



Nurses Association
OF NEW BRUNSWICK

Standards for Nursing Education in New Brunswick



Mission

The Nurses Association of New Brunswick is a professional regulatory organization that exists to protect the public and to support nurses by promoting and maintaining standards for nursing education and practice, and by promoting healthy public policy.

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INTRODUCTION

The *Nurses Act* gives the Nurses Association of New Brunswick (NANB) the legislated mandate to establish and maintain standards for nursing education and to approve nursing education programs in the province.

Standards for nursing education inform and support the development and maintenance of high quality nursing education in the interest of public safety. The standards' ultimate purpose is to provide guidance to nursing education programs in preparing registered nurses and nurse practitioners to practise effectively and competently within the present and future health care systems.

The *Standards for Nursing Education* apply to nursing education programs that lead to initial entry to practice as a registered nurse or nurse practitioner in New Brunswick. The Standards serve as the framework for the approval of these two nursing education programs, as well as the re-entry to practice program.

There are four standards for nursing education, addressing **curriculum***, **program**, students, and graduates. These standards consist of an explicit set of four standard statements that are measurable, achievable benchmarks. The corresponding indicators listed under each standard statement provide additional criteria on how the standards must be met or demonstrated for entry to practice programs.

Nursing education standards outline the expectations for nursing education programs to ensure that graduates have the **competencies** necessary to provide safe, competent and ethical nursing care in a variety of settings with **clients** across the life span and the continuum of care. The entry-level registered nurse or nurse practitioner is expected to have achieved the entry-level competencies¹ as established by the Nurses Association of New Brunswick and to practise according to NANB standards.

The standards for nursing education are:

1. The CURRICULUM provides learning experiences across the life span and the continuum of care necessary for students to achieve registered nurse or nurse practitioner entry-level competencies established by the Nurses Association of New Brunswick.
2. The PROGRAM has the resources to support students in achieving the entry-level competencies established by the Nurses Association of New Brunswick.
3. STUDENTS demonstrate progress towards achieving the entry-level competencies as established by the Nurses Association of New Brunswick.
4. GRADUATES of the program are prepared to practise according to NANB standards and have achieved the competencies required for entry-level registered nurse practice or entry-level nurse practitioner practice established by the Nurses Association of New Brunswick.

* Words or phrases in bold print in the text are found in the glossary.

¹ Entry-level competencies refer to the competencies outlined in *Entry-Level Competencies for Registered Nurses in New Brunswick* and *Nurse Practitioner Core Competencies*.



STANDARD I

The **CURRICULUM** provides learning experiences across the life span and the continuum of care necessary for students to achieve registered nurse or nurse practitioner entry-level competencies established by the Nurses Association of New Brunswick.

Indicators:

- 1.1 Entry-level competencies guide the development and implementation of the curriculum.
- 1.2 The curriculum describes the program of studies, and includes: i) an organizing framework; ii) program goals and expected outcomes; iii) courses in nursing, the biological and physical sciences, the behavioural and social sciences, and the humanities; iv) course descriptions; v) sequence of learning activities; and vi) student evaluation.
- 1.3 Nursing courses (theory, clinical and **laboratory**) comprise no less than 50% of the curriculum as measured by course credits.
- 1.4 The philosophy of teaching and learning is current, evidence-based and relevant to nursing education.
- 1.5 Teaching and learning activities provide students with the opportunity to achieve program goals and expected outcomes.
- 1.6 Clinical learning activities provide sufficient opportunities for students to meet the program goals and expected outcomes and the entry-level competencies:
 - i) Programs leading to initial entry to registered nurse practice have a minimum of 1400 **hours of clinical practice** in a variety of settings (acute, long term care, and community) with clients from across the life span and the continuum of care, and include a full-time clinical **preceptorship** at the end of the program that consolidates theory and nursing practice.
 - ii) Programs leading to initial entry to nurse practitioner practice have a minimum of 700 hours of clinical practice in a variety of primary health care settings with clients from across the life span and the continuum of care, and include a full-time clinical preceptorship at the end of the program that consolidates theory and nurse practitioner practice.
- 1.7 Systematic and continuous evaluation of all curriculum components is carried out by students, educators and other key stakeholders to ensure ongoing development, maintenance and enhancement of the curriculum.
- 1.8 The curriculum maintains its relevance by responding to current and emerging trends in health care, nursing practice, and nursing education.
- 1.9 Learning takes place in a context that is sensitive to linguistic, ethnic, spiritual, cultural and social diversity.
- 1.10 The curriculum prepares students to work collaboratively within nursing and with other **health care team** members.



STANDARD II

The **PROGRAM** has the resources to support students in achieving the entry-level competencies established by the Nurses Association of New Brunswick.

