

CODE OF ETHICS

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College of Licensed Practical
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Introduction: The Code of Ethics as Foundation to Practice

This Code of Ethics for the College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Manitoba (CLPNM) articulates specific standards that are based on the values of the nursing profession. These values are:

- Respect and dignity of the person
- Compassionate care
- Trustworthy professional relationships
- Informed decision-making
- Safety and protection of the public
- Privacy and confidentiality
- Justice, equity, and fairness
- Quality work environments

More specifically, the Code of Ethics serves as the foundation for the nurse's¹ professional practice. Further, the Code:

- Outlines the nursing profession's commitment to respect, promote, protect, and uphold the fundamental rights of people who are both the recipients and the providers of health care
- Describes the accepted standards for ethical decision-making, ethical practice, and the professional conduct expected of nurses
- Provides a framework for professional integrity, accountability, and responsibility

All CLPNM registrants (licensed practical nurses, graduate practical nurses and student practical nurses), in all roles and settings, are held accountable for understanding, upholding, and promoting the ethical standards of the profession.

¹ In this document, "nurse" refers to the following CLPNM registrants: licensed practical nurses, graduate practical nurses, and student practical nurses.

Ethical Standards and Responsibilities

Six broad ethical standards, listed below, govern the conduct of members of the Licensed Practical Nursing profession. The value statements following each standard describe the ideals for nursing care and establish reasonable directions for practice. The six ethical standards for the profession are:

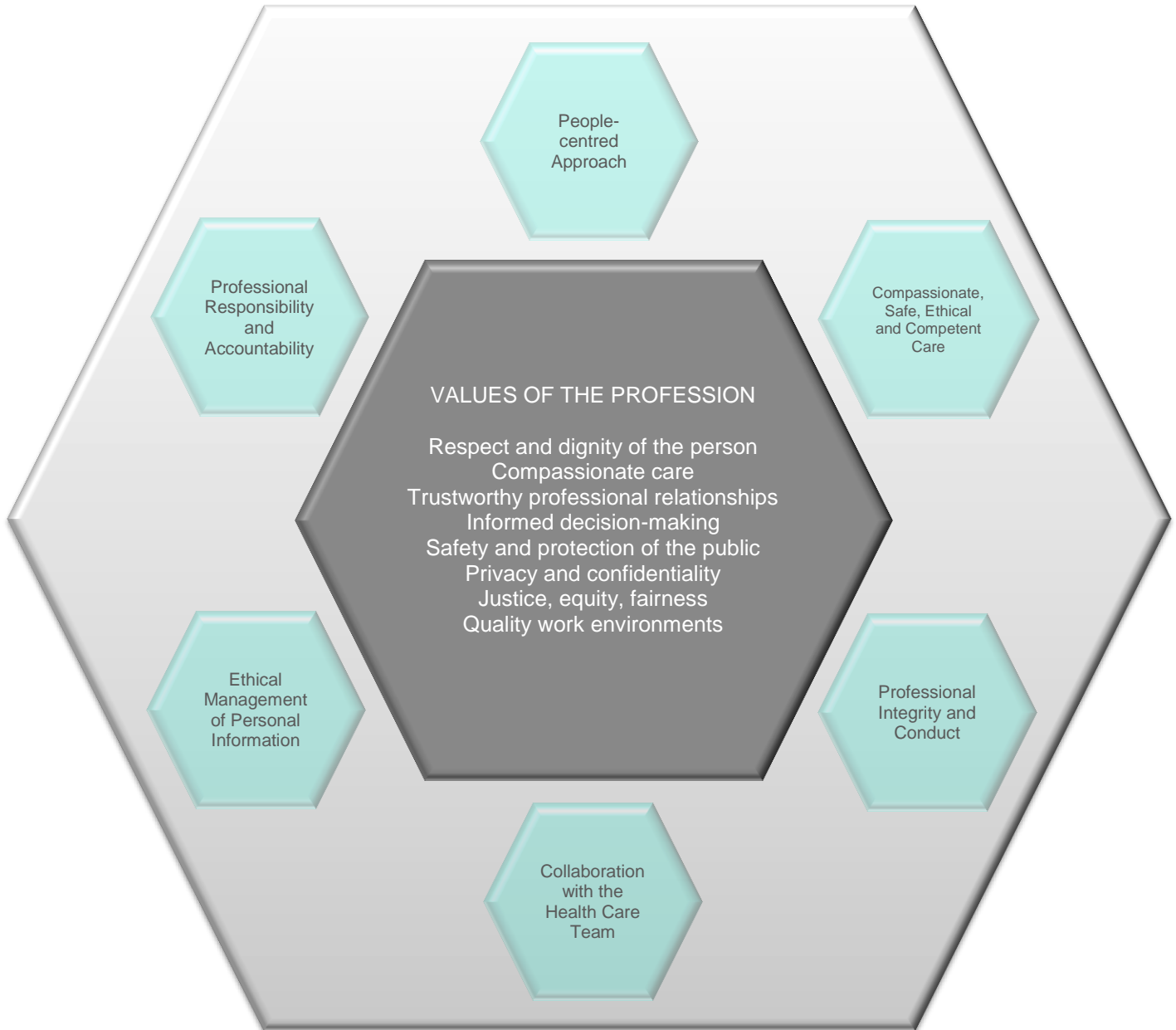
1. People-centred approach: Nurses empower and enable people to maintain, promote, and protect their health and well-being.
2. Compassionate, safe, ethical, and competent care: Nurses are committed to providing quality, compassionate, safe, ethical, and competent care.
3. Ethical management of personal health information: Nurses manage the privacy and confidentiality of personal health information.
4. Collaboration with the health care team: Nurses encourage and support collaborative, comprehensive, and integrated health care.
5. Professional integrity and conduct: Nurses act with integrity and are mindful of their professional conduct.
6. Professional responsibility and accountability: Nurses, as members of a self-regulating profession, are responsible for knowing the Code of Ethics, are accountable for their actions and decisions, and are answerable to the CLPNM for their practice.

