

Practice Guideline:
Advanced
Foot Care



ANBLPN

Association of New Brunswick Licensed
Practical Nurses

AIAANB

L'Association des Infirmier(ère)s Auxiliaires
Autorisé(e)s du Nouveau-Brunswick

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Mission

The Association of New Brunswick Licensed Practical Nurses (ANBLPN) is the regulatory body for Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN) in New Brunswick. ANBLPNs mandate is protection of the public by promoting the provision of safe, competent, ethical, and compassionate care. ANBLPN sets, monitors, and enforces practical nurse education, registration, and professional conduct. ANBLPN creates Standards of Practice, establishes a Code of Ethics, and develops and implements a Continuing Competence Program. Additionally, ANBLPN publishes documents to support the practice of LPNs in New Brunswick.

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Basic and Advanced Foot Care

Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN) provide basic and advanced foot care services to clients in a variety of settings, including the self-employed setting. LPNs who are self-employed and providing advanced foot care services should consult the Association of New Brunswick Licensed Practical Nurses (ANBLPN) document, [Self-Employment Guidelines](#) which outlines the necessary requirements in order to provide nursing services as a self-employed nursing professional.

Basic foot care is an entry level competency for LPNs, however, those wishing to provide **advanced foot care** must obtain additional formal education specific to the foot and lower limb. Additional education is required due to the fact that these clients are at an increased risk for complications associated with foot care and LPNs must therefore possess the necessary knowledge to help prevent, anticipate and manage any complications that may occur (NSCN, 2019). Advanced foot care education can be acquired through employers, education facilities or private foot care educators.

There are various advanced foot care education providers throughout New Brunswick, however, not all provide the same objectives and practical hours. Due to these variations, ANBLPN does not officially approve or endorse any foot care education programs.

ANBLPN does not endorse, recommend, or approve any advanced foot care courses. LPNs are expected to review the [National Competencies for Advanced Foot Care in Canada](#) and make an informed decision on foot care education courses that are consistent with these competencies.

Responsibility & Accountability

Regardless of your employment setting, all actively practicing LPNs are expected to provide safe, competent, compassionate, and ethical nursing services to clients. LPNs must also ensure their practice adheres to the established [Standards of Practice](#) and [Code of Ethics](#) for Licensed Practical Nurses in New Brunswick.

Those providing advanced foot care must also:

- Obtain the necessary post-basic education in advanced foot care;
- Follow policies and procedures of the workplace, or if self-employed, develop and follow established policies and procedures;
- Adhere to your professional scope of practice and consult with other health care providers if care required exceeds your personal scope of practice;
- Ensure foot care services are consistent with best practice, including the care of foot care equipment and devices in relation to infection control, and
- Ensure you have the necessary insurance for self-employment.

- **Scope of Practice**

LPNs performing advanced foot care must have the necessary knowledge, skill and competence required to practice advanced foot care safely. LPNs must also always practice within their professional and personal scope of practice. If the needs of a client exceed your professional or personal scope of practice, LPNs must consult with the client's primary care provider (i.e. physician or nurse practitioner). If a client does not have a primary care provider and their care needs are urgent, they should be referred to a walk-in clinic or the Emergency Department.

Advanced foot care providers are also expected to seek continuous professional learning opportunities to enhance their practice and seek education related to foot care devices (proper use, cleaning and sterilization) and infection prevention and control based on best practice (CLPNNL, 2020).

- **Infection Prevention & Control**

Foot care and foot care devices have been associated with infections and therefore LPNs must remain educated and follow best practices in relation to cleaning, disinfection, sterilization, transportation, and storage of equipment. Foot care clients expect and require safe nursing interventions regardless of where they are receiving these services. Therefore, each client requires a *sterilized* set of foot care devices (IPAC, 2019).

Foot care providers are responsible to ensure that their clients are not placed in a situation where there is a risk of infection due to improper cleaning and sterilization of foot care devices. If certain equipment cannot be sterilized, they should be deemed as single use (IPAC, 2019). Quality controls should also be in place for ultrasonic cleaners and autoclaves that are used for the disinfection and sterilization of equipment. For further information on best practices related to infection prevention and control, LPNs should refer to Infection Prevention and Control of Canada position statement: [Reprocessing of Critical Foot Care Devices](#).

- **Insurance Coverage**

All Licensed Practical Nurses registered with ANBLPN have Medical Malpractice Liability Insurance. Those who are self-employed foot care providers, are also **required** to obtain **Commercial General Liability (CGL) Insurance**. CGL insurance can provide coverage to the service provider for areas such as bodily injury, property damage, and tenants legal liability. LPNs may contact ANBLPNs service provider, Lloyd Sudd Insurance Brokers Ltd. (www.lloydsadd.com), to inquire about this insurance or they may choose to go with another insurance provider if they wish.

