

Status of Advanced Practice Nursing in Canada

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The Advanced Practice Nursing role has been a part of the Canadian healthcare system for approximately 50 years. The roles for Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNSs) and Nurse Practitioners (NPs) have evolved over the past 15 years. For example: the scope of practice for Canadian NPs now includes MAID and prescribing schedule 1 medications including narcotics.

Critical Mass

Number of NPs in Canada in 2016: 4,832

Number of RNs in Canada in 2016: 293,911

Protected Titles/Definitions

According to the [2008 Canadian National ANP Framework](#), the agreed definition for ANP in Canada is:

...an umbrella term describing an advanced level of clinical nursing practice that maximizes the use of graduate educational preparation, in-depth nursing knowledge and expertise in meeting the health needs of individuals, families, groups, communities and populations. It involves analyzing and synthesizing knowledge; understanding, interpreting and applying nursing theory and research; and developing and advancing nursing knowledge and the profession as a whole (CNA 2008).

Clinical Nurse Specialist or CNS: A CNS is a kind of APN who has a graduate degree in nursing and who integrate their skills into their nursing practice to either directly or indirectly care for patients often of a specific population or sub-population. Expanded scope of practice is allowed with additional training and oversight.

Nurse Practitioner or NP: “registered nurses with additional educational preparation and experience who possess and demonstrate the competencies to autonomously diagnose, order and interpret diagnostic tests, prescribe pharmaceuticals, and perform specific procedures within their legislated scope of practice” (CNA, 2006).

Regulation

CNSs and NPs are regulated by the provincial Nurse Practitioner regulatory association of the Canadian province or territory of licensure.

Education

All APNs require a graduate degree in nursing (master or doctorate degree). After being granted the graduate degree, NPs must also pass a NP Certification exam that is recognized and administered by the provincial or territorial regulatory body.

Prescription Authority

CNS have no prescribing authority. NPs have full prescribing authority.

Background Reading

<https://www.longwoods.com/product/download/code/21732>

Web Links

<http://npac-aiipc.org/>

<http://caapn-aciipa.org/>

<http://fhs.mcmaster.ca/ccapnr/>

<http://apntoolkit.mcmaster.ca/>

<http://www.npcanada.ca/>

Social Media Presence

<https://www.facebook.com/CanadianAssociationofAdvancedPracticeNurses/>

<https://twitter.com/NPsinCanada>

<https://www.facebook.com/CNA.AIIC/>

<https://twitter.com/canadanurses?lang=en>

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