



Practical Nursing Program – Frequently Asked Questions

Why should I consider the Practical Nursing program? What sets this program apart from other programs?

As a student in the Practical Nursing program, you will gain skills in providing nursing care to individuals of all ages under the expert guidance of our faculty.

The curriculum is based on principles of primary health care.

This program also stands out because it is nationally recognized and provides relevant content that prepares graduates to work in a variety of practice environments.

What are the program highlights? What is the focus in each semester?

The focus of each semester is as follows:

Semester 1

An introduction to the concepts of health promotion and illness prevention with a clinical focus on the older adult.

Semester 2

Rehabilitative/supportive care and the concepts of mental health with a clinical focus on individuals with chronic health challenges.

Semester 3

Theoretical and clinical experiences associated with curative/restorative care in the acute care setting and the concepts of perinatal nursing, child and adolescent nursing.

Semester 4

The transition from student to graduate practical nurse with an additional focus on the nursing of Aboriginal people.

Each semester contains a clinical experience that will help you put theory into practice.

How is the program structured?

The program is based on a sequential four semester approach to course offerings. The courses are organized into streams that flow across each semester. They are designed to meet diverse learning styles.

Instructional methods include seminars, observational experiences, pre and post-clinical conferences, small group presentations, lectures, demonstrations, role-playing, storytelling, discussion, reflective thinking and writing, and simulation lab experiences.

Opportunities for critical reflection about a caring based practice, development of employability skills and understanding the role and scope of practice of the licensed practical nurse (LPN) are blended into the program's learning activities.

The clinical practice courses are integrative in nature and, as such, the evaluation of your performance in the clinical setting involves evaluating the application of the theoretical concepts learned in all the

other courses in the care of clients. This is what ultimately determines your progress toward achieving the competencies of the beginning practical nurse.

So I can prepare and plan appropriately (i.e childcare, employment), what would my schedule look like as a student in the on-campus program?

Courses are typically scheduled on-campus Monday through Friday 0830-1530. However, there may be occasional classes/labs that start earlier or end later than these times.

Clinical experiences commence at a variety of times depending on the specific clinical experience, (e.g. some shifts may begin as early as 6:30 a.m.). Clinical and practicum shifts may vary and could include days, evening, nights or weekend experiences. The length of clinical and practicum shifts may vary as well including eight, ten and twelve hour shifts.

Is this program approved?

The Saskatchewan Association of Licensed Practical Nurses (SALPN) is responsible for the approval of the Practical Nursing program. The approval criterion ensures that graduates meet the standards and competencies for practice as set forth by SALPN.

What is the difference between a licensed practical nurse (LPN) and a registered nurse (RN)?

A licensed practical nurse provides professional nursing care for individuals across the lifespan within the context of family and community. A registered nurse, who also provides nursing care for individuals, focuses on broader health promotion and illness prevention aspects of care for individuals, families, groups and communities.

What are the employment opportunities like after graduation?

Employment opportunities are excellent and reflect current and projected critical shortages of licensed practical nurses.

There is national reciprocity of Sask Polytech graduates so you will be able to work in any province in Canada or in the Northwest Territories. Graduates have also accepted positions in the United States and overseas.

Do LPNs work shift work?

While it depends on the place of employment, historically, licensed practical nurses work a combination of days, evenings and/or night shifts that are eight or twelve hours long.

Do I need to get a Criminal Record Check?

Yes, your clinical practice experience will occur in settings in which you will provide direct client care. For the protection of clients, the program requires that each student provide the results of a Criminal Record Check, including vulnerable sector query and fingerprinting if required as part of the program registration process.

Accepted applicants will be required to provide evidence of a Criminal Record Check upon admission into the program. Additional Criminal Record Checks may be required by specific clinical agencies. At the discretion of a health region or clinical agency, you may be declined access to a clinical or work placement based on the contents of the Criminal Record Check. Any cost associated with the Criminal Record Check is your responsibility.

Do I need to have a current CPR & First Aid Certificate?

