



Entry-Level Competencies (ELCs) for the Practice of Registered Nurses - July 24 2018

Background

In 2017 the Canadian Council of Registered Nurse Regulators (CCRNRR) initiated the revisions of the Entry-Level Competencies of Registered Nurses in Canada (the “ELCs”). This initiative was led by a working group comprised of 11 jurisdictions representing registered nurse (RN) regulators in Canada. The ELCs are revised every five years to ensure inter-jurisdictional consistency and practice relevance. Consistency between jurisdictions supports the workforce mobility requirements of the Canadian Free Trade Agreement. Revisions are based on the results of an environmental scan, literature reviews and stakeholder consultation. The regulatory body in each jurisdiction validates and approves the ELCs and confirms they are consistent with Provincial/Territorial legislation.

Each ELC in this context is defined as *“an observable ability of a registered nurse at entry-level that integrates the knowledge, skills, abilities, and judgment required to practice nursing safely and ethically.”*

ELCs are used by regulatory bodies for a number of purposes including but not limited to:

- Academic program approval/recognition
- Assessment of internationally educated applicants
- Assessment of applicants for the purpose of re-entry into the profession
- Input into the content and scope of entry-to-practice exams
- Practice advice/guidance to clinicians
- Reference for professional conduct matters

The Context of Entry-Level Registered Nursing Practice

The design and application of the listed competencies is at entry-to-practice. Entry-level RNs are at the point of initial registration or licensure, following graduation from an approved nursing education program. Their beginning practice draws on a theoretical and experiential knowledge base that has been shaped by specific experiences during their education program. They are health care team members who accept responsibility and demonstrate accountability for their practice and in particular, recognize their limitations, ask questions, exercise professional judgment, and determine when consultation is required.

RN practice is dynamic and evolving; the ELCs establish the foundation for the novice to expert continuum. Entry-to-practice represents the time when learners become clinicians. Further development of RN practice is facilitated through education, collaboration and mentorship. RNs are expected to be able to apply the principles of all ELCs throughout their career.



Entry-level RNs realize the importance of identifying what they know and do not know, what their learning gaps may be, and how and where to access available resources. They display initiative, a beginning confidence, and self-awareness in taking responsibility for their decisions in the care they provide.

It is understood that these competencies are expected not only of entry-level RNs, but that all RNs should demonstrate at least these competencies throughout their careers. However, it is unrealistic to expect entry-level RNs to function at the level of practice of experienced RNs. They are aware of and work within the registered nursing scope of practice, and they appropriately seek guidance when they encounter situations outside of their ability.

All groups involved in the provision of health care have a shared responsibility to create and maintain practice environments that support RNs in providing safe, ethical, and quality health care. The practice environment influences the transition and consolidation of RN practice and the development of further competence.

Overarching Principles

The following overarching principles apply to the education and practice of entry-level registered nurses:

1. Requisite skills and abilities are required to attain the entry-level RN competencies.
2. The entry-level RN is prepared as a generalist to practice safely, competently, compassionately, and ethically:
 - in situations of health and illness,
 - with all people across the lifespan,
 - with all recipients of care: individuals, families, groups, communities, and populations, and
 - across diverse practice settings.
3. The client is the central focus of RN practice and leads the process of decision making related to care. Client-centered care reflects that people are at the center of decisions about their health and seeing them as experts, working alongside RNs to achieve optimal health outcomes.
4. The entry-level RN has a strong foundation in nursing theory, concepts and knowledge, health and sciences, humanities, research, and ethics from education at the baccalaureate level.
5. The entry-level RN practices autonomously within the scope of practice, practice standards and relevant legislation in their jurisdiction.
6. In the context of this document “client” refers to a person, patient or resident who benefits from the recipient of registered nursing care and, where the context requires, includes a substitute decision maker for the recipient of nursing services. A client may be an individual, a family, group, community or population.

Structure

The document is organized thematically per a roles-based format. There are a total of 95 competencies grouped thematically under 9 headings:



1. Clinician
2. Communicator
3. Collaborator
4. Advocate
5. Educator
6. Leader
7. Professional
8. Scholar
9. Coordinator



Integration of all nine roles enables the entry-level RN to provide safe, effective, competent, compassionate, and ethical nursing care in any practice setting. RNs are expected to draw on all ELCs in day-to-day practice.



Some concepts are relevant to multiple roles. For the sake of clarity and to avoid unnecessary repetition, certain key concepts (e.g. client centred, evidence-informed, etc.) are mentioned once and assumed to apply to all competencies.

Terms in blue text are defined in the Glossary at the end of the document.

DRAFT



CCRN Competencies July 23 2018

1. Clinician

As Clinicians, registered nurses apply unique knowledge, skills, judgement and professional values to provide safe, competent, compassionate, and evidence-informed nursing care across the lifespan in response to client needs.

