PRACTICE STANDARD FOR REGISTERED NURSES AND NURSE PRACTITIONERS

Employed Student Registrants

Practice Standards set out requirements related to specific aspects of nurses’ practice. They link with other standards, policies and bylaws of the British Columbia College of Nursing Professionals and all legislation relevant to nursing practice. This practice standard applies to employed student registrants.

April 3, 2020: Please note that the BCCNP bylaws permit practising RNs, RPNs, and NPs to supervise employed student registrants and employed student psychiatric nurse registrants. This standard is currently undergoing review and will be updated shortly to reflect the bylaws.

All students who are enrolled in a BCCNP-recognized entry-level or re-entry-level registered nurse education program (or equivalent) and who are employed as an employed student nurse must register with BCCNP as an employed student registrant. Choosing to work as an employed student nurse is voluntary. Working as an employed student nurse is not required for graduation from a BCCNP-recognized entry-level or re-entry-level registered nurse education program (or equivalent). Nor is it required for eventual registration as a registered nurse.

A nursing student who is working as an employed student nurse must be:

- enrolled in a BCCNP-recognized entry-level or re-entry-level registered nurse education program (or equivalent), and
- registered with BCCNP as an employed student registrant.

Employed student registrants have significant responsibilities. They are:

- subject to the regulatory oversight of BCCNP during both employment and education program activities,
- held to BCCNP’s Standards of Practice, and
- subject to BCCNP inquiry and discipline.

Subject to Regulatory Oversight

The legal authority for an employed student registrant to perform any activity that may affect a client exists only through regulatory supervision by a BCCNP registered nurse or nurse practitioner. Being an employed student nurse offers students the opportunity to consolidate skills learned during their nursing education program. Students working as employed student nurses are not permitted to perform activities that would require them to acquire new clinical skills outside the education program.

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1 The term employed student registrant encompasses both an employed student registrant and a grandparented student registrant who has been authorized to work as an employed student nurse under section 4.121(5) of the BCCNP Bylaws.
Practice Activities

Employed student registrants do not have a “scope of practice” in the same way registered nurses or nurse practitioners do. Specifically, an employed student registrant:

- does not have independent authority to perform activities with the potential to affect a client,
- may undertake only those activities for which they have gained competence in a BCCNP-recognized entry-level or re-entry-level registered nurse education program (or equivalent); this competence is usually achieved by learning the theory, practising in the lab, and being observed performing the activity to the satisfaction of the education program faculty, and
- is permitted to undertake such an activity only when it is authorized by a registered nurse or nurse practitioner who has accepted the responsibility for regulatory supervision of that employed student registrant activity in accordance with the practice standard Regulatory Supervision of Nursing Student Activities.

Subject to Inquiry and Discipline

BCCNP will consider any complaint made against an employed student registrant in accordance with its inquiry and discipline processes established under the Health Professions Act. An employed student registrant who is subject to these processes may have limits and conditions placed on his or her practice.

There are significant consequences to having such limits and conditions on practice, including:

- the employed student registrant may be unable to fulfill the clinical activity requirements needed to graduate from the registered nurse education program,
- the employed student registrant may be delayed in becoming, or not eligible to become, a registered nurse.

Principles

The following principles set out the professional, legal and ethical requirements for employed student registrants’ practice.

1. Employed student registrants who are no longer enrolled or change education programs must notify BCCNP within one month of the date of the change.
2. The continuing competence of employed student registrants is maintained through their education program activities.
3. Employed student registrants are responsible and accountable for their own actions and decisions.
4. Even though employed student registrants are not yet fully qualified nurses, they will be held to all BCCNP Standards of Practice, which set out requirements for registered nurses.
5. Employed student registrant activities that may affect clients are done only under the regulatory supervision of a BCCNP registered nurse or nurse practitioner.
6. Employed student registrants use the title “employed student nurse” or “employed student of nursing” when identifying themselves to clients, colleagues and others.
7. In accordance with the practice standard Appropriate Use of Titles, employed student registrants do not use the title “nurse” on its own.
8. Employed student registrants clearly and consistently communicate to others that they are not fully qualified nurses and that they practice under the regulatory supervision of a registered nurse or nurse practitioner.

9. Employed student registrants always know which registered nurse or nurse practitioner is responsible for regulatory supervision of their activities and how to access that person if there is a concern when the employed student registrant is working.

10. Employed student registrants undertake only those activities for which they have gained competence through a BCCNP-recognized entry-level or re-entry-level registered nurse education program (or equivalent), and then only as authorized by the registered nurse or nurse practitioner providing regulatory supervision.

11. Employed student registrants are not permitted to be solely responsible for a client.

12. Employed student registrants do not oversee or direct the activities of other workers or students.

13. Employed student registrants may not accept an order.

14. If an employed student registrant’s employment location changes, even if it is with the same employer or in the same building, he or she must notify BCCNP and provide a current management contact person.

15. Employed student registrants facilitate regulatory supervision of their activities by providing information on their own competence and participating in the process set out in the practice standard Regulatory Supervision of Nursing Student Activities.

16. If there is no registered nurse or nurse practitioner registrant physically present at the work location to provide regulatory supervision of activities, employed student registrants do not perform any activities that may affect clients.

17. If concerns arise, employed student registrants communicate information to others as appropriate (e.g., employer and education program) and contact BCCNP Practice Support for advice.

Glossary

**Competence:** The integration and application of knowledge, skills, attitudes and judgment required to perform safely, ethically and appropriately within an individual’s practice or in a designated role or setting.

**Employed Student Nurse:** The employment role in which a nursing student is employed in a health care setting during or between terms of their education program, in accordance with BCCNP Bylaws. Also, the title an employed student registrant is permitted to use as set out in the practice standard Appropriate Use of Titles.

**Nursing Student:** An individual enrolled in a BCCNP-recognized entry-level or re-entry-level registered nurse education program or equivalent.

**Order:** An instruction or authorization for a specific client given by a health professional (i.e., a physician, midwife, podiatrist, nurse practitioner, dentist or naturopath) to a registered nurse to carry out an activity that includes a restricted activity listed in Section 7 of the Regulation. This includes pre-printed orders that set out the usual care for a particular client group or client problem and are made client-specific by the health professional adding the name of the individual client, making any necessary changes to the pre-printed order to reflect the needs of the individual client, and signing the order.

**Regulatory Supervision:** The process by which a registered nurse or nurse practitioner may authorize an activity to be performed by another person who does not otherwise have authority to perform the activity.
For More Information

STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

BCCNP’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 BCCNP website www.bccnp.ca

Appropriate Use of Titles Practice Standard (pub. 343)
Consent Practice Standard (pub. 359)
Professional Standards for Registered Nurses and Nurse Practitioners (pub. 128)
Regulatory Supervision of Nursing Student Activities Practice Standard (pub. 695)

OTHER RESOURCES

Employed student registrant Registration pages on BCCNP website www.bccnp.ca
Professional Conduct Review pages on BCCNP website www.bccnp.ca

For more information on this or any other practice issue, contact BCCNP’s Practice Support Services by e-mail at practice@bccnp.ca or call 604.742.6200 or toll-free (Canada only) 1.866.880.7101.

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