



# Education Requirements for Entry-Level Registered Nurses

*Position statements describe CRNBC's views on issues that affect nursing practice. They can assist registrants to influence change.*

## ISSUE

The education of new graduate registered nurses must constantly evolve to reflect changes in the health care needs of British Columbians. The achievement by new graduate registered nurses of the entry-level competencies, as established by the College of Registered Nurses of British Columbia (CRNBC), enables them to meet the public's health care needs.

## CRNBC POSITION

- The CRNBC professional practice requirements set out in the *Competencies Required of a New Graduate* and the *Professional Standards for Registered Nurses and Nurse Practitioners* set out the minimum requirements for the newly graduated registered nurse to practise safely.
- The CRNBC competencies for entry-level registered nurse practice are achieved through baccalaureate nursing education.
- Graduates of basic nursing education programs in British Columbia (B.C.) will achieve the entry-level competencies through baccalaureate nursing education programs after 2005.
- The entry-level competencies are reviewed and revised on a regular basis so they remain current with emerging client health needs, new directions in health policy and delivery systems, and related developments in nursing practice.
- The decision to move to all baccalaureate basic nursing education to achieve the entry-level competencies relates to new graduate registered nurses only. The decision is not retroactive and does not affect registered nurses currently practising in B.C.
- All nurses who are registered with CRNBC will continue to be eligible for registration renewal as practicing members provided they meet the registration renewal requirements.
- Nurses registered in another Canadian province/territory seeking initial registration in B.C. are eligible for registration provided they meet all requirements for registration.

## BACKGROUND

CRNBC is responsible, through legislation, for the approval of basic entry-level nursing education programs preparatory to initial registration as a registered nurse in B.C. CRNBC establishes the entry-level competencies expected of the new graduate registered nurse. The newly graduated registered nurse of an approved nursing education program is prepared to meet professional practice standards as set out in the *Competencies Required of a New Graduate* and the *Professional Standards for Registered Nurses and Nurse Practitioners*.

CRNBC's entry-level competencies were developed through consultation and consensus-building methods with registered nurses from practice, education, administration and research; with employers and with other key groups. The entry-level competencies in B.C. are consistent with those of other Canadian provinces/territories and with the competencies tested through the Canadian Registered Nurse Examination. This consistency has been a major component of the labour mobility agreement pertaining to registered nurses in Canada and thereby satisfies the requirement of the Agreement on International Trade.

The entry-level competencies have, as their basis, a strong foundation in nursing sciences, bio/psycho/social sciences, humanities, liberal arts, research and ethics. The entry-level competencies prepare new graduate registered nurses to care for clients of all ages across a continuum of care in multiple settings. Competencies reflect emerging trends in health care, such as the care of the frail elderly and management of chronic disease. The entry-level competencies ensure that registered nurses have the foundational knowledge in health promotion and illness prevention to assist British Columbians to achieve optimum health. The entry-level competencies support evolving nursing practice in such areas as genetics, immunology, environmental health, informatics and infectious diseases. For the new graduate registered nurse to acquire all the required entry-level competencies, baccalaureate education is required.

In 2002, the B.C. government announced its support for new graduate registered nurses to achieve the CRNBC entry-level competencies through baccalaureate nursing education programs. The Ministry of Health Planning and the Ministry of Advanced Education have developed a multi-year transition plan, that takes into consideration the supply of new graduate registered nurses, as all entry-level registered nursing education programs implement baccalaureate curricula.

Nurse human resource planning should reflect, as a fundamental principle, that registered nurses are appropriately educated to meet the complex and changing health needs of the public. Ensuring that sufficient numbers of new graduate registered nurses are prepared to meet the health care needs of British Columbians is an important component of nurse human resource planning. Nurse human resource planning must also extend beyond entry-level registered nurses. Nurses in roles such as clinical nurse specialists, nurse practitioners, nurse educators, nurse administrators and nurse researchers provide leadership within the health care system and the nursing profession, and support registered nurses in direct care.

## POSITION STATEMENT

Registered nurses who are diploma-prepared have learned about and contributed to changes in health care through the knowledge and skills they have acquired from years of professional practice, continuing education and maintaining their competence to practise. A registered nurse's entire background should be considered when opportunities exist for employment, mobility, advancement or other privileges within the profession. This review may include experience, education and expertise as well as the demonstration of competencies more specifically related to the position.

### CRNBC RESOURCES

Print resources to assist you are available from the CRNBC website [www.crnbc.ca](http://www.crnbc.ca) or Helen Randal Library. E-mail [pubs@crnbc.ca](mailto:pubs@crnbc.ca) or telephone 604.736.7331 (ext. 118) or 1.800.565.6505 (B.C. only).

*Competencies Required of a New Graduate* (pub. 375)

*The Practice of the Newly Graduated Registered Nurse: What to Reasonably Expect* (pub. 390)

CRNBC Helen Randal Library Reference Librarian. E-mail [reflib@crnbc.ca](mailto:reflib@crnbc.ca) or telephone 604.736.7331 (ext. 119) or 1.800.565.6505 (B.C. only).

Information about entry-level nursing education or registration requirements is available on the CRNBC website [www.crnbc.bc.ca](http://www.crnbc.bc.ca) or by calling CRNBC Registration at 604-736-7331 (ext. 209) or toll-free in B.C. 1-800-565-6505.