

NURSES ASSOCIATION OF NEW BRUNSWICK

**Approval of Nurse Practitioner
Programs in New Brunswick**

2006

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Introduction

The Nurses Association of New Brunswick is a self-regulated profession. As such, the Association is responsible for the approval of nursing education programs which prepare nurses for registration as nurse practitioners.

The approval authority is described in the *Nurses Act* and in the Association's *Bylaws*. Through the approval process, NANB promotes good practice by ensuring that nurse practitioner education programs prepare nurses to practice as nurse practitioners in a safe, competent and ethical manner.

The Tool for Approval of Nurse Practitioner Program in New Brunswick describes the standards, indicators, policies and process for the approval of nurse practitioner education programs leading to initial registration as a nurse practitioner in New Brunswick. Supporting documents include: *NANB Standards for Nursing Education in New Brunswick*; *NANB Standards for Nursing Practice*; *CNA's Code of Ethics for Registered Nurses*; *NANB Competencies and Standards of Practice for Nurse Practitioners in Primary Health Care*.

NANB Position Statement on the Nurse Practitioner

Meeting the demands of a reformed health care system requires the expertise of professionals with specialized knowledge and skills. NANB believes that one solution to the problems of access, quality and cost of care is a restructuring of the health care system and more effective utilization of all health care personnel. The advanced practice role of nurse practitioner (NP) is a critical link in addressing the challenges facing health care in today's environment.

Definition

A nurse practitioner is a nurse registered with the Nurses Association of New Brunswick who has advanced knowledge and clinical expertise in assessment, diagnosis, and health care management and who has successfully completed an approved NP program. NPs provide comprehensive primary health care services including health promotion, disease and injury prevention, curative, rehabilitative and supportive services to individuals, families and communities in all health settings.

Scope of Practice

The NP's role is grounded in advanced nursing practice. The NP demonstrates depth and breadth of knowledge, synthesis of data and use of complex skills and interventions. In addition, the NP role includes prescribing from an approved formulary, ordering and interpreting diagnostic tests from a defined list, and diagnosing, treating and managing common acute and chronic illnesses.

As a member of an interdisciplinary health team, the NP role is both autonomous and collaborative in nature.

Education

The educational preparation for the NP is offered within a master's of nursing degree.

Approval Criteria

The NANB *Standards for Nursing Education* serves as the framework for the NANB nurse practitioner program approval process. The approval criteria is based on the *Standard's* indicators.

Standard I: Curriculum

The curriculum provides learning experiences across the life span necessary for students to achieve the competencies required for beginning nurse practitioners as defined by the Nurses Association of New Brunswick.

Indicators:

- 1.1 The program philosophy, mission, curriculum framework and goals reflect the requirements for professional nurse practitioner practice in New Brunswick.
- 1.2 The curriculum is responsive to and reflects current trends in:
 1. health and health promotion;
 2. nursing practice and nursing research;
 3. education;
 4. health service delivery;
 5. society.
- 1.3 The curriculum is responsive to and reflects changes in the treatment of diseases, ordering of tests, and prescribing medications.
- 1.4 The curricular goals and outcomes reflect the competency requirements for beginning nurse practitioners.
- 1.5 The curricular teaching and learning activities address the current and emerging trends and realities in health, health care, nursing practice, education and research.
- 1.6 Learning activities (courses, laboratory work, clinical practicums, teaching strategies) provide students with the opportunity to meet program goals and outcomes.
- 1.7 Systematic and continuous evaluation of all curriculum components, including the goals/objectives/outcomes, learning activities and student evaluation methods, is carried out to ensure ongoing development, maintenance and enhancement of the curriculum.

Standard II: Program

The program has sufficient fiscal, human, physical, clinical resources, facilities, services and policies to support students to achieve the competencies required for beginning nurse practitioners as defined by the Nurses Association of New Brunswick.

