

Guidance Document

Continuing Competence Program

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

May 2026



Continuing Competence Program (CCP) for RNs, NPs, RPNs, and LPNs

The *Regulated Health Professions Act* (RHPA) requires the Council of PEICNM to establish a Continuing Competence Program (CCP) for all Registered Nurses (RNs), Registered Psychiatric Nurses (RPNs), Nurse Practitioners (NPs), and Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs). Participation in the CCP is mandatory for annual registration and is required regardless of employment status.

Continuing competence is defined as the ongoing ability to integrate and apply the knowledge, skills, judgment, and interpersonal attributes required to practice safely and ethically within a designated role and setting. It is achieved through lifelong learning, reflective practice, and the integration of new learning into professional practice. Continuing competence is essential to public protection. The public must be assured that nurses consistently meet established standards of practice and provide safe, ethical, and competent care.

The CCP serves as a regulatory and quality assurance mechanism under the RHPA. Through structured reflective learning and professional development activities, the program supports nurses in maintaining and enhancing competence throughout their careers. By requiring annual participation, the CCP strengthens public confidence and fulfills PEICNM's mandate of public protection.

Responsibility and Accountability

All nurses are accountable for their individual practice and actions at all times. They have a professional obligation to attain, maintain, and continually enhance competence relevant to their area of practice.

The obligation to maintain competence is embedded within the Standards of Practice, the Code of Ethics/Code of Ethical Conduct, regulations, and applicable legislation. The Standards of Practice form the foundation of the CCP and are integrated throughout all CCP tools and requirements.

RN Standard 3 – Responsibility and Accountability

Each nurse demonstrates responsibility and accountability to the public by providing competent, safe, and ethical nursing practice.

- **3.2:** Practices in accordance with the RHPA and its Regulations and Bylaws; the PEICNM Standards for Nursing Practice; the Code of Ethical Conduct; other relevant PEICNM documents; other relevant Acts and legislation; and individual competence and ability to evaluate own practice.

NP Standard 1 – Professional Responsibility and Accountability

- **1.4:** Attains, maintains, and enhances competencies within their own area of practice.

In addition to the NP Standards, Nurse Practitioners are also required to adhere to the RN Standards.

RPN Standard 3 – Responsibility and Accountability

The Registered Psychiatric Nurse is accountable and responsible for safe, competent, and ethical psychiatric nursing practice that meets standards of the profession and legislated requirements.

- **3.4:** Assumes responsibility and accountability for continuing competence and for meeting continuing competence requirements.

LPN Standard 1 – Professional Accountability and Responsibility

Licensed Practical Nurses are accountable for their practice and responsible for ensuring that their practice and conduct meet both the standards of the profession and legislative requirements.

- **1.2:** Self-assess their professional practice and competence and participate in continuous learning.

Definition of Client within the CCP

For the purposes of the CCP, the term *client* includes individuals, families, groups, or communities who receive nursing services.

For nurses practicing in non-clinical roles, such as education or administration, the client refers to the recipient of professional services. For example:

- An educator's client may be a student, nurse, or other care provider.
- A nurse in an administrative role may identify their team or team members as their clients.

How to complete CCP?

CCP will be completed each year during registration renewal. All nurses must complete the following steps:

Step 1: Self-Assessment

Annually each nurse must conduct and document an assessment of their own individual competence. The self-assessment must use the Standards of Practice as a reference point and be relevant to their current practice environment. The self-assessment tools are designed to stimulate personal and thoughtful reflection of individual nursing practice. The self-assessment tool does not need to be submitted to PEICNM annually but should be kept in their personal files at home.

Each nurse must complete their self-assessment using the specific tool for their specific nursing designation. These tools can be found on PEICNM's website by [clicking here](#).

Step 2: Evaluation of Learning Plan from previous year

As a part of the registration renewal process, each nurse will be asked to complete a reflective evaluation of their goal(s) that they made the previous year. The nurse will be asked to self-reflect on their learning activities and goal(s) and answer the question:

“How did completing your learning activities impact your nursing practice? Include at least one specific example”.

For RNs, NPs, and RPNs: your previous year's learning goal will be available for you to view within the renewal process.

For LPNs: the 2027–2028 renewal process will require you to access your learning plan separately from your personal records, as it was paper-based. In future renewal cycles, the learning plan will be built into the renewal process.

Step 3: Learning Module

Each year, all registrants will be required to complete a learning module regarding a specific topic. All registrants will complete the same topic each year. This will be embedded within annual registration renewal. The knowledge learned within the learning module will be used to develop a component of their Learning Plan, which will be described in Step 4.

For RNs, NPs, and RPNs: you will be required to read the *Indigenous Cultural Safety, Cultural Humility, and Anti-Racism Practice Directive* by November 1, 2026 as a part of the registration renewal process. It can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

For LPNs: you will be required to complete the learning regarding *Indigenous Cultural Safety, Cultural Humility, and Anti-Racism* by April 1, 2027 as part of the registration renewal process. It can be accessed by [clicking here](#).

Step 4: Learning Plan

The development of a learning plan will be completed as a part of the annual registration renewal process. Each registrant will be required to create two SMART learning goals.

What is a SMART goal?

A SMART goal is a structured way to create clear and achievable goals. SMART goals help provide direction, improve focus, and make it easier to measure progress.

SMART stands for:

- S – Specific
 - A specific goal clearly explains:
 - What you want to accomplish?
 - Who is involved?
 - What steps or actions are required?
 - Questions to ask yourself:
 - What exactly do I want to achieve?
 - Why is this goal important?
 - Who is involved?
 - What needs to happen?
- M - Measurable
 - A measurable goal includes a way to track progress and determine when the goal has been achieved.
 - Questions to ask yourself:
 - How will I measure success?
 - How will I know when I have reached the goal?
 - What evidence will show progress?
- A – Achievable
 - An achievable goal is realistic and attainable based on available time, resources, skills, and supports.
 - Questions to ask yourself:
 - Is this goal realistic?
 - Do I have the skills or resources needed?

- What supports may help me succeed?
- R – Relevant
 - A relevant goal aligns with your priorities, responsibilities, or long-term objectives.
 - Questions to ask yourself:
 - Why does this goal matter?
 - Does this support my professional development?
 - Is this the right time to focus on this goal?
- T – Time Bound
 - A time-bound goal includes a clear timeline or deadline.
 - Questions to ask yourself:
 - When will I complete this goal?
 - What is my target date?
 - Are there milestones I should meet along the way?

Examples of a well-written SMART goal:

- ✓ I will attend two continuing education workshops related to nursing leadership skills by June 2027.
- ✓ I will increase my knowledge of diabetes management by reviewing one current clinical guideline each month and sharing one key learning point with colleagues during staff meetings over the next six months.

Examples of a poorly written SMART goal:

- ❖ I want to know more about nursing policies.
- ❖ I will improve my communication skills.
- ❖ I will make no medication errors this year.

One of the learning goals must be related to the learning module completed in Step 3 and the other learning goal must be specific to the nurse's own practice. The nurse must relate each learning goal to a specific Standard of Practice of their own nursing designation.

If the nurse is not currently working, they must anticipate how their learning will impact their practice when they return to work.

Please note that not all learning meets CCP requirements. Employer mandated education and/or review of knowledge (for example: CPR, WHMIS, TLR) are not considered acceptable learning goals as they are not specific to nursing and they also apply to a variety of non-nurse care providers.

Learning activities can be formal (for example, course work leading to a certificate) or informal (for example, lunch and learns, self-directed study, reading journals, elearning).

Step 5: Audit