

## **Practice Directive**

# **Admission and Discharge – Acute Care (Hospital)**

**Prince Edward Island College of Nursing and  
Midwifery**

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**PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND COLLEGE OF  
NURSING AND MIDWIFERY**

## ***Background***

Nurse Practitioners (NPs), through their education and legislated scope of practice, care for clients across the continuum of care within the community, acute care, and long-term care settings. As the client transitions from care settings, NPs must work collaboratively with the client, family, and all members of the healthcare team to ensure safe and successful transitions occur.

## ***Legislative Authority***

The legislated scope of practice for NPs can be found in the Registered Nurses and Registered Psychiatric Nurses Regulations. NPs also draw upon their Standards of Practice, Entry-Level Competencies and any other relevant legislation when making care decisions. Admission and discharge of clients to acute care facilities is within the scope of practice of an NP, however, NPs lacked the legislated authority within the Hospitals Act to do so, until recently. Changes made to the [Hospitals Act – Hospital Management Regulation](#) now allows for NPs, who are authorized by Health PEI, to admit, treat, and discharge clients in hospital.

## ***Scope of Practice vs Scope of Employment***

Scope of practice differs from scope of employment. A regulated health professional's scope of practice is derived from the following:

- Legislation
- Education
- Personal Experience
- Individual Competencies

In PEI, the Registered Nurses and Registered Psychiatric Nurses Regulations outline the Reserved Activities that any NP holding a registration in PEI is legally entitled to perform. However, an individual NP must also consider their education, personal experiences and individual competencies before performing any Reserved Activity or related skill.

Employers outline the scope of employment through job descriptions, policies, and procedures. The scope of employment cannot be outside a regulated health professional's scope of practice. Scope of employment may have a significant impact on the individual scope of practice.

NPs are accountable to be aware of and practice in accordance with any employer specific policies, processes, practices and/or guidelines related to hospital admission and discharge of clients, such as:

- Determining whether the NP is authorized to admit or discharge,

- Determining expectations regarding the management of the client while in hospital, including after work hours,
- Accessing supports with the collaborative team including discharge planning supports,
- Completing required notification and documentation requirements related to hospital admission and discharge policies,
- Management of the transfer of clients from one unit to another or one facility to another,
- Ongoing care of clients without a primary care provider while in hospital and upon discharge.

### ***Client Admission and Client Discharge***

NPs are accountable to follow their standards of practice, code of ethical conduct and employer policies to ensure they are providing safe, competent, compassionate, and ethical care when admitting and discharging clients from hospitals. To ensure safe admission and discharge of clients from hospital, NP must:

- perform a comprehensive assessment to determine if a client needs hospitalized care,
- work with the employer to attain any additional individual competencies/education required to safely admit or discharge clients from hospital,
- identify when the client care required is beyond their individual and professional scope of practice,
- collaborate, consult with, and refer clients to the most appropriate health care professional when the needs of the client exceed their individual scope of practice,
- ensure the client's condition has stabilized or resolved to the point where ongoing recovery or health care management can take place at home or in another healthcare setting.
- determine that ongoing care can be managed outside of the hospital setting in collaboration with team members involved in the client's care, including the individual designated as the primary care provider,
- collaborate with other care facilities to ensure a comprehensive discharge plan when appropriate.
- The client, their family and any caregivers have received all information and education required to manage the client's healthcare safely and effectively once discharged.
- arrange for any necessary supports or services, including equipment and personnel, are in place.

## *Key points*

- NPs have the authority to admit and discharge clients to hospitals under the Hospitals Act – Hospital Management Regulations.
- NPs ability to both admit and discharge clients will improve client care and access to needed health services for overall improvement in health outcomes.
- NPs must attain the required competencies related to hospital admission and discharge and work within employer policies and processes.
- NPs with questions related to liability coverage regarding responsibilities for hospital admission and discharge should contact Canadian Nurses Protection Society.