Indicators:

- 2.1 Nursing faculty possess theoretical nursing knowledge and maintain clinical expertise appropriate to their teaching responsibilities.
- 2.2 Nursing faculty members meet the NANB criteria for registration as a nurse and as a nurse practitioner.
- 2.3 Appropriate resources (fiscal, physical, human, clinical) are used to facilitate the creation and implementation of the curriculum and to foster its ongoing improvement.
- 2.4 Learning activities and clinical placement occur in a variety of primary health care settings.
- 2.5 The program provides a minimum of 700 hours of relevant clinical practice for students.
- 2.6 Research and scholarly activities that contribute to the extension and expansion of nursing knowledge and curriculum development are conducted by nursing faculty.
- 2.7 Representatives of key stakeholder groups are provided with opportunities to participate in learning activities and evaluating program goals and outcomes.
- 2.8 Partnership with key stakeholder groups are in place to assist with selecting, planning and evaluating learning and clinical experiences that will facilitate achievement of the competency requirements for nurse practitioners.
- 2.9 Ongoing program evaluation using feedback from students, faculty, preceptors, and employers is used to guide program revisions.

Standard III: Students

Students meet the admission criteria and during their participation in the nurse practitioner program, demonstrate progress towards achieving the competencies required for beginning nurse practitioners as defined by the Nurses Association of New Brunswick.

Indicators:

- 3.1 Students meet established university graduate admission requirements.
- 3.2 Students' progress toward the goals/objectives/outcomes of the program is evaluated, documented and communicated systematically to students throughout the program.
- 3.3 Students have access to learning resources in sufficient quantity to meet curriculum goals.
- 3.4 University policies and procedures dealing with student promotion, failure, withdrawal, appeal, readmission, and graduation are followed.

Standard IV: Graduates

Graduates of the nurse practitioner program are prepared to practice according to professional practice and ethical standards and have achieved the competencies required for beginning nurse practitioners as defined by the Nurses Association of New Brunswick.

Indicators:

- 4.1 Graduates meet the NANB *Standards of Practice for Nurse Practitioners* and the *Competencies for Beginning Nurse Practitioners* as documented by graduates, faculty, employers and users of nurse practitioner services.
- 4.2 Graduates meet the NANB requirements for registration as a nurse practitioner.

Approval Process

The approval of nurse practitioner programs offered in New Brunswick is a legislated responsibility of the Nurses Association of New Brunswick (*Nurses Act, 1984*, Part II, Section 5.1(e)) and specified in the *Bylaws* (2001) in article 1.03.1 A and B and in article X, 10.02.

The NANB Nursing Education Advisory Committee has the responsibility to act in an advisory capacity to the NANB board of directors in relation to the *Standard for Nursing Education in New Brunswick*. The final responsibility for approval rests with the board of directors.

Frequency of School Approval

The New Brunswick Nurse Practitioner programs must be approved every 3 years.

The faculty/school may request a deferral of the approval process for up to 12 months.

Pre submission of program to be reviewed

1. The Board, on the recommendation of the Nursing Education Advisory Committee, appoints the members of the approval team including the team leader.
2. The schedule of the school visit will be arranged by an NANB staff resource person in cooperation with the school.
3. NANB will request information on a nurse practitioner program 12 weeks prior to the approval visit.
4. Persons responsible for the nurse practitioner program will forward the requested information, which will be shared with the team, to NANB five weeks prior to the visit.

Review of program submission

1. Each approval team member will receive the program information four weeks prior to the visit.
2. Members will review the program submission by using the NANB Tool for Approval of Nurse Practitioner Programs in New Brunswick.
3. The approval team will meet via teleconference one week prior to the scheduled visit to discuss the program's submission; identify additional documents that may be required from the program; formulate interview questions for the site visit; finalize the site visit schedule; and address concerns and questions concerning the site visit.

The site visit

The purpose of the site visit is to validate the extent to which the program meets the *Standards for Nursing Education* as they apply to the nurse practitioner program.

