

## BC's Nurse Practitioner – An essential resource for healthcare

### **Background:**

- NPs work independently or in partnership with other care providers to deliver a range of primary and acute health care services
- NPs introduced into BC's health care system in 2005 with the goals of increasing health provider manpower and improving access to primary health care services for British Columbian's.
- Nurse Practitioner care is legislated under the Health Profession Act similar to other autonomous health care providers.

### **Education:** Master in Nursing – Nurse Practitioner

- Nurse Practitioner students must have completed an undergraduate degree in nursing and have relevant work experience as a Registered Nurse.
- NPs have completed a Masters or Doctoral degree from an approved University.

### **Self – Regulation/Licensing:**

- Nurse Practitioner practice is regulated by its provincial disciplinary body, the College of Registered Nurses of BC (CRNBC).
- Nurse Practitioners demonstrate competency by completing both a written exam and an Objective Structured Clinical Exam (OSCE).
- On-going competency is measured by annual self-appraisal including on-going continuing medical education at NP or MD level and a professional practice review every 5 years carried out by CRNBC on site evaluator.

### **Nurse Practitioner Care:**

- NPs deliver excellence in supportive patient centered clinical care by combining advanced nursing assessment, care planning and patient education with medical diagnostics and therapeutics.
- NPs stress both care and cure
- NPs can diagnose and treat most common medical conditions for patients across the lifespan.
- NPs practice within the primary healthcare mandate by providing needed access to essential health care and work collaboratively with other health professionals as part of a patient's health care team.
- NPs use medical technology and confidential chart records in a way that is familiar to Canadians.
- Additionally, NPs use their nursing knowledge to focus on health promotion, disease prevention, health education and counselling.
- NP practice is independent and self regulated and does not require oversight from other professional groups.

Among the many services that NPs provide, they:

- Order, perform and interpret diagnostic tests such as lab work and x-rays
- Diagnose and treat common acute and chronic conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, infections and injuries
- Prescribe medications and other treatments
- Manage patients' overall health care
- Provide counselling

- Help patients learn how their actions affect their health and well-being

**Advanced Practice Nursing Skills:** NPs have additional education and skills enabling them to effectively:

- Serve as leaders and change agents in health service delivery
- Participate in and to take a leadership role in program development and evaluation functions.
- Actively participate in healthcare research and evaluation in clinical care, population health and program quality assurance.

**Nurse Practitioners deliver health care services in:**

- Community Primary Health Care teams
- FFS Family Physician Practice
- Variety of Acute/Specialty Medicine & Surgical Care teams
- Rural and urban settings
- First Nations health clinics
- Immigrant health clinics
- Areas with socially vulnerable including street entrenched, including clients with HIV/Aids and addictions
- Mental Health services
- Community Frail Elderly Home Health programs

NPs provide personalized, cost effective care to patients across the country. NPs are an essential ingredient for healthcare in BC.

For more information about Nurse Practitioners

<https://www.crnbc.ca/Standards/ScopePractice/Pages/Default.aspx>

[http://www.cna-nurses.ca/cna/practice/advanced/initiative/default\\_e.aspx](http://www.cna-nurses.ca/cna/practice/advanced/initiative/default_e.aspx)