Number	Competency
1.1	Provides safe, ethical, competent , compassionate , client-centred and evidence-informed nursing care across the lifespan in response to client needs.
1.2	Conducts a holistic nursing assessment to collect comprehensive information on client health status.
1.3	Uses principles of trauma-informed care .
1.4	Analyses and interprets data obtained in client assessment to inform ongoing decision making about client health status.
1.5	Develops plans of care using critical inquiry to support professional judgment and reasoned decision-making to develop health care plans.
1.6	Evaluates effectiveness of plan of care and modifies accordingly.
1.7	Anticipates actual and potential health risks and possible unintended outcomes.
1.8	Recognizes and responds immediately when client safety is affected.
1.9	Recognizes and responds immediately when client's condition is deteriorating
1.10	Prepares clients for and performs procedures , treatments, and follow up care.
1.11	Applies knowledge of pharmacology and principles of safe medication practice.
1.12	Implements evidence-informed practices of pain prevention, manages client's pain, and provides comfort through pharmacological and non-pharmacological interventions.
1.13	Implements therapeutic nursing interventions that contribute to the care and needs of the client .
1.14	Provides nursing care to meet palliative and end-of-life care needs, which may include medical assistance in dying (MAiD) .
1.15	Incorporates principles of harm reduction with respect to substance use and misuse into plans of care .
1.16	Provides recovery oriented nursing care in partnership with clients who experience a mental health condition and/or addiction, considering the effects of stigma.
1.17	Incorporates mental health promotion and suicide prevention approaches when providing nursing care.
1.18	Incorporates knowledge from the health sciences, nursing science, social sciences, pharmacology, and humanities into plans of care .
1.19	Uses knowledge about current and emerging health care issues and trends to optimize client health outcomes.
1.20	Uses knowledge of the impact of evidence-informed registered nursing practice on client health outcomes.
1.21	Uses effective strategies to prevent, de-escalate, and manage a client's disruptive, aggressive, or violent behaviour.
1.22	Uses strategies to promote wellness, to prevent illness, and to minimize disease and injury in clients , self, and others.



Number	Competency
1.23	Adapts practice in response to the spiritual beliefs and cultural practices of clients .
1.24	Implements evidence-informed practices for infection prevention and control.

2 Communicator

Registered nurses are communicators who use a variety of strategies and relevant technologies to create and maintain professional relationships, share information, and foster therapeutic environments.

Number	Competency
2.1	Introduces self to clients and health care team members by first and last name, and professional designation (protected title).
2.2	Uses evidence-informed communication skills to build trusting, compassionate , and therapeutic relationships with clients .
2.3	Uses conflict transformation strategies to promote healthy relationships and optimal client outcomes.
2.4	Uses information and communication technologies (ICTs) to support communication.
2.5	Communicates effectively in complex and rapidly changing situations.
2.6	Documents and reports clients' plans of care clearly, concisely, accurately, and in a timely manner.

3 Collaborator

Registered nurses are collaborators who play an integral role in the health care team partnership.

Number	Competency
3.1	Demonstrates collaborative professional relationships.
3.2	Initiates collaboration to support care planning and safe, continuous transitions from one health care facility to another, or to residential, community or home and self-care.
3.3	Determines their own professional and interprofessional role within the team by considering the roles, responsibilities, and the scope of practice of others.
3.4	Applies knowledge about the scopes of practice of each regulated nursing designation to strengthen intraprofessional collaboration that enhances contributions to client health and well-being.
3.5	Contributes to health care team functioning by applying group communication theory, principles, and group process skills.



4 Advocate

Registered nurses are advocates who support clients to voice their needs to achieve optimal health outcomes. Registered nurses also support clients who cannot advocate for themselves.

Number	Competency
4.1	Recognizes and takes action in situations where client safety is actually or potentially compromised.
4.2	Resolves questions about unclear orders, decisions, actions, or treatment.
4.3	Advocates for the use of Indigenous health knowledge and healing practices in collaboration with Indigenous healers and Elders, where requested by Indigenous clients , consistent with the <i>Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada</i> .
4.4	Advocates for health equity for all, particularly for vulnerable and/or diverse clients and populations.
4.5	Supports environmentally responsible practice .
4.6	Advocates for safe, competent, compassionate and ethical care for clients .
4.7	Supports and empowers clients in making informed decisions about their health care, and respects their decisions.
4.8	Supports healthy public policy and principles of social justice .
4.9	Assesses that clients have an understanding and ability to be an active participant in their own care, and facilitates appropriate strategies for clients who are unable to be fully involved.
4.10	Advocates for client's rights and ensures informed consent, guided by professional code of ethics, professional standards, and legal obligations.
4.11	Uses knowledge of population health, determinants of health, primary health care, and health promotion to achieve health equity.
4.12	Assesses client's understanding of informed consent, and implements actions when client is unable to provide informed consent.
4.13	Demonstrates knowledge of a substitute decision maker's role in providing informed consent and decision making for client care.
4.14	Uses knowledge of health disparities and inequities to optimize health outcomes for all clients .

5 Educator

Registered nurses are educators who identify learning needs with clients and apply a broad range of educational strategies towards achieving optimal health outcomes.

Number	Competency
5.1	Develops an education plan with the client and team to address learning needs.
5.2	Applies strategies to optimize client health literacy .