Prior to commencement of the Practical Nursing program, you are required to have certification for CPR Health Care Provider "C" - AED and Standard First Aid. On the first day, please provide proof of certification to the program. Failure to do so will result in exclusion from clinical experiences and discontinuation from the program. According to program policy the CPR Health Care Provider "C" - AED certificate is valid for two years from date of issue and a Standard First Aid Certificate is valid for three years from date of issue.

Do I need to have a Transferring Lifting Repositioning (TLR) Certificate?

Students in the Practical Nursing program are required to be certified in TLR in order to participate in clinical experiences. Proof of TLR certification must be provided at the beginning of the program. Failure to do so will result in exclusion from clinical experiences and discontinuation from the program.

Students coming into the program who have previously been certified in TLR need to ensure it has been recertified within one year prior to commencing the program.

Are there any immunizations that are required for the program?

Accepted applicants are required to provide current immunization records and meet Saskatchewan Polytechnic immunization requirements prior to entry into clinical/practicum experiences. More detailed information regarding immunization requirements will be provided in your welcome package and during program orientation.

Can I take the program part-time?

You may take APHY 162 & APHY 262 as a part time evening student at Parkland College. Selected courses from this program are available through continuing education with Sask Polytechnic, prior to being enrolled as a student in the full-time program. These courses are: APHY 162, APHY 262, SOCI 160, SOCI 260 and SOCI 261. For more information on these course offerings, please refer to the Saskatchewan Polytechnic's website for more details.

Are there ways for me to complete the program sooner?

No, we do not have an accelerated option to complete the program.

Can I take any of the courses before I start my program on a full-time basis?

Yes, selected courses from this program are available through continuing education distance learning (home study and online) as an unclassified student prior to enrolling in the full-time program. You will need to meet the program entrance requirements, submit an application, and be selected from the qualified candidates.

I have worked as a Continuing Care Assistant. Would I get any credit for that training?

For more information go to [Bridging Option to Practical Nursing Program for Continuing Care Assistants](#).

If English is not my first learned language, do I need to provide proof of English Language Proficiency (ELP) to be accepted into the program?

Yes. Applicants must provide evidence of completing a minimum of two (2) years of full-time study in English in Canada or submit English Language Proficiency results from IELTS or the CELBAN (CELBAN only an option if an internationally educated nurse).

IELTS: must meet the minimum in each component in addition to meeting an overall of 7.

- Writing - 7
- Speaking - 7
- Listening - 7.5
- Reading - 6.5

CELBAN (only an option if an internationally educated nurse)

- Writing - 7
- Speaking - 8
- Listening - 10
- Reading - 8

When will I know if I am accepted into the program?

Letters of acceptance are sent out after the application period has ended. This typically would occur by the middle of April.

Where can I buy my books and other materials?

Information on purchasing textbooks and course manuals will be provided when you register. Material is available for purchase online, by phone, or in person.

Are there any bursaries that I can apply for?

Six Saskatchewan Association of Licensed Practical Nurses (SALPN) bursaries are presented annually to students eligible for graduation and who have overall achievement in the Practical Nursing program including academic and clinical performance, interaction with clients and family in the clinical setting, leadership skills and community or school involvement.

Parkland College counselors can provide information regarding additional funding opportunities for Practical Nursing students.

Are the graduates of the Practical Nursing program required to write an exam in order to become a LPN?

Yes, in order to become licensed, following completion of the program, graduates write a Canadian Practical Nursing Registration Exam (CPNRE).

If I want, can I further my education in nursing and get credit for what I have?

The Practical Nursing program is not a step towards becoming a registered nurse; however, if program graduates want to pursue further education in the discipline of nursing, credit options may be available.

Sask Polytech and the University of Regina are offering the Saskatchewan Collaborative Bachelor of Science in Nursing (SCBScN). Transfer credit is available for Practical Nursing graduates wishing to pursue the SCBScN program.

What completion document do I receive after completing the program?

Upon graduation, you will receive a diploma in Practical Nursing.