

NOVA SCOTIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CONTINUING CARE BRANCH

Subject: Educational Requirements for Entry to Practice

Original Approved Date: February 24, 2006

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Original signed by Keith Menzies

Approved by: _____
Keith Menzies, Executive Director, Continuing Care Branch

1.0 POLICY STATEMENTS

- 1.1 To promote quality care, the Continuing Care Branch, Nova Scotia Department of Health, will establish requirements for the educational qualifications to be used by employers when hiring individuals to be employed in providing direct care and support services to clients in designated service venues which fall under the mandate of the Branch.
- 1.2 Individual employers may determine and apply employment criteria which exceed the minimum requirements established by the Continuing Care in this policy.
- 1.3 The Department of Health will fund employers at an equal rate for employees who are certified as Continuing Care Assistants (CCA), Personal Care Workers (PCW), Home Support Workers (HSW), Home Health Providers (HHP) or Home Health Aides (HHA) and who are working for the same employer in the same role.

2.0 APPLICATION OF THE POLICY

- 2.1 This policy applies to facilities or agencies who are employing individuals to provide direct care and support services, under the direction of a Registered Nurse or Licensed Practical Nurse, to Continuing Care clients in designated service venues.
- 2.2 This policy **does not apply** to the hiring or employment of individuals whose employment duties require that they be a health professional, registered with a licensing college or body.

3.0 DESIGNATED SERVICE VENUES

For the purposes of this policy, the designated Continuing Care service venues include:

- Nursing Homes and Homes for the Aged
- Continuing Care home care services

4.0 EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS - NEW EMPLOYEES

Employers in designated Continuing Care service venues hiring an individual as a new employee, who will be providing direct care and support services to Continuing Care clients are governed by the following:

- 4.1 Where possible, and in accordance with the provisions of this policy, individuals hired as new employees in the designated service venues are to hold one of the following provincial certifications:
- Continuing Care Assistant
 - Personal Care Worker
 - Home Health Provider
 - Home Health Aide
 - Home Support Worker
- 4.2 Persons holding certification as a Continuing Care Assistant (CCA) are eligible to work in any of the designated Continuing Care service venues.

Nursing Homes and Homes for the Aged

- 4.3 In addition to those with Continuing Care Assistant certification, individuals who hold provincial certification as a Personal Care Worker, Home Health Provider or Home Health Aide are eligible for hire as new employees to work in Nursing Homes and Homes for the Aged.
- 4.4 An individual not holding one of the identified provincial certificates, but who was hired prior to April 1, 2006 as a personal care worker in a Nursing Home or Home for the Aged **in Nova Scotia**, and who has been employed in that capacity within the 12 months prior to an employment application, is eligible for hire as a new employee to work in Nursing Homes and Homes for the Aged.

Home Support Agencies

- 4.5 In addition to those with Continuing Care Assistant certification, individuals who hold provincial certification as a Home Support Worker are eligible for hire as new employees to work in home support agencies.

- 4.6 Where there is no available candidate who meets the provisions of sections 4.1 to 4.5 of this policy, the employer may hire an individual on a conditional basis provided that, at a minimum, the following requirements are met:
- (a) The individual has taken the following CCA program modules prior to commencing work:
 - Introduction to the Continuing Care Assistant Program
 - Introduction to the Continuing Care Sector
 - Body Mechanics: Positioning/Transfers
 - Personal Care & Special Treatments
 - (b) The individual obtains First Aid/CPR certification prior to commencing work.
 - (c) The individual is orientated to the employing organization prior to commencing work.
 - (d) An educational plan to achieve CCA certification is identified collectively by the employee and the employer and is documented on the employee's file.
- 4.7 In **exceptional** circumstances, where there is no available candidate who meets the provisions of sections 4.1 to 4.6 of this policy and when, due to unavoidable and immediate workload demands, there is insufficient time for a new employee to complete the requirements identified in Section 4.6, subsections (a) & (b), an employer may hire an individual to start work immediately on a conditional basis, provided the following requirements are met:
- (a) The employer obtains specific Department of Health approval for the policy exception.
 - (b) The individual is orientated to the employing organization prior to commencing work.
 - (c) An educational plan to achieve CCA certification is identified collectively by the employee and the employer and is documented on the employee's file.
- 4.8 It is the responsibility of the employer to determine the need for and to implement any requirements related to extra supervision or restrictions in duties for employees hired under the provisions of Sections 4.6 or 4.7 of this policy.
- 4.9 Employers hiring individuals under the provisions of Sections 4.6 or 4.7 are required to report to the Department of Health, on an annual basis, the number of employees who have been hired on a conditional basis and the education plans for these employees.

- 4.10 Employers are responsible to ensure that new employees hired under the provisions of Sections 4.6 or 4.7 obtain CCA certification within two (2) years of the date of hire, in order to continue employment involving the provision of direct care and support services to Continuing Care clients.

5.0 CURRENT EMPLOYEES

Individuals currently employed to provide direct care and support services to Continuing Care clients in the designated Continuing Care service venues continue to be eligible to be employed in this capacity.

6.0 EMPLOYMENT OF STUDENTS FOR REPLACEMENT COVERAGE

- 6.1 Notwithstanding the requirements outlined in Section 4.0 of this policy, students may be hired on a temporary basis to provide replacement coverage for employees who provide direct care and support services to clients in designated service venues, provided the following educational and operational criteria are met:
- 6.1.1 The individual is actively enrolled in a Baccalaureate Nursing Program or Practical Nursing Program.
 - 6.1.2 The individual has successfully completed courses of a Baccalaureate Nursing Program or Practical Nursing Program covering the following topic areas:
 - Body Mechanics: Positioning/Transfers
 - Personal Care & Special Treatments
 - 6.1.3 The individual holds current certification in CPR/First Aid.
 - 6.1.4 The individual has completed an applicable clinical placement.
 - 6.1.5 Where the setting permits, the individual must be assigned to work in conjunction with another staff member in a team environment.
 - 6.1.6 A clinical supervisor at the nursing school provides a recommendation for employment.
 - 6.1.7 The individual is orientated to the employing organization prior to commencing work.
- 6.2 It is the responsibility of the employer to determine the need for and to implement any requirements related to extra supervision or restrictions in duties for students hired under the provisions of Section 6.1 of this policy.