

## PRACTICE STANDARD FOR BCCNM NURSES

# Use of Title

Practice Standards set out requirements related to specific aspects of nurses' practice. They link with other standards, policies and bylaws of the BC College of Nurses and Midwives, and all legislation relevant to nursing practice.

The use of the title “nurse” carries particular meaning and conveys a level of knowledge and skill in managing the health care of a client. Reserved titles are restricted by the *Health Professions Act* for use only by the registrants of a regulatory college. The *Health Professions Act, Nurses (Licensed Practical) Regulation, Nurses (Registered) and Nurse Practitioners Regulation, Nurses (Registered Psychiatric) Regulation*, and BCCNM Bylaws specify which titles may be used by individuals who are practising practical nursing, nursing (including nurse practitioners), and psychiatric nursing. Only individuals who are registered with BCCNM may use a reserved nursing title in B.C. and the permission to do so is granted when you register with BCCNM.

Employers provide the organizational supports and systems necessary for nurses to meet the BCCNM Standards of Practice.

## Principles

1. Registrants<sup>1</sup> use their title(s) in ways that comply with:
  - a. the Health Professions Act;
  - b. the applicable nursing regulation<sup>2</sup>;
  - c. BCCNM Bylaws;

---

1 In this standard, the terms “nurse” and “registrant” refer to all BCCNM nursing registrants regardless of status, including: licensed practical nurses, nurse practitioners, registered nurses, registered psychiatric nurses, licensed graduate nurses, employed student nurses, and employed student psychiatric nurses.

2 These are the Nurses (Licensed Practical) Regulation, the Nurses (Registered) and Nurse Practitioner Regulation, and the Nurses (Registered Psychiatric) Regulation.

- d. BCCNM Standards of Practice.
2. When registrants document care or services provided to a client, they identify their:
    - a. name;
    - b. title that most specifically reflects their nursing designation;
    - c. certification if they are on BCCNM's certified practice register [e.g., Registered Nurse (Certified), RN(C)].
  3. Nurses identify themselves by title to clients and to members of the health care team and others.
  4. Nurses use only the reserved title(s) that they are registered for, regardless of their role or job description in the work setting.
  5. Nurses who hold multiple designations with BCCNM use the title associated with their job description and the role in which they are practising.
  6. Licensed practical nurses who hold practising registration with BCCNM use the titles licensed practical nurse, practical nurse, LPN, or nurse.
  7. Nurse practitioners who hold practising registration with BCCNM use the titles nurse practitioner, registered nurse practitioner, NP, or nurse. Nurse practitioners may also use RN or RN-NP as appropriate.
  8. Nurse practitioners indicate their stream of practice by using "NP (F)" or "NP (Family)"; "NP (A)" or "NP (Adult)"; or "NP (Ped)"<sup>3</sup> or "NP (Pediatric)", as appropriate, when documenting care or services to clients, including prescriptions, tests, and referrals.
  9. Registered nurses who hold practising registration with BCCNM use the titles registered nurse, RN, or nurse.
  10. Registered nurses or nurse practitioners with BCCNM-certified practice designations and working in a certified practice role may use the titles Registered Nurse (Certified), and RN(C). If a certified practice registrant wishes to note their specific certification, they may append the following terms:
    - a. First Call Certified
    - b. Remote Practice Certified
    - c. Reproductive Health (STI and/or CM) Certified. These RNs may have Sexually Transmitted Infection and/or Contraceptive Management sub-certification.

---

3 NP(P) is **not** the abbreviation for NP(Pediatric). NP(P) is reserved by the BCCNM Bylaws for nurse practitioners with provisional registration only.

11. Licensed graduate nurses<sup>4</sup> who hold practising registration with BCCNM use the titles licensed graduate nurse, LGN, or nurse.
12. Registered psychiatric nurses who hold practising registration with BCCNM use the titles registered psychiatric nurse, psychiatric nurse, RPN, or nurse.
13. Nurses who hold provisional registration with BCCNM use (P) or (Provisional) after their designation.
14. Nurses who hold temporary registration with BCCNM use (T) or (Temporary) after their designation.
15. Nurses who hold non-practising registration with BCCNM use "non-practising" before their title.
16. Nurses who hold non-practising registration cannot convey or imply they are authorized to practice practical nursing, nursing, or psychiatric nursing.
17. When providing regulatory supervision to students, nurses ensure that:
  - a. students who are enrolled in an entry-level practical nursing education program identify themselves as a "student practical nurse" or "SPN" when documenting or providing care or services to a client.
  - b. students who are enrolled in an nurse practitioner education program identify themselves as a "student nurse practitioner" or "SNP" when documenting or providing care or services to a client as a student. Student nurse practitioners identify themselves as a registered nurse when they are working in a registered nurse role and are registered with BCCNM.
  - c. students who are enrolled in an entry-level nursing education program<sup>5</sup> identify themselves as a "student nurse" or "SN" when documenting or providing care or services to a client.
  - d. students who are enrolled in an entry-level psychiatric nursing education program identify themselves as a "student psychiatric nurse" or "SPsycN" when documenting or providing care or services to a client.
18. Students who are registered as an employed student nurse<sup>6</sup> identify themselves as an "employed student nurse" or "ESN" when documenting or providing care or services to a client.

