

Immunization

Practice Guideline



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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INTRODUCTION

Immunization has a significant positive impact on the health of Canadians and nursing professionals play a key role in the administration of immunizations. Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN) provide immunization services in a variety of settings such as hospitals, long term care, pharmacies, clinics, and client's homes. Regardless of the practice environment, LPNs are responsible to assess the health status of clients before, during, and after a vaccine has been administered. LPNs must also manage any adverse effects of immunizations and perform ongoing assessments of their own continuing learning needs.

Nursing professionals are expected to utilize scientific evidence when educating clients about immunizations and are accountable to differentiate between their own personal beliefs regarding immunization and the evidence-based scientific data supporting their effectiveness (NSCN, 2019).

IMMUNIZATION COMPETENCY

Administration of immunizations is a beyond entry level competency for LPNs. LPNs wishing to add immunization to their individual scope of practice are required to obtain the necessary education before partaking in immunization practices.

LPNs may obtain this education as a post-graduate through employer-based education that consists of a learning module and clinical mentorship opportunity. They may also complete an accredited post-graduate immunization course such as ANBLPN's learning module.

The competencies required to safely administer immunizations are outlined in the [Canadian Immunization Guide](#) from the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). LPNs should also consult the [New Brunswick Immunization Program Guide](#) from the Government of New Brunswick Public Health branch, to stay up to date on all immunization education.

Additionally, if a client has been assessed as being high risk for a negative outcome (i.e., history of severe allergic reaction), LPNs should consult and collaborate with an appropriate care provider prior to administering the immunization (NSCN, 2019).

AUTHORIZATION

LPNs should ensure that they have the knowledge, competence, and authorization to implement any nursing intervention. All immunizers must adhere to the policies, standards, and guidelines outlined in the New Brunswick Immunization Program. LPNs must verify that immunization is within their scope of employment and that the employer has policies in place to support this practice.

Due to an LPNs and RNs professional scope of practice, LPNs and RNs are required to have a medical directive from an authorized prescriber to administer a vaccine (GNB, 2021). Care directives can also be used to authorize LPNs to administer immunizations to specific populations, such as school-aged children or nursing home clients. Care directives can also be used to authorize the administration of medication for any adverse event following immunization.

MANAGING ADVERSE EVENTS

Nursing professionals must maintain client safety by ensuring that there is a plan in place to manage any possible adverse event following immunization (AEFI). An AEFI is an undesirable and unexpected experience following immunization (ANBLPN, 2019). It is a legal requirement to report all AEFIs to your local Public Health branch as this will help ensure the continued safety of all vaccines that are used in Canada.

The plan for managing AEFIs must include medication management, required assessment and monitoring of the client, documentation, and notification procedures for reporting the AEFI.

PRACTICAL NURSE STUDENTS

Practical Nursing students are not regulated by ANBLPN as they do not hold active licensure with ANBLPN. Students are accountable to their nursing program and must adhere to their campus policies (NSCN, 2020).

SELF-EMPLOYED LPNS

Self-employed LPNs must adhere to all the accountabilities outlined in this document. Additionally, all self-employed practical nurses must obtain additional liability insurance for their individual practice. For more information on insurance required when self-employed, please refer to ANBLPNs practice guideline; [Self-Employment Guidelines](#).

CONCLUSION

LPNs must ensure they have the knowledge, competence, and authorization to take part in the administration of immunizations. They are accountable to ensure they possess the competencies required of all immunizers as outlined in the New Brunswick Immunization Guide. Additionally, LPNs must ensure there is a medical directive in place prior to the administration of vaccines and that they have a plan in place to manage any potential adverse events to maintain client safety.

REFERENCES

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