



The Nova Scotia College of Nursing (NSCN) is the regulatory body for licensed practical nurses (LPNs), registered nurses (RNs) and nurse practitioners (NPs) in Nova Scotia. Our mandate is to protect the public by promoting the provision of safe, competent, ethical and compassionate nursing services by its registrants. The term nurse in this document refers to LPNs, NPs, and RNs unless otherwise stated.

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Our practice support tools are developed using current reference material. The source of this material is available upon request.



When NSCN was formed on June 4, 2019, each legacy College had a slightly different continuing competence program (CCP). Over the coming years, there will be a review and revision of the continuing competence requirements for all nurses. For example, the CCP for LPNs used a retrospective evaluation reflecting on the impact of the learning once the plan was completed. The CCP for RNs and NPs used a prospective evaluation reflecting on how they planned to evaluate the impact of the learning on their nursing practice.

For the interim, we have unified the process and expectations of each program as much as currently possible. This guide describes the interim Continuing Competence Program (CCP) requirements for all nurses in Nova Scotia effective January 13, 2020 until further notice.

Overview of CCP

WHAT IS CCP?

Continuing competence is career-long enhancement of knowledge, skill, and judgment required to practise safely and ethically.

The CCP is a regulatory program and quality assurance mechanism outlined in the Nursing Act to support nurses in facilitating their continuing competence. Every nurse in Nova Scotia is required to complete the CCP requirements as part of their annual licensure requirement, regardless of their employment status.

The CCP provide a level of assurance to the public that nurses are continuously meeting their professional practice standards. This program contributes to our mandate of public protection by requiring every nurse in Nova Scotia to participate annually in reflective learning activities designed to help them maintain and enhance their professional competence.

Within CCP, the client includes any individuals, families, groups or communities who are the recipient of nursing services. For nurses in non-clinical positions, such as education or management, the client is the recipient of your services. As an educator for example, your client may be a student, nurse or other care provider. As a manager, your client may be your team or individuals on your team.

INTEGRATION OF STANDARDS OF PRACTICE RELATED AND CCP

All nurses are accountable for their own practice and actions at all times and have a professional obligation to attain and maintain competence relevant to their practice area(s).

Competence is acquired and maintained through lifelong learning, the integration of learning into practice and reflective practice. As a result, the standards of practice serve as the foundation for the CCP requirements and is integrated into all of the CCP tools.

This obligation to attain and maintain competence is inherent in the standards of practice:

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 LPNs engage in ongoing self-assessment of their professional practice and competence, and seek opportunities for continuous learning.

RN STANDARD 1: Responsibility and Accountability

Registered nurses are responsible to practise safely, competently, compassionately and ethically and are accountable to clients, the employer, the profession and the public.

- 1.9 Demonstrating continuing professional development, including compliance with the NSCN Continuing Competence Program.

NP STANDARD 1: Responsibility and Accountability

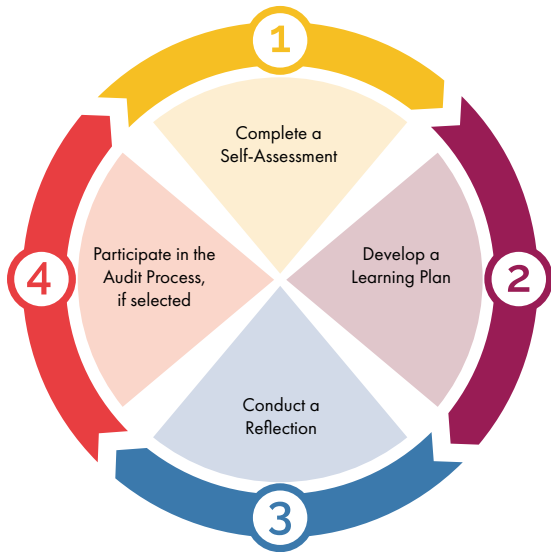
Nurse practitioners are accountable to provide safe, competent, compassionate and ethical care within their legislated scope of practice, educational preparation and individual competence. In their role, nurse practitioners are accountable to critically appraise evidence and to apply best practice in their client care.

- 1.3 Meet all requirements for licensure, quality assurance and auditing programs.
- 1.10 Engage in education and professional development activities to maintain their competence

In addition to the NP standards, NPs must also to adhere to the RN Standards.

How to Complete the Program

WHAT ARE THE CCP STEPS FOR LPNS?



STEP 1: Complete a Self-Assessment

Every year, you must conduct and document an assessment of your individual competence. The self-assessment must use the Standards of Practice for LPNs as a reference point and be relevant to your current practice environment. The NSCN self-assessment tools are designed to stimulate personal and thoughtful reflection of individual nursing practice.

You will never be required to submit your completed self-assessment to NSCN as part of the CCP audit process. Keep the completed self-assessment in a personal file at home.

Complete your self-assessment using the LPN Self-Assessment Tool

STEP 2: Develop a Learning Plan

The development and implementation of a learning plan is the blueprint you use to set, meet and reflect on your professional development goals.