1. The approval site visit will normally take place over a three-day period.
2. The sources of data encompass observations of teaching/learning strategies, practice settings, interviews of students, faculty, graduates and relevant stakeholders groups and review of documents.
3. The focus of the site visit is to verify that the program provides learning experiences in the classroom and in clinical settings which prepares students to practice as beginning nurse practitioners.
4. The following activities will be included in the site visit:
 - meet with university president, vice-president academic and other administrative representatives;
 - meet with dean/director, assistant dean/director, faculty and student representatives;
 - observe teaching/learning activities;
 - observe and interview students in practice settings;
 - meet with administrators, staff and preceptors from practice settings; and
 - meet with graduates and employers of nurse practitioners.

The team will meet with the faculty on the day following the visit to give a brief verbal report. This will include comments on the indicators being met or not met and may also include discussion of the strengths of the program and suggestions for improvement if appropriate. The school may provide clarification or additional information during this meeting.

Report of the Approval Team

Following the school visit, the team will prepare a written report. This report will contain the collected data presented in a format based on the *NANB Standards for Nursing Education*. Indication will be given as to whether each indicator is being met satisfactorily, partially met or not met. The report will list strengths and weaknesses of the program as well as areas in need of improvement. The report will also contain a recommendation regarding approval. The team leader will present the report to the NANB Nursing Education Advisory Committee one month following the visit. Upon review, the committee will submit their approval status recommendation to the NANB board of directors.

Approval Status

As per the NANB approval process, the Nursing Education Advisory Committee will make recommendations to the NANB board of directors to grant the nurse practitioner program one of the following:

Approval granted: The nurse practitioner program is functioning at a satisfactory level in keeping with the *Standards for Nursing Education in New Brunswick*. The approval status may be granted for a period of up to three years.

Notwithstanding the above, a school may be directed to implement minimal recommendations and report on same within one year from the time the report is received.

Graduates from a program which has received this rating will be considered graduates of an approved nurse practitioner program for the purposes of registration as a nurse practitioner with the Nurses Association of New Brunswick.

Approval deferred: Approval is withheld for the time being; recommendations are made aimed at the deficiencies of the school in meeting the standards.

Action to address the recommendations must be initiated within 12 months after the date the report is received.

Graduates from a program which has received this rating will be considered graduates of an approved nurse practitioner program for the purpose of registration as a nurse practitioner with the Nurses Association of New Brunswick

Approval denied: When a school that has been given deferred approval status fails to present sufficient evidence that the standards are being addressed twelve months after the time when approval was deferred, approval is denied.

Graduates from a program that has received this rating will not be eligible for registration as a nurse practitioner with the Nurses Association of New Brunswick.

NANB Staff Resource Person

In relation to the Nurse Practitioner Program Approval Process, the NANB staff resource person is responsible for:

1. Informing, advising and supporting the nursing practitioner program preparing for the approval visit. The NANB staff resource person is available to visit the school to discuss the approval process and also to do a follow-up as required following the approval visit.
2. Consulting with the approval team members prior to, during, and following the visit, and responding to general inquiries and correspondence related to the approval process. The NANB staff resource person does not participate in decision making about the approval status of a program.
3. The NANB staff resource person serves as an ex-officio member of the approval team. This role is comprised of secretariat responsibilities, such as preparing the visit agenda in consultation with members of the approval team and the nurse practitioner program, facilitating the visit to the program site(s) and facilitating the work of members of the approval team.

The Approval Team

The approval team will consist of two nurse practitioners. The selection of the team members will be based on the following criteria:

1. The team leader:
 - a nurse educator with a doctoral degree;
 - recent or current teaching experience in a nurse practitioner program;
 - recent or current clinical practice as a nurse practitioner;
 - experience in nursing education program evaluation would be an asset;
 - fluent in the language of the school being visited.
2. The team member:
 - a nurse with a minimum of a master's degree;
 - recent or current teaching experience in a nurse practitioner program;
 - recent or current clinical practice as a nurse practitioner;
 - experience in program evaluation would be an asset;
 - fluent in the language of the school being visited.

