



Newfoundland & Labrador
College of Nurses

Requisite Skills and Abilities

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The Newfoundland and Labrador College of Nurses (the College) establishes the entry-level competencies (ELCs) required for nursing practice and approves nursing education programs that prepare Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs), Registered Nurses (RNs), and Nurse Practitioners (NPs) for licensure in Newfoundland and Labrador (NL). This document is guided by the ELCs, which provide direction for curriculum development and describe the knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes, and judgments expected of entry-level nurses¹ to provide safe, competent, and ethical nursing care in a variety of practice settings.

Certain capabilities are necessary to attain the ELCs. These capabilities are called ***Requisite Skills and Abilities*** and are described in seven categories:

- Behavioral
- Cognitive
- Communication
- Environmental
- Interpersonal
- Physical
- Sensory perceptual

The purpose of this document is to provide information on the requisite skills and abilities required to complete an educational program in order to obtain a licence to practice nursing. Prospective nursing students, career advisors, and education institutions should consider the required capabilities for nursing practice in determining if nursing is an appropriate career choice.

The College supports an equitable process and prospective students with a disability are entitled to reasonable accommodation provided that client safety and well-being are not compromised. Students should review the potential need for accommodation with the educational institution for the student to obtain the required entry-to-practice competencies.

The NL Human Rights Act requires that where any limitation, exclusion, or denial exists because of a disability, there must be a good faith reason. The Supreme Court of Canada identified the Meiorin Test (1999) as a measure of whether a requisite skill and ability is reasonable and justifiable. This requisite skill and ability must be:

- rationally connected to the performance of the job
- adopted in an honest and good faith belief that it is necessary to fulfill a legitimate work-related purpose
- reasonably necessary to accomplish a legitimate work-related purpose.

The requisite skills and abilities are intended to be guidelines only for the successful completion of a nursing education program and reasonable accommodation may still need to be provided to the point of undue hardship to both individuals and groups in some circumstances. Prospective students with concerns about whether they

¹ Currently, the College does not approve a psychiatric nursing education program in NL. Individuals interested in the requisite skills and abilities for psychiatric nursing practice may contact the applicable regulatory body in which the psychiatric nursing education program is located.

have the required skills and abilities for progression through, or successful completion of, a nursing education program should contact the educational institution where they intend to apply.

Requisite Skill and Ability Categories

The requisite skills and abilities are organized in seven categories with examples of entry-level nursing activities to illustrate each (see Table 1). They are included to provide a snapshot of the nature of activities involved in typical entry-level nursing practice. Note: The examples are not an exhaustive list and are intended to mean “including, but not limited to” the particular examples provided.

Table 1: *Requisite Skill and Ability Categories*

Behavioural – Ability to conduct oneself in a professional manner	
The ability to do the following: • behave in a manner that promotes safe, competent, and ethical nursing care • maintain a calm and respectful demeanor • create and maintain a safe environment for self and others • demonstrate honesty, integrity, and respect in all interactions • respond appropriately in situations that are stressful or that involve conflict • react appropriately to giving and receiving physical touch and working in close proximity with a full range of clients • fulfill responsibility as part of a team • manage time and set priorities appropriately • provide care and support to clients through developmental and role transitions from birth to death in a variety of settings • engage in self-reflection	Practice examples: • manages time and sets priorities when balancing multiple demands • reacts quickly and effectively to unexpected or unusual situations • maintains a calm presence with clients regardless of the client’s behaviour or environmental factors • provides care to clients of all ages and genders • uses appropriate safety precautions

Cognitive – Ability to perform skills which demonstrate mental processes of perception, memory, judgment, and reasoning

The ability to do the following:

- recall and apply information over a brief or extended period of time
- recall and integrate information from past experiences, and a variety of sources to inform current decisions
- problem solve and reason to develop professional judgment and make appropriate decisions
- apply mathematical skills and abilities to provide safe preparation and administration of interventions through different formats, including:
 - add
 - subtract
 - multiply
 - divide
 - calculate ratio and percentages

Practice examples:

- recalls clinical skills or patterns of signs, symptoms, and diagnoses from previous clients, learning experiences, and theoretical learning
- recalls written, oral, or recorded information provided by colleagues and clients
- calculates and verifies medication dosages to prepare and administer medications
- anticipates actual and potential health risks and possible unintended consequences
- recognize when situations require further inquiry

Communication – Ability to express and receive written, verbal, and non-verbal information in a respectful and professional manner

The ability to do the following:

- speak and understand spoken English to develop a rapport with clients and be able to recognize their physical and mental health as well as emotional needs
- read, write, and understand written English at a level that provides for safe and accurate understanding of words and meanings
- recognize own non-verbal communication and interpret non-verbal communication from others
- consider and respect individual beliefs, cultures, and differences in expression and associated meaning
- obtain and respond to information from clients, colleagues and others

Practice examples:

- obtains and records an accurate client health history
- reads and understands client health record
- actively listens to clients and members of the health care team
- communicates clearly and accurately with other health care team members about clients in a timely manner
- participates in client education
- documents and reports clearly, concisely, accurately, and in a timely manner
- uses a variety of methods for documentation

Environmental – Ability to establish and maintain safe surroundings and function in the presence of environmental factors	
The ability to do the following: • carry out client care in an environment subject to: ○ pathogens ○ noxious smells ○ distractions ○ unpredictable behaviour of others ○ noise ○ chemicals and irritants • implement interventions that facilitate protection of the public and oneself	Practice examples: • recognize dangers in the client environment • recognize the potential exposure to infectious diseases, chemicals, and allergens • tolerate unpleasant foul odors • tolerate disposing of body waste (urine, feces, emesis)
Interpersonal – Ability to interact with others in a respectful and professional manner and create positive relationships	
The ability to do the following: • demonstrate empathy and compassion • develop therapeutic relationships and rapport with individuals, families, and groups • work in close proximity to clients and colleagues • establish and maintain professional boundaries with clients and others • recognize the needs of clients and colleagues and respond appropriately	Practice examples: • supports a client during a painful or distressing procedure • identifies that others have needs and perspectives that may be different than one's own. • educates and supports clients to make informed choices
Physical – Ability to perform the following actions well enough to provide client care and participate in educational activities	
The ability to do the following: • move within limited space • carry out tasks requiring manual dexterity • stand and maintain balance • push and pull • perform repetitive movements • perform complex sequences of hand-eye coordination • bend	Practice examples: • uses forceps while performing wound care • prepares and administers medication • assists a client to get out of bed and walk • climbs stairs for a home care visit • repositions a person in bed using appropriate safe handling techniques



• reach • lift • climb • walk • carry objects	
Sensory-Perceptual – Ability to perceive with each of the following senses well enough to provide client care and participate in educational activities.	
The ability to do the following: • see • hear • touch • smell	Practice examples: • reads numbers and lines of measure on a syringe • reads the small print on medication packages and bottles • feels a patient's pulse • assesses client colour and skin temperature • hears a heartbeat through a stethoscope • detects foul odors such as strong, foul-smelling urine • hears alarm bells and verbal communication or sounds of other clients when they are not visible or in the immediate area where the care is being provides

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