Registration Requirements

Once an LPN has obtained their advanced foot care education, they are required to provide proof of completion to ANBLPN. Once received, ANBLPN will note that the LPN has acquired the necessary education to practice advanced foot care in our registration system.

As with all actively practicing LPNs, advanced foot care providers must meet all the requirements for annual registration which includes:

- Annual registration by the indicated deadline to maintain active licensure;
- Meeting and maintaining practice hour requirements (1000 hours over last 5 years); and
- Annual participation in the Continuing Competence Program (CCP) as per the LPN Act.

Practicing foot care without an active license, or without the necessary education, will result in an investigation for professional misconduct (CLPNM, 2015).

*Foot care providers are **not exempt** from the annual CCP, registration, or practice hour requirements regardless of the number of hours they work.*

Titles and Abbreviations

Although LPNs are authorized to provide advanced foot care with the necessary post-education, ANBLPN does not recognize or authorize the use of titles, signatures or abbreviations that may convey that the LPN has become “certified” in foot care. This includes terms such as:

- “Certified Foot Care Nurse”;
- Abbreviations that imply certification such as “CFCN”; or
- The title “foot care nurse” or “FCN” as part of their signature.

The use of these titles and abbreviations give the impression that a formal credential has been achieved which is misleading to the public (CLPNM, 2015). At this time, there is no certification process for nursing foot care in Canada that is recognized by any provincial regulatory body (CAFCCN, 2015) and therefore no one in Canada is certified in foot care.

Nursing certifications in Canada are only available through the Canadian Nurses Association, and currently they do not offer certification in foot care. Therefore you must refrain from advertising or signing your name as a certified foot care professional.

Advertising

If you are self-employed as a foot care nursing professional, advertising is a significant component of your practice. The purpose of advertising your business is to inform potential clients of the services you provide so that they may make an informed decision about which nursing foot care provider they would like to select.

Any advertising of your independent practice must be ethical, accurate, professional and maintain the dignity of the profession (NSCN, 2019). You are required to use your name and professional designation in the advertising of your business. It is not appropriate to include client testimonials or solicit testimonials from your clients to be used for the purpose of advertising.

Your advertising must also **not** include:

- ANBLPNs logo;
- Sensational claims or guarantees;
- References to products that you sell; or
- Individual product endorsements (CNO, 2019).

Conflict of Interest

The LPN's primary responsibility is to provide professional care to their clients. LPNs are in a position of trust and cannot use their position to influence clients for personal or financial gain. A conflict of interest occurs when an individual is involved in multiple interests, where one could possibly influence the other. Failure to manage a conflict of interest could be seen as professional misconduct.

Potential conflicts of interest include:

- Using your role as a staff LPN to recruit clients for your own independent business;
- Collecting foot care service fees while being paid by an employer (i.e. conducting your independent practice while working for another employer);
- Receiving a benefit from a manufacturer or distributor for endorsing their products over other products; or
- Recommending and selling products where the LPN receives a personal benefit (i.e. financial gain).

Endorsing, Selling or Recommending Products

The recommending and selling of products to clients can create a conflict of interest for nursing professionals. LPNs must avoid situations where the nurse-client relationship could be used for personal benefit. The LPN cannot benefit from using, recommending, providing, or selling products to clients. LPNs are also not permitted to receive a benefit from a manufacturer or distributor for endorsing their product over other products.

It remains vital that the therapeutic nurse-client relationship be protected at all costs. Nursing professionals should provide care options to their clients to ensure that clients are able to make an informed decision around which product or service is best for them. If the nursing professional offers information or samples of *multiple* foot care products, and sells several of these options, and the client understands there is no obligation to purchase anything, the trust relationship can stay intact.

Providing options to clients may enhance the nurse-client relationship as the client may feel educated and equipped to manage their own health in a way that resonates with them.

Endorsing a certain product without providing information about other options has the potential to mislead the public and compromise trust between the nursing professional and client (CNO, 2019a). If the nursing professional uses/sells only one product and implies it is “the best” and the client feels obliged to purchase, this will erode the therapeutic relationship. Self-employed LPNs may *use* a wide range of products as part of their services however, they cannot be personally benefitting through the selling of the product. LPNs should also refrain from using their professional designation to endorse products (CNO, 2019b).

Conclusion

If you have further questions related to foot care, please contact your provincial regulatory authority. We encourage all LPNs to visit the Canadian Association of Foot Care Nurses (www.cafcnc.ca) for additional resources to help guide their professional practice and if you are self-employed, please review ANBLPNs [Self-Employment Guidelines](#).

References

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