

# ***Telenursing***

## **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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## Mission

The Association of New Brunswick Licensed Practical Nurses (ANBLPN) is the regulatory authority 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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## INTRODUCTION

The use of technology has become a part of our every day lives, and health care is no stranger to this. Technology has become an important part of many health care delivery models and nursing professionals are increasingly using technology to provide virtual health care and communicate with their clients.

Virtual health may be referred to as telenursing, telehealth, tele-practice, or virtual nursing. This guideline will use the term telenursing to describe nursing services being delivered through technology.

Telenursing involves the use of technology to deliver nursing services to clients who are not physically in the same location as the nursing professional. The Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) and client connect using technology such as video conferencing, teleconferencing or email (NSCN, 2021).

Telenursing has many benefits, however, there are also risks that need to be considered prior to engaging in the use of technology to deliver health care services. The purpose of this guideline is to support LPNs in their practice by informing them of the professional and legal expectations when providing telenursing services.

## TELENURSING OBJECTIVES

Engaging in telenursing can ease communication between health care providers which helps facilitate collaborative practice. It can also increase access to nursing services to those who may have difficulty accessing in-person care. Additionally, telenursing can help ease the stress that health care organizations are experiencing by leaving in-person appointments available to those who require face-to-face care (CLPNA, 2020).

Telenursing services are provided with the intent to provide safe, compassionate, ethical, and competent care to clients while:

- Increasing access to nursing services;
- Maintaining and/or improving a client's health status;
- Improving client outcomes; and
- Providing services in an efficient and effective manner.

*Telenursing can improve access to nursing services, enhance interprofessional collaboration and ease wait times for those requiring in-person appointments.*

Telenursing can include nursing services such as:

- Client teaching, counselling, and advocating on behalf of a client;
- Assessments and client follow-ups;
- Monitoring vital signs and blood glucose via self-measurement devices; and
- Responding to alarms by clients to let nursing professionals know when something is going wrong (CLPNA, 2020).

## REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

LPNs wishing to take part in telenursing must understand the registration requirements in New Brunswick and/or the registration requirements of the Canadian jurisdiction they wish to provide telenursing services in.

Any LPN located in New Brunswick who is providing telenursing to clients that reside inside or outside of New Brunswick must have active licensure with the Association of New Brunswick Licensed Practical Nurses (ANBLPN). An LPN not located in New Brunswick and providing telenursing services to clients located in New Brunswick must also have active licensure with ANBLPN.

Other Canadian jurisdictions may have different policies or legislation that govern registration requirements for telenursing. LPNs should always consult with the appropriate jurisdiction when providing services outside of the province they are located in. ANBLPN also recommends that LPNs contact [Lloyd Sudd Insurance Brokers](#) to discuss any legal implications involved in telenursing.

If there is a variance in registration requirements between New Brunswick and another jurisdiction, LPNs should practice in accordance with the more restrictive requirements. LPNs must also be aware of any responsibilities or obligations when working in multiple jurisdictions (CLPNA, 2020).

## PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND COMPETENCIES

Regardless of where nursing services are provided, nursing principles apply across all practice settings - including telenursing. It is important that LPNs understand their professional scope of practice as well as the scope of any other health care professional involved in the client's care.

LPNs who are providing telenursing services are required to collaborate with a registered nurse to develop the initial care plan. Once the initial care plan is developed, the LPN may independently implement, evaluate, and document on the nursing care plan (NSCN, 2021).

LPNs may accept orders from a physician who is not located in New Brunswick, providing they are a member of the [Telemedicine Provider List](#). The College of Physicians and Surgeons of New Brunswick, set the necessary regulatory requirements needed for physicians to practice telemedicine. For full physician requirements regarding telemedicine, please refer to the College of Physicians and Surgeons of New Brunswick's publication; [Telemedicine Regulation](#).

LPNs are expected to conduct their practice in accordance with the [Standards of Practice for LPNs in Canada](#) and the [Code of Ethics for Licensed Practical Nurses in Canada](#), just as they would when providing in-person client care. The LPN must be educated, competent and authorized by their employer for any services they provide through telenursing.

When providing telenursing services, LPNs will continue to follow the nursing process and use their professional knowledge, skills, and judgement to; perform assessments, collaborate with clients while developing the care plan, implement nursing interventions, and evaluate the outcome of these interventions. LPNs must also ensure they have the required knowledge and competency to engage in

telenursing services. If a knowledge gap has been identified, the LPN is expected to obtain any necessary education or mentorship required to provide telenursing services safely to clients.