Indicators:

- 2.1 The organizational structure, leadership and committee system supports the administration of the program.
- 2.2 There are appropriate resources (fiscal, physical, technological, human, and clinical) to facilitate the development and implementation of the curriculum and to foster ongoing improvement.
- 2.3 **Nursing faculty** size and composition is sufficient to provide teaching and guidance to students to ensure student progress toward practice-readiness and meeting entry-level competencies.
- 2.4 Nursing faculty to student ratio in clinical settings ensures optimal student learning and safe client care.
- 2.5 Nursing faculty possesses theoretical nursing knowledge and maintains clinical skills appropriate to teaching responsibilities.
- 2.6 Nursing faculty professional development activities support currency and relevance of the curriculum.
- 2.7 Nursing faculty works in a university culture where the sharing of a common philosophy and values is fostered through peer support, teamwork and team building.
- 2.8 Nursing faculty participates in research or scholarly activities that inform and advance the profession of nursing and nursing education in the public interest.
- 2.9 Orientation and support strategies for nursing faculty and **preceptors** are in place to ensure that expectations of student performance are consistent throughout the program.
- 2.10 Learning resources including library resources are current, accessible, innovative and consistent with new knowledge and technology
- 2.11 Formal systems and processes are in place to measure program effectiveness including methods to: i) examine and analyze factors contributing to student attrition and success; and ii) obtain feedback from students, educators and other key stakeholders.



STANDARD III

STUDENTS demonstrate progress towards achieving the entry-level competencies as established by the Nurses Association of New Brunswick.

Indicators:

- 3.1 Policies and procedures for nursing students relating to admission, promotion, probation, failure, withdrawal, appeal, re-admission and graduation from the program are established and adhered to by the university and the nursing education program and are clearly communicated to students, faculty and other key stakeholders.
- 3.2 Students meet established university admission requirements that are transparent and include:
i) prerequisites that provide reasonable assurance of success in the program; and ii) the **requisite skills and abilities** needed to achieve entry-level competencies.
- 3.3 Recruitment strategies attract qualified students in numbers to provide adequate future nursing resources.
- 3.4 The student evaluation system provides evidence that students are meeting the program goals and expected outcomes and developing the entry-level competencies.
- 3.5 Students have access to support services including learning services, personal counseling, academic counseling, student health services, and financial aid.



STANDARD IV

GRADUATES of the program are prepared to practise according to NANB standards and have achieved the competencies required for entry-level registered nurse or entry-level nurse practitioner practice established by the Nurses Association of New Brunswick.

Indicators:

- 4.1 Final evaluation of graduating students confirms the achievement of the expected outcomes of the program and the NANB entry-level competencies.
- 4.2 Graduate success rates on the registration examination are monitored, analyzed and used to inform program admission requirements and other program decisions.
- 4.3 Processes are in place for graduates, employers of graduates and other stakeholders to provide feedback regarding graduates' preparedness to deliver safe, competent and ethical care.
- 4.4 Data collected from graduates, employers and other stakeholders, regarding graduates' preparedness to meet NANB standards and entry-level competencies, is analyzed and used to inform program decisions.



GLOSSARY

Client: Individuals and/or groups with whom registered nurses or nurse practitioners have interaction and can include individuals, families, groups, populations or entire communities.

Competencies: The integrated knowledge, skills, abilities and judgement required to practise nursing safely and ethically.

Curriculum: A systematic and comprehensive plan of learning activities that includes philosophical foundations, program goals and expected outcomes, content, sequence of learning activities and evaluation.

Health care team: A number of health care providers from different disciplines (often including both regulated professionals and unregulated workers) working together to provide care for and with individuals, families, groups, populations, or communities. (CNA, 2008)

Hours of clinical practice: The time students spend in learning activities in a variety of settings (acute, long term care, and community), and may include orientation, pre and post conferences, and clinical experiences of an observational nature.

Laboratory: A simulated setting where students acquire nursing skills and competencies. Laboratory hours within a baccalaureate program may not exceed 10% of the clinical practice hours.

Nursing faculty: Those registered nurses who are hired by the nursing education program including full time, part time and contract faculty.

Preceptor: A proficient or expert practitioner who enters into a one-to-one relationship with a learner for a set period of time to provide on-site supervision along with clinical teaching. (NANB, 2011)

Preceptorship: A teaching and learning method involving a formal, usually one-to-one, relationship between the preceptor and a nursing student. The learning occurs as the nursing student practices full time alongside the preceptor. The preceptor assists the student to consolidate theory with the roles, functions and competencies of the graduate about to enter practice. (Adapted from SRNA, 2009)

Program: The system, including all of the resources (fiscal, physical, technological, human, clinical, organizational structures, committees, and policies) needed to support and deliver the curriculum to ensure achievement of program goals and expected outcomes.

Requisite skills and abilities: Those foundational skills and abilities that enable students to achieve the entry-level competencies and provide safe, competent, ethical nursing care in the best interest of the public. (Adapted from NANB, 2009)



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