



College of
Registered Nurses
of Manitoba

Competencies for RN(AP)s*

*Registered nurse (authorized prescriber) denotes the final title and is synonymous with RN(AP)

Purpose

The competencies for RN(AP)s describe the integrated knowledge, skills, judgment and attributes that guide registered nurse (authorized prescriber)s in order to incorporate prescriptive authority safely, competently and ethically into their professional nursing practice. Safe, competent, ethical RN(AP) practice requires the integration and performance of many competencies simultaneously.

The competencies serve as a guide for curriculum development for course(s) of instruction required for registered nurses seeking prescriptive authority. They also inform the public and employer of the knowledge, skills, judgment and attributes necessary in order to meet practice expectations of RN(AP)s. RN(AP)s may use the competencies to support their self-reflection, self-evaluation, and continuing competence, as well as to educate others about their role.

Assumptions

1. The practice for RN(AP)s is grounded in the values, knowledge and theories of professional nursing practice.
2. RN(AP) competencies build and expand upon the competencies required of an RN.
3. RN(AP) competencies require additional nursing education related to the role of authorized prescribing.
4. RN(AP)s work in collaboration with other health-care providers to provide safe, high-quality health-care services.
5. The RN(AP) will self-declare the client population for which they have been granted prescriptive authority, and will prescribe only those specific drugs or vaccines as set out in the Regulation to meet the identified unmet needs specific to that population.

Competencies

Assessment and Diagnosis of Client Health/Illness Status

1. Conducts a thorough and accurate assessment, history taking, and consultation of individuals within the client population identified as having an unmet health need.
2. Employs critical thinking and diagnostic reasoning skills in clinical decision-making by synthesizing health information to identify health risks and concerns and to make appropriate diagnoses.
3. In the process of making a diagnosis, applies scientific knowledge that considers: etiology, developmental stage, physiology, pathophysiology and pathogenesis, and the clinical manifestations of the disease processes or health concerns identified as currently being unmet. Applies this broad scientific knowledge to understand the human response to health conditions, diseases or disorders.
4. Orders related screening and diagnostic tests and interprets reported findings of the tests based on sound clinical reasoning and critical thinking to facilitate good clinical decision making.
5. Applies critical thinking and knowledge of anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology, and pharmacology in determining the appropriateness of prescribing the drug(s) related to the identified unmet need with a specific population.
6. Uses current evidence to support safe prescribing practices. Demonstrates an awareness of what constitutes current evidence and best practice.
7. Effectively communicates health findings and/or diagnoses to clients and families, discusses health outcomes/prognosis, reviews treatment options, assists/supports clients with personal responses to their health conditions and creates an environment in which effective learning can take place.
8. Collaborates with the client, and where appropriate, the family and other health-care providers in prioritizing health concerns, ensuring an appropriate plan of care has been developed. When prescribing a drug, the plan of care includes follow-up or evaluation where appropriate.

Pharmacotherapeutics and Other Therapeutic Interventions in Client Care Management

1. Demonstrates an understanding of the principles of prescribing and good prescribing practices.
2. Demonstrates an understanding of risk management in medication management, pharmaco-economics, and influences on prescribing.
3. Applies knowledge of pharmacology and evidence-informed practice in prescribing drugs, as provided for in the Regulation. Additional competencies for prescriptive authority required by the RN(AP) are as follows:
 - a. Prescribes pharmacotherapy based on the client's health history; current health status; disease, disorder or condition; stage of life; and individual circumstances.
 - b. Prescribes in accordance with both the provincial and federal standards and legislative requirements; and
 - c. Consults and/or collaborates, and/or refers to physicians, pharmacists, and nurse practitioners as appropriate.
4. Provides educational information to clients about prescription and non-prescription drugs which includes information regarding:
 - a. Expected action of the drug;
 - b. Importance of compliance with prescribed frequency and duration of the drug therapy;
 - c. Potential side effects;
 - d. Signs and symptoms of potential adverse effects (i.e. allergic reactions) and action to take if they occur;
 - e. Potential interactions between the drug and certain foods, other drugs or substances such as herbal and homeopathic remedies;
 - f. Specific precautions to take or instructions to follow; and
 - g. Recommended follow-up.
5. Monitors and documents the client's response to drug therapy where appropriate in the practice setting. Based on the client's response, the RN(AP) may decide to continue, adjust, or withdraw the drug, or to consult with a physician, RN(NP), and/or pharmacist.

Professional Responsibilities and Accountabilities

1. Demonstrates an understanding of legislative and professional frameworks (i.e. *The Regulated Health Professions Act* and practice expectations for RN(AP)s).
2. Demonstrates an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the RN(AP) within the health-care team.
3. Is professionally accountable for prescribing decisions, including actions and omissions, and cannot delegate this accountability to any other person.
4. Demonstrates an understanding of the law and ethics related to decision making in RN prescribing including, but not limited to:
 - a. Only prescribing drugs for clients for whom the RN(AP) has relevant knowledge of the client's health and medical history;
 - b. Not prescribing for family members or for themselves;
 - c. Storing blank prescription forms in an appropriate manner, not accessible to the public and not providing any person with a blank, signed prescription; and
 - d. Maintaining a record of all prescriptions written, including refills.
5. Establishes a consultative/collaborative relationship with physician(s), RN(NP), pharmacist and other health-care providers appropriate to the client population for whom the RN(AP) provides care.
6. Communicates effectively with other health-care providers involved in the care of the client, seeking consultation when needed at any point during the provision of care.
7. Completes prescriptions accurately, completely and legibly.
8. Demonstrates an understanding of proper transmission of prescriptions by phone, facsimile and other electronic means.
9. Monitors adverse drug reactions and demonstrates understanding of reporting requirements of Health Canada for adverse drug reactions.
10. Documents care provided in an accurate, comprehensive, and contemporaneous manner, accessible by all members of the health-care team.
11. Maintains professional knowledge and competence in relation to prescribing.
12. Demonstrates an understanding that prescriptive authority does not transfer with the RN to other areas of practice, it is specifically granted to address an unmet need within a specific client population.
13. Prescribes only within the RN(AP)'s competence. If a client requires care beyond that which can be provided by the RN(AP), the client is referred to the appropriate health-care provider.
14. Advocates for organizational policy/protocol that supports safe prescribing practices for RN(AP)s.

References

- Canadian Nurses Association (2010). *Canadian Nurse Practitioner Core Competency Framework*.
- Office of the Nursing Services Director (2008). *Guiding Framework for the Implementation of Nurse and Midwife Prescribing in Ireland*.

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