



# Uniting B.C.'s Four Nursing Designations

Submitted by Nurses and Nurse Practitioners of BC

## At the core of B.C.'s transformational health-care system strategy is a team-based approach to care.

Interdisciplinary teams of health-care providers are working collaboratively together to offer seamless access to a range of services that patients need, when they need them. Health-care teams are vital to those working in the nursing profession.

The field of nursing is made up of a diverse group of clinicians, educators, policy makers, administrators, researchers, managers, innovators and health-care leaders. There are differences in scope and focus within the nursing profession, which is made up of four designations: Registered Nurses, Licensed Practical Nurses, Registered Psychiatric Nurses, and Nurse Practitioners. While there are similarities between all designations, each one is distinct in the level of educational preparation, training, and scope of practice.

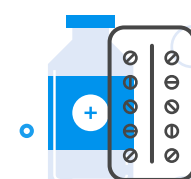


### Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs)

LPNs support the health and well-being of individuals, families, groups, communities, populations and systems by observing, assessing, monitoring, and documenting patient symptoms, reactions, and progress. They administer medications, perform medical procedures, educate and inform about nutrition, self-care, medication management, disease prevention and promote health and wellness to patients, families and caregivers.

### Registered Nurses (RNs)

RNs were the first of the recognized designations and remain the largest contributing their scientific knowledge, technical skills and clinical expertise to the health needs of their patients, clients, residents, and communities. This includes direct care delivery across the spectrum of acute and chronic conditions, health education and literacy, social justice, cultural safety and humility. RNs also serve as key community resources and contribute to research activities, help to advance health-care knowledge using innovative approaches, and engage in clinical governance by developing guidelines, protocols and policy.



### Registered Psychiatric Nurses (RPNs)

RPNs, a designation unique to Western Canada, have a primary care focus on psychosocial, developmental, emotional or mental health. RPNs care for people of all ages experiencing issues related to mental health, substance use or complex behavioral challenges and possess specialized mental health assessment and psychiatric intervention skills.

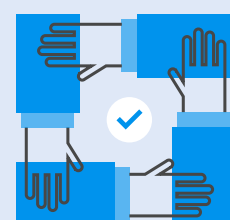


### Nurse Practitioners (NPs)

NPs were first introduced to B.C. in 2005 and are advanced practice nurses who have completed specialized clinical education at the Master's or Doctoral of Nursing Practice level, which enables them to blend nursing and medical knowledge in their practice. NPs diagnose, treat and manage disease and illness, prescribe medications, order and interpret laboratory and diagnostic tests, and initiate referrals to specialists.

Nurses from all four designations – working collaboratively with other health-care professionals – are integral in improving the health outcomes of patients and influencing the health-care system. While each designation practices under a different scope of practice, the core values of nursing remain the same for all designations. Core values include providing safe, compassionate, competent and ethical care, promoting health and well-being, promoting and respecting informed decision making, preserving dignity, maintaining privacy and confidentiality, promoting justice, and being accountable. Ensuring that nurses are supported to work well together improves the health-care system and enables the nursing profession to contribute to healthy public policy through a unified single nursing professional policy “voice”.

As the professional association that represents all of B.C.'s nursing designations, the Association of Nurses and Nurse Practitioners of BC (NNPBC) brings nursing together collaboratively, respectfully, with a focus on shared leadership and an emphasis on healthy public policy. NNPBC provides the venue and the outlet for nurses to focus on common goals, to understand their distinctiveness and to bring those perspectives together at a board table that allows for equal representation among the designations. The core of the work is making sure that the profession of nursing is well positioned to advance approaches that are focused on solutions to issues that impact nursing, the health of the population, and the health-care system of British Columbia.



We welcome your input and feedback. Contact us at: [MOHNNewsletter@gov.bc.ca](mailto:MOHNNewsletter@gov.bc.ca)

