



Fact Sheet: Student Nurses and Student Nurse Employees

The [Nurses Act](#) defines a student nurse as “any person enrolled in an approved nursing education program”. Student nurses, during the time they are enrolled in a program of nursing and are under the guidance of the university faculty, may perform the tasks, duties and functions required as part of a course of study, subject to such conditions, limitations and restrictions as determined by the educational institution.

When student nurses are in clinical settings and under the guidance of the university, registered nurses (RN) and nurse practitioners (NP) remain responsible for the overall care of the clients; however, some components of client care will be shared. Student nurses are usually supervised by a clinical instructor who is responsible for assigning nursing care duties and for providing support and supervision to the student. The RN/NP must be available for student nurses and clinical instructor alike for assistance or consultation with assigned activities. The Nurses Association of New Brunswick’s (NANB) [Fact Sheet - Mentoring](#) and [FAQ - Working with Nursing Students](#) offers information on the role of RNs in supporting learners, such as student nurses.

It is common practice for student nurses to seek employment in various healthcare settings (for example, during the summer period). Student nurses in New Brunswick are not regulated and when employed as part of the health care team, they are unregulated care providers (UCP). This means they are not governed by legislation, have no legally defined scope of practice, and are not accountable to an external nursing regulator. Like for all other UCPs, the employer is responsible to define their job description, and they are accountable to their employer.

NANB has the practice guideline [A Collaborative Approach to Assigning, Delegating and Teaching in Health Care](#) (2019) that offers information and articulates the responsibilities of RNs when working with UCPs. Additional information is also available on the Canadian Nurses Protective Society website in the articles [Ask a lawyer: Working with unregulated care providers](#) and [Delegation to Other Health Care Workers](#).

For more information about working with student nurses, student nurse employees, and UCPs, you can speak with one of NANB’s Nurse Consultants at 1-800-442-4417 or by email at Practiceconsultation@nanb.nb.ca.