Your learning plan must:

- Identify at least two activities with objectives on how you will gain that knowledge as well as clear timelines for completion.
- Identify which standard and indicator corresponds with your learning goals

Complete your learning plan using the NSCN Learning Plan Tool .

Some learning goals do **not** meet CCP requirements. It is important to note employer-mandated education and/or review of knowledge (e.g. CPR, WHMIS, lifts and transfers, etc.) 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 .

STEP 3: Conduct a Reflection

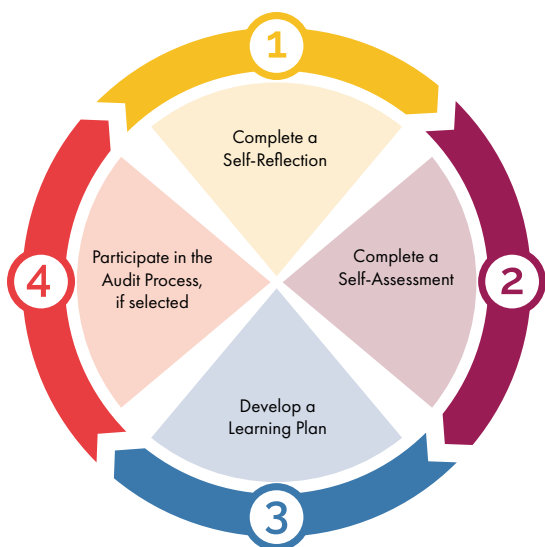
The purpose of reflection is to give you an opportunity to think about the overall impact of the learning and to articulate how meeting the learning goals has improved client outcomes and enhanced your everyday practice.

- There is a section in your learning plan tool that prompts you to document your reflection. You have successfully completed this step when you have completed this section of the learning plan.

STEP 4: Participate in the Audit Process, If Selected

On a rotational basis, a randomly selected group of nurses must participate in the audit process. If selected for audit, you are required to submit a copy of your completed learning plan to NSCN for verification. More information about this process can be found on page 5 of this guide.

WHAT ARE THE CCP STEPS FOR RNS AND NPS?



STEP 1: Complete a Self-Reflection

As part of the process, you must engage in reflective practice and consider events in your nursing practice over the past year that may have represented learning opportunities for you. This will help you to participate in a meaningful self-assessment of your practice.

STEP 2: Complete a Self-Assessment

Every year, you must conduct and document an assessment of your individual competence. The self-assessment must use the standards of practice as a reference point and be relevant to your current practice environment. The NSCN self-assessment tools are designed to stimulate personal and thoughtful reflection of individual nursing practice and how you are meeting the RN or NP standards of practice.

You will never be required to submit your completed self-assessment to NSCN as part of the CCP audit process. Keep the completed self-assessment in a personal file at home.

Complete your self-assessment using the RN/NP Self-Assessment Tool .

STEP 3: Develop a Learning Plan

The development and implementation of a learning plan is the blueprint you use to set, meet and evaluate your professional development goals. Use your self-reflection and self-assessment to inform your plan. Implement your plan over the licensing year and review it regularly to make sure you are staying on track.

Your learning plan must:

- Identify at least two activities with objectives on how you will gain that knowledge as well as clear timelines for completion.
- Identify which standard and indicator corresponds with your learning goals
- Identify how you plan to evaluate your new knowledge

Complete your learning plan using the NSCN Learning Plan Tool .

Some learning goals do not meet CCP requirements. It is important to note employer-mandated education and/or review of knowledge (e.g. CPR, WHMIS, lifts and transfers, etc.) 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.

STEP 4: Participate in the Audit Process, If Selected

On a rotational basis, a randomly selected group of nurses must participate in the audit process. If selected for audit you are required to submit a copy of your completed learning plan to NSCN for verification.

More on the Audit Process

THE AUDIT PROCESS IF RANDOMLY SELECTED

NSCN is required to conduct a CCP audit as part of meeting its mandate of public safety.

A randomly selected list of nurses is generated in January and registrants are notified by mail and email in February. Those randomly selected will have 60 days to submit a copy of their completed learning plan to NSCN.

Once NSCN receives your submission:

Each learning plan will be reviewed by NSCN staff against a scoring rubric to determine if there is enough information to verify compliance with the CCP as evidenced by:

- Appropriate learning goals and activities to meet the identified goals
- Implementation within the prescribed time frame
- Clear reflection articulating the impact the learning has had on client outcomes and individual nursing practice.

The CCP Committee will review each plan that has been identified by NSCN staff as not meeting established criteria submission for verification of compliance.

You will be notified of the outcome and whether you:

- Meet verification criteria
- Are required to submit more information or;
- Are required to resubmit a learning plan

Additional Support

CCP RESOURCES

- [CCP FAQs](#)
- NSCN Self-Assessment Tools
 - [LPN](#)
 - [RN](#)
 - [NP](#)
- NSCN [Learning Plan Tool](#) and examples for each designation

Do you have any other CCP-related Questions?

Please contact a NSCN Practice Consultant by emailing ccp@nscn.ca.