Number	Competency
5.3	Selects, develops, and uses relevant teaching and learning theories and strategies to address diverse clients and contexts, including lifespan, family, cultural, and considerations.
5.4	Evaluates effectiveness of health teaching and revises education plan if necessary.
5.5	Assists clients to access, review, and evaluate information they retrieve using information and communication technologies (ICTs) .

6 Leader

Registered nurses are leaders who influence and inspire others to achieve optimal health outcomes for all.

Number	Competency
6.1	Acquires knowledge and responds to the <i>Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada</i> .
6.2	Integrates continuous quality improvement principles and activities into nursing practice.
6.3	Participates in developing innovative client-centred care models.
6.4	Recognizes the impact of organizational culture on the provision of health care and acts to enhance the quality of a professional and safe practice environment.
6.5	Participates in creating and maintaining a healthy, respectful, and psychologically safe workplace.
6.6	Demonstrates self-awareness through reflective practice and solicitation of feedback.
6.7	Takes action to support culturally safe practice environments.
6.8	Uses and allocates resources wisely.
6.9	Provides constructive feedback to promote professional growth of other members of the health care team .
6.10	Demonstrates knowledge of the structure of the health care system at all levels and its impact on client care and professional practice.
6.11	Adapts practice to meet client care needs within a continually changing health care system.

7 Professional

Registered nurses are professionals who are committed to the health and well-being of clients. Registered nurses uphold the profession's standards of practice and ethical values and are accountable to the public and the profession.

Number	Competency
7.1	Demonstrates accountability , accepts responsibility, and seeks assistance as necessary for decisions and actions within the legislated scope of practice .
7.2	Demonstrates a professional presence , and confidence, honesty, integrity, and respect in all interactions.



Number	Competency
7.3	Exercises professional judgment when using agency policies and procedures, or when practising in their absence.
7.4	Maintains client privacy, confidentiality, and security by complying with legal, ethical, and organizational policies and standards.
7.5	Identifies the influence of personal values, beliefs, and positional power on clients and the health care team and acts to reduce bias and influences.
7.6	Establishes and maintains professional boundaries with clients and the health care team .
7.7	Identifies and addresses ethical (moral) issues using ethical reasoning, seeking support when necessary.
7.8	Demonstrates professional judgment to ensure information and communication technologies (ICTs) are used in a way that maintains public trust in the profession.
7.9	Adheres to the self-regulatory requirements of jurisdictional legislation to protect the public by <ol style="list-style-type: none"> assessing own practice and individual competence to identify learning needs. developing a learning plan using a variety of sources seeking and using new knowledge that may enhance, support, or influence competence in practice Implementing and evaluating the effectiveness of the learning plan and developing future learning plans to maintain and enhance competence as a registered nurse.
7.10	Demonstrates fitness to practice ¹ .
7.11	Adheres to the duty to report . ²
7.12	Distinguishes between the mandates of regulatory bodies, professional associations, and unions.
7.13	Recognizes, acts on, and reports, harmful incidences , near misses , and no harm incidences .
7.14	Recognizes, acts on, and reports actual and potential workplace and occupational safety risks.

8 Scholar

Registered nurses are scholars who demonstrate a lifelong commitment to excellence in practice through continuous learning, applying evidence to practice, and supporting research activities.

Number	Competency
8.1	Uses best evidence to make informed decisions.
8.2	Translates knowledge from all sources into professional practice.

¹ Individual jurisdictions to modify/delete to align with use of “fitness to practice” in their jurisdiction.

² Individual jurisdictions to modify/delete to align with use of “duty to report” in their jurisdiction.



Number	Competency
8.3	Engages in self-reflection to interact from a place of cultural humility and create culturally safe environments where clients perceive respect for their unique health care practices, preferences, and decisions.
8.4	Engages in activities to strengthen competence in nursing informatics .
8.5	Identifies and analyzes emerging health care evidence and technologies that may change, enhance, or support the delivery of care.
8.6	Supports research activities and develops own research skills .
8.7	Engages in practices that contribute to lifelong learning.

9 Coordinator

Registered nurses coordinate point-of-care health service delivery with clients, the health care team, and other sectors to ensure continuous, safe care.

Number	Competency
9.1	Consults with clients and health care team members to make ongoing adjustments required by changes in the availability of services or client health status.
9.2	Monitors client care to help ensure needed services happen at the right time and in the correct sequence.
9.3	Organizes own workload, assigns nursing care, sets priorities, and demonstrates effective time management skills
9.4	Delegates ³ within registered nurse scope of practice and evaluates client care delegated to others.
9.5	Makes decisions to manage client transfers within health care facilities.
9.6	Supports clients to navigate health care delivery systems and those of other sectors for services to optimize health and well-being.
9.7	Prepares clients for transitions in care.
9.8	Prepares clients for discharge.
9.9	Applies knowledge of epidemiology, and emerging community and global health issues to participate in emergency management measures, including prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.

³ Individual jurisdictions to modify/delete to align with use of “delegation” in their jurisdiction.