LPNs will also continue to use their critical thinking and clinical judgement while providing telenursing, just as they would when performing in-person care. Therefore LPNs are accountable to recognize when telenursing services are no longer meeting the needs of the client and an in-person assessment is required (NSCN, 2021).

## RISK MANAGEMENT

Telenursing does create a higher level of risk for nursing practice as it does not allow for in-person care. Therefore, it is imperative that LPNs engaged in telenursing have a clear understanding of their scope of practice and professional accountabilities, as well as being aware of employer policies and procedures that are in place to support the practice of telenursing.

Employers should give special consideration to the following when developing policies related to telenursing:

- Decision-making tool to determine if telenursing will meet the client's needs;
- Choice of appropriate technology;
- Management of care when telenursing is no longer meeting a client's needs;
- Consultation to other health care providers when care needs exceed the LPNs scope of practice;
- Obtaining informed consent;
- Privacy and confidentiality;
- Security of client records;
- Professional and appropriate video/telephone conduct;
- Procedures to follow if technology becomes unavailable or temporarily not working;
- Sending and receiving consultations/referrals; and
- Documentation

Due to the increased risk that telenursing poses, LPNs must consider the purpose of the client interaction when deciding if telenursing will be appropriate (NSCN, 2021). LPNs must also continuously assess whether telenursing is continuing to meet the client's needs or if a face-to-face appointment is required. Most often, the initial interaction with a client should be face-to-face and it can then be determined if follow-up care can be safely carried out via telenursing.

When determining the appropriateness of telenursing, LPNs must consider any risks it may pose to the client and if there are any potential adverse outcomes if the client cannot access care and telenursing is not an option.

Telenursing can be convenient and ease client access to care; however, these factors must not overshadow client safety when a face-to-face interaction is required (NSCN, 2021). If the LPN determines that telenursing is no longer appropriate for the client, then a face-to-face interaction must be arranged.

*The convenience and ease of access that telenursing provides must not overshadow client safety when a face-to-face interaction is required*

## CONFIDENTIALITY

All nursing professionals have an ethical and legal obligation to maintain client confidentiality across all practice environments. This is especially important when providing telenursing services; not only in terms of client interaction, but also to ensure that the technology being used for telenursing is secure.

All organizations and LPNs who are providing telenursing must ensure they are complying with any relevant legislation that protects the confidentiality of clients. The ethical and legal obligation to maintain client confidentiality is stated in the core regulatory documents; [Standards of Practice](#) and [Code of Ethics](#), that all LPNs are accountable to.

## DOCUMENTATION

Timely and accurate documentation is required across all practice settings, and this includes telenursing. All client interactions require documentation and must be done in accordance with documentation standards while following any workplace policies and procedures related to documentation.

As telenursing is a unique practice setting, it may also be necessary to document the following:

- The reason for providing services via technology;
- The type of technology being used to conduct telenursing;
- Where the client is located; and
- Relevant privacy and security measures being used to protect client information (CLPNA, 2020).

For more information on documentation, please refer to ANBLPNs [Documentation](#) practice guideline.

## CONCLUSION

As health care delivery models continue to change and new technologies emerge, telenursing will also evolve to better meet the health care needs of Canadians. LPNs are integral members of the health care team and have a role to play in telenursing.

LPNs must always conduct their practice in accordance with their Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics, while following all employer policies and procedures. They must ensure they maintain the knowledge and competencies required to provide safe, compassionate, and ethical care to their clients when interacting face-to-face or when using technology. LPNs must remain knowledgeable on the risk's telenursing may pose and apply all measures to minimize these risks to deliver telenursing safely.

If you continue to have questions about telenursing, please contact ANBLPN directly.

## RESOURCES

College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta. (2020). *Practice Guideline: Virtual Healthcare*. Retrieved from: [https://www.clpna.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/doc\\_Practice\\_Guideline\\_Virtual\\_Healthcare.pdf](https://www.clpna.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/doc_Practice_Guideline_Virtual_Healthcare.pdf)

College of Physicians and Surgeons of New Brunswick. (2008). *Regulation #13: Telemedicine Regulation*. Retrieved from: <https://cpsnb.org/en/medical-act-regulations-and-guidelines/regulations/419-regulation-13-telemedicine-regulation?highlight=WyJ0ZWxlYWVkaWNpbmUiXQ==>

Nova Scotia College of Nursing. (2021). *Practice Guidelines for Nurses: Telenursing*. Retrieved from: <https://cdn1.nscn.ca/sites/default/files/documents/resources/Telenursing.pdf>