---

4 Licensed graduate nurse is an older title being retired over time. There are a limited number of registrants permitted to use this designation.

5 "Entry-level nursing education program" refers to an RN entry-to-practice education program.

6 See the BCCNM practice standard *Employed Student Registrants*.

19. Students who are registered as an employed student psychiatric nurse<sup>7</sup> identify themselves as an “employed student psychiatric nurse” or “ESPN” when documenting or providing care or services to a client.
20. Employed student registrants<sup>8</sup> identify themselves as an “ESN” or “ESPN” when they are working in the employed student role, and use “student nurse” or “student psychiatric nurse” when providing care and documenting in the context of the education program.
21. Nurses who use their title to advertise or market services or products comply with the BCCNM Bylaws.

## Applying the principles

“Nursing designation” refers to the five classes of nurses regulated by BCCNM – licensed practical nurse, licensed graduate nurse, nurse practitioner, registered nurse, registered psychiatric nurse.

As all classes of nurses can use the reserved title “nurse”, you should identify yourself by title that most accurately describes your scope of practice (i.e., LPN, NP, RN, RPN).

BCCNM regulates the use of titles protected under the Health Professions Act and nursing regulations. You may reference your academic credentials along with your reserved titles; however, your academic credentials do not authorize you to practise practical nursing, nursing, or psychiatric nursing, and you should not use or refer to academic credentials (or any other qualifications, memberships, etc.) in a way that implies that you hold a nursing designation for which you are not registered. You should be aware of any potential confusion that may arise from your use of an academic credential, and be clear with clients and team members about what your role is.

Nursing titles are connected to your registration; you cannot use a different nursing designation when you are working in a role designated for another nurse, or think the qualification better describes your role. For example, as an RN you should not call yourself an LPN because the role you are working in is normally fulfilled by one. **Similarly, as an RN you should NOT say you are an RPN or a psychiatric nurse because you work in a mental health setting.** You are allowed to use only the reserved titles for which you are registered for through BCCNM. If you have dual registration, you should use the designation best associated with your role.

If you are a nurse practitioner, but working in a registered nurse role, identify yourself as a registered nurse.

You can help students understand the importance of identifying themselves by role to clients, team members, and in their documentation, by encouraging them to use the appropriate student title.

If you are registered with more than one designation and you are moving between roles, particularly in the same setting, it is your responsibility to be clear to clients and team members about what role

---

<sup>7</sup> See the BCCNM practice standard *Employed Student Registrants*.

<sup>8</sup> “Employed student registrant” refers to both employed student nurses and employed student psychiatric nurses. Refer to the practice standard *Employed Student Registrants* for more information.

you are in and what reserved title you are registered to use. For example, you might work as an “NP (Family)” one day and an “RN(C)” another day, or you might be an “ESPN” and a “student psychiatric nurse” on different days on the same unit. Identify yourself with your reserved title and document as appropriate to your role.

Section 363 of the BCCNM Bylaws outline some requirements for marketing and apply to any nurse who is marketing, promoting or selling products or services to clients, directly or indirectly.

If you are working in a role that you are not certain is within the scope of practical nursing/nursing/psychiatric nursing (e.g., providing aromatherapy or reflexology), consult with BCCNM Practice Support about using your title.

## Appendix – table of titles

This table outline the titles BCCNM recommends registrants use as a quick reference, however the Principles above provide all available options.

BCCNM Registrant Class	Licensed Practical Nurse Registrants	Nurse Practitioner Registrants	Registered Nurse Registrants	Licensed Graduate Nurse Registrants	Registered Psychiatric Nurse Registrants
Practising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Licensed practical nurse</li> <li>Practical nurse</li> <li>LPN</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nurse practitioner</li> <li>NP</li> <li>Adult NPs:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NP (A)</li> <li>NP (Adult)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Family NPs:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NP (F)</li> <li>NP (Family)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Pediatric NPs:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NP (Ped)</li> <li>NP (Pediatric)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Registered nurse</li> <li>RN</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Licensed graduate nurse</li> <li>LGN</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Registered psychiatric nurse</li> <li>Psychiatric nurse</li> <li>RPN</li> </ul>
Certified Practice Nurses			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Registered nurse</li> <li>Registered nurse (certified)</li> <li>RN(C)</li> </ul> <p>or add the following to an RN designation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remote practice certified</li> <li>Reproductive Health (STI and/or CM) Certified</li> <li>First call certified</li> </ul>		