The ethical responsibilities of nurses are described below under the headings for each of the ethical standards. The nurse carries out these responsibilities in his or her daily practice when collaborating with the health care team, the client,² students, colleagues, other health care professionals, and other stakeholders involved in promoting the health and well-being of people. Nurses in all areas of practice are held accountable for demonstrating the

² The client is the person with whom the nurse is engaged in a professional therapeutic relationship. The client may also include the natural supports and/or substitute decision-makers for the individual client. The client may also be a family, group/aggregate, or a population residing in a specific community.

responsibilities identified under each of the six broad ethical standards. The relationship between values and standards is illustrated in the diagram below.

FOUNDATION FOR THE LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSE'S PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE



1. People-Centred Approach

Nurses empower and enable people to maintain, promote, and protect their health and well-being.

Respect and Dignity – *Ethical responsibilities ... The Nurse:*

- Recognizes and respects the inherent worth of each person
- Expresses regard for individual uniqueness and does not discriminate on the basis of a person's colour, race, national or ethnic origin, culture, political or spiritual beliefs, creed, gender, age, marital, family or legal status, lifestyle, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, socio-economic status, or any other attribute
- Respects the rights, values, preferences, beliefs, cultural background and knowledge of the client, family/designate, and community when planning for or providing care and services
- Respects the client's choice and autonomy for care and treatment decisions
- Advocates for the client without bias or discrimination
- Builds, preserves, and respects the trust and privilege inherent in the relationship between the nurse and people receiving care
- Upholds principles of justice, equity, and fairness in the delivery of health care services

Information – *Ethical responsibilities ... The Nurse:*

- Provides accurate, unbiased, and timely information to facilitate informed decision-making
- Ensures sufficient and appropriate information is provided on which to base an informed consent for care and related treatment, including risks, benefits, and efficacy of options
- Respects the wishes of the client and family/designate to refuse information or treatment about the client's health condition

- Provides to the client, in advance of service, information regarding any relevant fees that might be charged by the nurse

Participation – *Ethical responsibilities ... The Nurse:*

- Supports capacity-building to help clients, families/designates, and communities become better informed and more engaged.
- Partners with clients, families/designates, and communities to achieve a healthier society
- Partners with the client or designate, to his or her level of ability and preference, when making decisions that affect the client's health
- Encourages and respects the client's autonomy and responsibility for his or her health and well-being
- Promotes capacity for self-management and self-care of the client
- Assists the client and family/designate in making decisions that will support positive health outcomes and in deliberations about the client's care
- Acknowledges and supports the client's right to integrate alternative approaches to health care

2. Compassionate, Safe, Ethical and Competent Care

Nurses are committed to providing quality, compassionate, safe, ethical, and competent care.

Ethical responsibilities ... The Nurse:

- Engages in compassionate care by:
 - Being fully present, open, and attentive to the client, family/designate, and the community
 - Caring about individuals, listening, and building open, honest, and trusting relationships
 - Taking professional action to meet the needs of the clients
- Ensures that any technology and scientific advances that may be offered to a client are compatible with the safety, dignity, and rights of people
- Advocates for sufficient resources to provide safe and competent care
- Takes all reasonable steps to avoid doing harm
- Takes appropriate action to safeguard individuals, families, and communities (including reporting to the applicable authorities) when their health is endangered by a co-worker or any other person
- Seeks advice from other health care professionals when necessary to provide safe and competent care
- Safeguards the health and safety of individuals during violent situations, job action, and natural or human-made disasters
- Advocates for discussion of ethical issues among team members, the client, family/designate, and community as necessary
- Contributes to the development of organizational policies and procedures for the delivery of competent, safe, and ethical nursing care

3. Ethical Management of Personal Health Information

Nurses manage the privacy and confidentiality of personal health information.

