of instruction that lead to an Ontario College credential.

EES may be embedded in General Education or vocational courses, or developed through discrete courses. However these skills are developed, all graduates with Ontario College credentials must be able to reliably demonstrate the essential skills required in each of the six categories.

SKILL CATEGORY	DEFINING SKILLS: Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates:	LEARNING OUTCOMES: The levels of achievement required by graduates. <i>The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to:</i>
COMMUNICATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading • Writing • Speaking • Listening • Presenting • Visual literacy 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>communicate clearly, concisely and correctly in the written, spoken, and visual form that fulfills the purpose and meets the needs of the audience.</i> 2. <i>respond to written, spoken, or visual messages in a manner that ensures effective communication.</i>
NUMERACY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding and applying mathematical concepts and reasoning • Analyzing and using numerical data • Conceptualizing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. <i>execute mathematical operations accurately.</i>
CRITICAL THINKING & PROBLEM SOLVING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyzing • Synthesizing • Evaluating • Decision making • Creative and innovative thinking 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. <i>apply a systematic approach to solve problems.</i> 5. <i>use a variety of thinking skills to anticipate and solve problems.</i>

SKILL CATEGORY	DEFINING SKILLS: Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates:	LEARNING OUTCOMES: The levels of achievement required by graduates. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to:
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gathering and managing information • Selecting and using appropriate tools and technology for a task or a project • Computer literacy • Internet skills 	<p>6. <i>locate, select, organize, and document information using appropriate technology and information systems.</i></p> <p>7. <i>analyze, evaluate, and apply relevant information from a variety of sources.</i></p>
INTERPERSONAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team work • Relationship management • Conflict resolution • Leadership • Networking 	<p>8. <i>show respect for the diverse opinions, values, belief systems, and contributions of others.</i></p> <p>9. <i>interact with others in groups or teams in ways that contribute to effective working relationships and the achievement of goals.</i></p>
PERSONAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing self • Managing change and being flexible and adaptable • Engaging in reflective practices • Demonstrating personal responsibility 	<p>10. <i>manage the use of time and other resources to complete projects.</i></p> <p>11. <i>take responsibility for one's own actions, decisions, and consequences.</i></p>

IV. General Education Requirement

All graduates of the Practical Nursing program have met the general education requirement described on the following pages, in addition to achieving the vocational and essential employability skills learning outcomes.

Requirement

The General Education Requirement for programs of instruction is stipulated in the Credentials Framework (Appendix A in the Minister's Binding Policy Directive *Framework for Programs of Instruction*).

For certificate programs: While the inclusion of General Education is locally determined for programs of instruction leading to either a college certificate or on Ontario College Certificate, it is recommended that graduate of the Ontario College Certificate programs have been engaged in learning that incorporates some breadth beyond the vocational field of study.

In programs of instruction leading to either an Ontario College Diploma or an Ontario College Advanced Diploma, it is required that graduates have been engaged in learning that exposes them to at least one discipline outside their main field of study and increases their awareness of the society and culture in which they live and work. This will typically be accomplished by students taking 3 to 5 courses (or the equivalent) designed discretely and separately from vocational learning opportunities.

This general education learning would normally be delivered using a combination of required and elective processes.

Purpose

The purpose of General Education in the Ontario college system is to contribute to the development of citizens who are conscious of the diversity, complexity, and richness of the human experience; who are able to establish meaning through this consciousness; and, who, as a result, are able to contribute thoughtfully, creatively, and positively to the society in which they live and work.

General Education strengthens student's essential employability skills, such as critical analysis, problem solving, and communication, in the context of an exploration of topics with broad-based personal and/or societal importance.

Themes

The themes listed below will be used to provide direction to colleges in the development and identification of courses that are designed to fulfill the General Education Requirement for programs of instructions.

Each theme provides a statement of Rationale and offers suggestions related to more specific topic areas that could be explored within each area. These suggestions are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive. They are included to provide guidance regarding the nature and scope of content that would be judged as meeting the intent and overall goals of General Education.

1. Arts in Society:

Rationale:

The capacity of a person to recognize and evaluate artistic and creative achievements is useful in many aspects of his/her life. Since artistic expression is a fundamentally human activity, which both reflects and anticipates developments in the larger culture, its study will enhance the student's cultural and self-awareness.

Content:

Courses in this area should provide students with an understanding of the importance of visual and creative arts in human affairs, of the artist's and writer's perceptions of the world and the means by which those perceptions are translated into the language of literature and artistic expression. They will also provide an appreciation of the aesthetic values used in examining works of art and possibly, a direct experience in expressing perceptions in an artistic medium.

2. Civic Life:

Rationale:

In order for individuals to live responsibly and to reach their potential as individuals and as citizens of society, they need to understand the patterns of human relationships that underlie the orderly interactions of a society's various structural units. Informed people will have knowledge of the meaning of civic life in relation to diverse communities at the local, national, and global level, and an awareness of international issues and the effects of these on Canada, and Canada's place in the international community.

Content:

Courses in this area should provide students with an understanding of the meaning of freedoms, rights, and participation in community and public life, in addition to a working knowledge of the structure and function of various levels of government (municipal, provincial, national) in Canada and/or in an international context. They may also provide an historical understanding of major political

issues affecting relations between the various levels of government in Canada and their constituents.

3. Social and Cultural Understanding:

Rationale:

Knowledge of the patterns and precedents of the past provide the means for a person to gain an awareness of his or her place in contemporary culture and society. In addition to this awareness, students will acquire a sense of the main currents of their culture and that of other cultures over an extended period of time in order to link personal history to the broader study of culture.

Content:

Courses in this area are those that deal broadly with major social and cultural themes. These courses may also stress the nature and validity of historical evidence and the variety of historical interpretation of events. Courses will provide the students with a view and understanding of the impact of cultural, social, ethnic, or linguistic characteristics.

4. Personal Understanding:

Rationale:

Educated people are equipped for life-long understanding and development of themselves as integrated physiological and psychological entities. They are aware of the ideal need to be fully functioning persons: mentally, physically, emotionally, socially, spiritually, and vocationally.

Content:

Courses in this area will focus on understanding the individual: his or her evolution; situation; relationship with others; place in the environment and universe; achievements and problems; and his or her meaning and purpose. They will also allow students the opportunity to study institutionalized human social behaviour in a systematic way. Courses fulfilling this requirement may be oriented to the study of the individual within a variety of contexts.

5. Science and Technology:

Rationale:

Matter and energy are universal concepts in science, forming a basis for understanding the interactions that occur in living and non-living systems in our universe. Study in this area provides an understanding of the behaviour of matter that provides a foundation for further scientific study and the creation of broader understanding about natural phenomena.

Similarly, the various applications and developments in the area of technology have an increasing impact on all aspects of human endeavour and have

numerous social, economic, and philosophical implications. For example, the operation of computers to process data at high speed has invoked an interaction between machines and the human mind that is unique in human history. This development and other technological developments have a powerful impact on how we deal with many of the complex questions in our society.

Content:

Courses in this area should stress scientific inquiry and deal with basic or fundamental questions of science rather than applied ones. They may be formulated from traditional basic courses in such areas of study as biology, chemistry, physics, astronomy, geology, or agriculture. As well, courses related to understanding the role and functions of computers (e.g., data management and information processing), and assorted computer-related technologies, should be offered in a non-applied manner to provide students with an opportunity to explore the impact of these concepts and practices on their lives.