BCCNM Registrant Class	Licensed Practical Nurse Registrants	Nurse Practitioner Registrants	Registered Nurse Registrants	Licensed Graduate Nurse Registrants	Registered Psychiatric Nurse Registrants
Provisional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Licensed practical nurse (provisional)</li> <li>Licensed practical nurse (P)</li> <li>LPN (provisional)</li> <li>LPN (P)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nurse practitioner (provisional)</li> <li>Nurse practitioner (P)</li> <li>NP (provisional)</li> <li>NP (P)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Registered nurse (provisional)</li> <li>Registered nurse (P)</li> <li>RN (provisional)</li> <li>RN (P)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Licensed graduate nurse (provisional)</li> <li>Licensed graduate nurse (P)</li> <li>LGN (provisional)</li> <li>LGN (P)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Registered psychiatric nurse (provisional)</li> <li>Registered psychiatric nurse (P)</li> <li>RPN (provisional)</li> <li>RPN (P)</li> </ul>
Temporary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Licensed practical nurse (temporary)</li> <li>Licensed practical nurse (T)</li> <li>LPN (temporary)</li> <li>LPN (T)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nurse practitioner (temporary)</li> <li>Nurse practitioner (T)</li> <li>NP (temporary)</li> <li>NP (T)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Registered nurse (temporary)</li> <li>Registered nurse (T)</li> <li>RN (temporary)</li> <li>RN (T)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Registered psychiatric nurse (temporary)</li> <li>Registered psychiatric nurse (T)</li> <li>RPN (temporary)</li> <li>RPN (T)</li> </ul>
Non-Practising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Non-practising licensed practical nurse</li> <li>Non-practising practical nurse</li> <li>Non-practising LPN</li> <li>Non-practising nurse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Non-practising nurse practitioner</li> <li>Non-practising NP</li> <li>Non-practising NP (Adult)</li> <li>Non-practising NP (Family)</li> <li>Non-practising NP (Pediatric)</li> <li>Non-practising nurse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Non-practising registered nurse</li> <li>Non-practising RN</li> <li>Non-practising nurse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Non-practising licensed graduate nurse</li> <li>Non-practising LGN</li> <li>Non-practising nurse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Non-practising registered psychiatric nurse</li> <li>Non-practising psychiatric nurse</li> <li>Non-practising RPN</li> <li>Non-practising nurse</li> </ul>

BCCNM Registrant Class	Licensed Practical Nurse Registrants	Nurse Practitioner Registrants	Registered Nurse Registrants	Licensed Graduate Nurse Registrants	Registered Psychiatric Nurse Registrants
Employed Student Registrant			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employed student nurse</li> <li>• ESN</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employed student psychiatric nurse</li> <li>• ESPN</li> </ul>
Appropriate Student Titles (For Reference)					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practical Nursing Student</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nurse Practitioner Student</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nursing Student</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Psychiatric Nursing Student</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student practical nurse</li> <li>• SPN</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student nurse practitioner</li> <li>• SNP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student nurse</li> <li>• SN</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student psychiatric nurse</li> <li>• SPsycN</li> </ul>



## Other information

BCCNM's Standards of Practice (Professional Standards, Practice Standards, and Scope of Practice Standards) set out requirements for practice that registrants must meet. They are available from the Nursing Standards section of the BCCNM website [www.bccnm.ca](http://www.bccnm.ca).

### Standards for Licensed Practical Nurses:

- [Professional Standards for Licensed Practical Nurses](#)
- [Scope of Practice for Licensed Practical Nurses: Standards, Limits and Conditions](#)

### Standards for Nurse Practitioners and Registered Nurses:

- [Professional Standards for Registered Nurses and Nurse Practitioners](#)
- [Scope of Practice for Nurse Practitioners: Standards, Limits and Conditions](#)
- [Scope of Practice for Registered Nurses: Standards, Limits and Conditions](#)

### Standards for Registered Psychiatric Nurses:

- [Professional Standards for Registered Psychiatric Nurses](#)
- [Code of Ethics for Registered Psychiatric Nurses](#)
- [Scope of Practice for Registered Psychiatric Nurses: Standards, Limits and Conditions](#)

For more information on this or any other practice issue, contact a BCCNM Practice Consultant by email at [practice@bccnm.ca](mailto:practice@bccnm.ca) or call 604.742.6200 or 1.866.880.7101.

Copyright © British Columbia College of Nurses and Midwives/November 2020

Effective date: July 27, 2020

900 – 200 Granville St  
Vancouver, BC V6C 1S4  
Canada

[www.bccnm.ca](http://www.bccnm.ca)

Pub. No. 343