



College of
**REGISTERED
PSYCHIATRIC NURSES**
of Alberta

STANDARDS

Registered Psychiatric Nurses
Standard of Practice Continuing
Competence Program

November 2024

Approved by the College of Registered Psychiatric Nurses of Alberta (CRPNA)
Provincial Council, November 2024.

Permission to reproduce this document is granted. Please recognize CRPNA.

College of Registered Psychiatric Nurses of Alberta (CRPNA)
Suite 201, 9711 – 45 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T6E 5V8

Phone: (780) 434-7666 Toll Free 1 (877) 234-7666
Fax: (780) 436-4165
Email: crpna@crpna.ab.ca
Website: www.crpna.ab.ca

Table of Contents

STANDARD OF PRACTICE CONTINUING COMPETENCE PROGRAM.....	1
STANDARD 1: Participation in the CRPNA Continuing Competence Program...	1
STANDARD 2: Participation in a CRPNA Audit	4
EXPECTED OUTCOMES.....	4
GLOSSARY:.....	5

STANDARD OF PRACTICE CONTINUING COMPETENCE PROGRAM

PURPOSE

Competence is the RPNs ability to use knowledge, skill, judgment, attitude, values and interpersonal attributes to perform in a given role, situation and or practice setting. Continuing competence ensures that the RPN can perform in an evolving health care environment. Continuing competence contributes to safe, quality psychiatric nursing practice and increases the public's confidence in the psychiatric nursing profession.

Part 3 of the HPA outlines the requirements for regulatory colleges to establish a continuing competence program (CCP) for registrants. Section 50(2)(a) of the HPA outlines that the purpose of a CCP is to maintain competence of registrants and to enhance the provision of professional services. Standards of practice are part of the overall regulatory framework that governs the RPN profession in Alberta. Standards of practice provide the minimum standard of behaviour that RPNs are expected to meet in their nursing practice and are enforceable under the HPA. Performance below the minimum standard and failure to comply with the requirements for the CCP could be determined as unprofessional conduct and result in disciplinary action and an application for renewal of the practice permit may be denied or a practice permit may be suspended.

This Standards of Practice outlines the broad structure and requirements for the CCP. For guidance on complying with this Standard, registrants should consult the CRPNA Continuing Competence Program Guide (CCP Guide) that details specific program requirements.

Participation in the CRPNA Continuing Competence Program helps psychiatric nurses engage in activities that promote or foster lifelong learning. The program helps psychiatric nurses maintain and improve their competence and is a professional requirement under legislation.

STANDARD 1: Participation in the CRPNA Continuing Competence Program

Registered Psychiatric Nurses (RPNs) on the regulated psychiatric nurse register and the provisional register maintains and continually improves his/her competence by participating in the College of Registered Psychiatric Nurses of Alberta (CRPNA) Continuing Competence Program.

Indicators

A registered psychiatric nurse demonstrates the standard by:

- assuming responsibility for his/her own professional development and for sharing knowledge with others;
- investing time, effort and other resources to improve knowledge, skills and judgment;
- engaging in a learning process to enhance his/her practice;
- participating in the College's Continuing Competence Program provided for in Standards of Practice and the Continuing Competence Program Guide.

Participation includes:

- performing a self-assessment; utilizing the self-assessment guide;
- developing a practice enhancement plan;
- implementing the practice enhancement plan; and
- evaluating the outcomes of the practice enhancement plan;
- keeping records of participation in Continuing Competence Program activities for a period of 5 years;
- providing colleagues with feedback that encourages professional growth;
- advocating for quality practice improvements in the workplace; and
- working together to create quality practice settings that promote continuing competence.

In addition:

A registered psychiatric nurse in an **administrator role** demonstrates the standard by:

- supporting all nurses to become reflective practitioners;
- encouraging all nurses to engage in ongoing learning;
- seeking opportunities for nurses to participate in continual learning activities;
- seeking opportunities to incorporate reflective practice into agency professional development systems; and
- advocating for a quality practice setting.