Ethical responsibilities ... The Nurse:

- Acknowledges and respects the right of individuals to have control over the collection, use, access, and disclosure of their personal health information
- Protects and respects the client's right to access his or her own personal health information
- Protects and respects the client's right to privacy and confidentiality
- Advocates for and complies with employer policies and practices that protect client information
- Treats personal health information obtained in a professional capacity as private and confidential and uses judgment in sharing this information
- Complies with the *Personal Health Information Act* and other applicable legislation pertaining to the access, collection, use and disclosure of personal health information
- Discloses personal health information only for legitimate and authorized purposes connected with the nurse's role, such as:
 - to another member of the client's health care team when necessary for the client's care, unless the client has instructed the nurse not to,
 - with the client's consent, or
 - when legally obligated to do so
- Reports breaches of privacy and confidentiality

4. Collaboration with the Health Care Team

Nurses encourage and support collaborative, comprehensive, and integrated health care.

Ethical responsibilities ... The Nurse:

- Treats all health care providers with dignity and respect
- Acknowledges and respects the role, knowledge, and competencies of other health care providers
- Promotes and supports colleagues and other team members to practice to their full scope of practice
- Explains to clients and communities the roles and responsibilities of the nurse and other health care team members
- Uses effective interpersonal communication strategies to foster respectful and collaborative relationships with clients, colleagues, and other health care stakeholders
- Exercises judgment in directing and delegating client care to other health care providers
- Uses conflict resolution skills to work toward solutions whenever conflict occurs during any interdisciplinary interactions
- Provides to, and accepts feedback from, other members of the health care team to support professional development
- Acts as a role model, resource, and mentor to clients, learners, nursing peers, and colleagues

5. Professional Integrity and Conduct

Nurses act with integrity and are mindful of their professional conduct.

Ethical responsibilities ... The Nurse:

- Demonstrates honesty, integrity, and professionalism
- Uses reflective thought and feedback from others when assessing his or her own practice
- Adheres to policies and procedures of the employment setting
- Admits mistakes, assumes responsibility for errors, and takes necessary actions to prevent or minimize harm to clients
- Should harm occur, notifies the client, takes appropriate action to prevent further harm, and complies with related employer policies
- Accepts responsibility for “fitness to practice” (i.e., personal physical, spiritual, mental, and emotional wellness) in order to provide safe and competent nursing care
- Demonstrates respect and kindness for self and others
- Practices nursing reflectively and ethically
- Maintains at all times standards of personal conduct, which reflect well on the profession and enhance public confidence
- Represents services provided accurately and honestly when billing the client or the client’s insurer
- Represents his or her training and level of competence accurately and honestly to clients, employers and the public
- Maintains appropriate boundaries between professional therapeutic relationships and non-professional personal relationships

- Recognizes his or her own personal values and beliefs, and takes measures to avoid any negative impact on client care, nursing practice and the practice environment
- Takes measures to avoid any real or perceived conflict between the nurse's personal interests and those of the client
- Does not accept any personal benefits (including financial benefits or gifts) that could influence, or appear to influence, the nurse's professional practice
- Discloses to the client any unavoidable personal interest, value or belief that could conflict with, or appear to conflict with, the interests of the client
- In all cases, places the interests of the client above the nurse's own in his or her professional nursing practice

6. Professional Responsibility and Accountability

Nurses, as members of a self-regulating profession, are responsible for knowing the Code of Ethics, are accountable for their actions and decisions, and are answerable to the CLPNM for their practice.

The Nursing Profession – *Ethical responsibilities ... The Nurse:*

- Practices within the CLPNM’s Scope of Practice and within the limits of his or her own competence
- Practices according to the Professional Standards³ of the nursing profession and in keeping with the laws and regulations guiding the nurse’s practice
- Contributes to the review and revisions of the Professional Standards
- Assumes responsibility to effectively communicate with the employer and reports to the CLPNM when organizational policies and practices conflict with the Professional Standards
- Stays informed about any regulatory changes that affect the nursing practice
- Understands, supports, and participates in the mandate of the CLPNM to protect the public
- Promotes and participates in the continuing development of the nursing profession

Continuing Competence – *Ethical responsibilities ... The Nurse:*

- Continually assesses his or her own competence to identify learning needs and opportunities for growth and development
- Incorporates evidence-based learning into nursing practice
- Uses relevant previous experiences to inform decisions

³ The CLPNM Professional Standards provide the legal and professional basis for nursing practice and comprise the Code of Ethics (values of the profession), the Standards of Practice (legal and professional foundations), any Regulatory Bulletins or Practice Directions (enhance, explain and guide practice), and the competency standards (theoretical and practical knowledge of the LPN).

- Is aware of the changing trends in nursing, health systems, and society that affect practice
- Participates in professional development to enhance nursing practice
- Participates in the CLPNM's continuing competency program

Quality practice environment – Ethical responsibilities ... The Nurse:

- Participates in creating and maintaining safe and equitable social and economic working conditions in nursing
- Uses resources effectively and efficiently when providing nursing services
- Promotes a practice environment that supports ethical behaviour and practice
- Advocates for developing, implementing, and evaluating best practice guidelines
- Promotes an environment in which the human rights, values, customs, and spiritual beliefs of the individual, family, and community are respected