A registered psychiatric nurse in an **educator role** demonstrates the standard by:

- supporting psychiatric nursing students and nurses in becoming reflective practitioners;
- developing, implementing and facilitating learning activities that help nursing students and nurses enhance their practice; and
- supporting nursing students and nurses in engaging in ongoing learning.

A registered psychiatric nurse in a **researcher role** demonstrates the standard by:

- encouraging the evaluation of psychiatric nursing practice, mental health and addictions through research; and communicating best-practice research findings to others

All members on the general register or provisional register must:

- provide on request, evidence of having met the requirements of the Continuing Competence Program, including, but not limited to providing copies of documents/records as required by the Continuing Competence Program Guide to the Registrar or Registration Committee for review.
- Undertake any actions in response to a direction by the Registrar or Registration Committee which may be at a regulated member's own cost.
 - i. The regulated member fails to comply with either:
 - 1) A direction given by the Registrar or Registration Committee; or
 - 2) A condition imposed by the Registrar or Registration Committee.

Section 40.1(1) of the HPA (2000) outlines the conditions that may be imposed on a registrant's practice permit:

40.1 (1) Where the registrar, complaints director, registration committee or competence committee imposes conditions on a regulated member's practice permit, the conditions that may be imposed include, but are not limited to, conditions that

- (a) the regulated member practise under supervision,
- (b) the regulated member's practice be limited to specified professional services or to specified areas of the practice,
- (c) the regulated member refrains from performing specified restricted activities,
- (d) the regulated member refrains from engaging in sole practice,
- (e) the regulated member submits to additional practice visits or other assessments,
- (f) the member reports to the registrar on specified matters on specified dates,
- (g) the practice permit is valid only for a specified purpose and time,
- (h) the member be prohibited from supervising students, other members, or other health professionals, and
- (i) the member completes the continuing competence requirements within a specified time

STANDARD 2: Participation in a CRPNA Audit

Registrants must participate in a CRPNA audit if selected.

Indicators

The registrants selected for audit must:

2.1 provide evidence of their completed learning plans to date for up to the past five years upon request by the Registration Committee.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Clients can expect that the regulated psychiatric nurse is competent to provide quality professional, safe and ethical psychiatric nursing care.

Supplemental documents –

- [Continuing Competence Program Guide](#) – digital online guide
- [Code of Ethics and Standards of Psychiatric Nursing Practice](#)

GLOSSARY:

Competencies	The integrated knowledge, skills, judgment and attitudes required by a Registered Psychiatric Nurse to practice competently, ethically and safely (Verma, Paterson & Medves, 2006)
Continuing Competence	Continuing competence is the ongoing ability of a Registered Psychiatric Nurse to integrate and apply the knowledge, skills, judgment, attitudes, values and interpersonal attributes required to practice safely and ethically in their current role and setting
Enabling Competency	The sub-element or key ingredient to achieving a key competency
Evidence-Informed Practice	Requires that decisions about health care are based on the best available, current, valid and relevant evidence. These decisions should be made by those receiving care, informed by the tacit and explicit knowledge of those providing care, within the context of available resources (Dawes et al., 2005) ⁹ (see evidence-informed decision-making).
Evidence-Informed Decision-Making	The purposeful and systematic use of the best available evidence to inform the assessment of various options and related decision-making in practice, program development and policy making (Oncology Advanced Practice Nursing, 2010) ¹⁰ (see evidence-informed practice.)
Key Competency	The important outcome objective (i.e., what is to be achieved or performed) in relation to a competency (see competencies.)
Judgment	The evaluation of evidence to make a clinical decision. In the context of psychiatric nursing, it includes the initial reaction of the Registered Psychiatric Nurse to the client. It is the ability to make critical distinctions and achieve a balanced viewpoint.