Responsibilities of the Approval Team

1. Prior to the approval visit, review all documents submitted. Attend all briefing and orientation sessions.
2. During the approval visit, meet with appropriate representatives from the faculty/school and clinical agencies; visit educational and clinical facilities; verify and clarify additional documents.
3. At the end of the approval visit, present a verbal report to the faculty/school of general findings and recommended approval status.
4. Submit to the NANB Nursing Education Advisory Committee a final written report within format three weeks of the visit. This report will contain the collected data presented in a based on the NANB *Standards for Nursing Education*. Indication will be given as to whether each indicator is being met satisfactorily, partially met or not met. The report will also list strengths and weaknesses of the program as well as areas in need of improvement. The report will also contain a recommendation regarding approval.

Responsibilities of the School of Nursing

The school of nursing must:

- submit to NANB the required documents as per the *Tool for Approval of Nurse Practitioner Program in New Brunswick*;
- suggest dates for the site visit which will permit the approval team to observe various activities;
- schedule meetings with university administration, faculty, students, clinical agencies and others as appropriate; and
- collaborate with requests from team members for additional documents and/or meetings with key players.

The School Visit

The visit will be planned for a period which will accommodate the program. The visiting schedule will include additional days to allow time for preparation, travel, record keeping and follow-up. The activities of the visit may change according to the team and the particular school situation.

Administrative process, committee structure, school records, the report of the last approval visit, and other relevant matters and structures will be reviewed. The visit will include observation of students in classroom and clinical situations. The team, individually or together, will meet with students, faculty, administrators of major clinical facility(ies) as well university administrators. The meetings will be arranged in advance of the school visit.

The team will meet with the faculty on the last day of the visit to give a brief verbal report. This will include comments on the indicators being met, partially met or not being met and may also include discussion of the strengths of the program(s) and suggestions for improvement if appropriate. Clarification or additional information may be provided during this meeting.

Appeal Process

A school of nursing may appeal an approval decision. The notice of intent to appeal must be submitted to the NANB board of directors within 30 days of receipt of the approval decision and the final report.

When a decision is appealed, the previous approval status is maintained until the disposition of the appeal.

Upon receipt of appeal notice, the NANB board names an appeal panel within two weeks.

The appeal panel will be composed of three individuals: two nurse educators, one of these being from administration; the third member will be an educator with a specialty in evaluation. This individual may be a nurse or non-nurse. The members of the appeal panel may not be a member of the Nursing Education Advisory Committee, a member of the faculty of the school appealing, or a member of the NANB board of directors. All members must be acceptable to the school requesting the appeal.

Representatives for the school shall present a written rationale for the appeal and may meet with the appeal panel to answer questions and provide additional information.

The appeal panel rules within three months either to uphold the original decision or to request the NANB board of directors to reconsider its decision.

Confidentiality

All communications about the approval of a nurse practitioner program are confidential. When the procedure is complete, the approval status of the program given by the NANB board of directors will be considered public information.

The Data Collection Tool

For the NP program, the tool:

1. serves as a means to prepare for the approval visit;
2. serves as a guide for self-evaluation by indicating if each indicator is met/partially met/not met; and
3. lists additional information as requested for each standard.

For the approval team, the tool:

1. serves as a means to prepare for the onsite approval visit.
2. gives direction for data gathering during the visit.
3. guides the approval team in writing the approval visit report.

Evaluation of the Approval Process

Once the approval process is completed, the NANB staff resource person shall initiate an evaluation of the approval process. The approval team members as well as the faculty of the NP program shall provide evaluative feedback.

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STANDARD I: CURRICULUM

The curriculum provides learning experiences across the life span necessary for students to achieve the competencies required for beginning nurse practitioners as defined by the Nurses Association of New Brunswick.

Indicators	3	2	1	Documents from school	Follow-up during visit
1.1 The program philosophy, mission, curriculum framework and goals reflect the requirements for professional nurse practitioner practice in New Brunswick.					
1.2 The curriculum is responsive to and reflects current trends across the lifespan in: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. health and health promotion; 2. nursing practice and nursing research; 3. education; 4. health service delivery; and 5. society. 					
1.3 The curriculum is responsive to and reflects changes in the: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. treatment of diseases; 2. ordering of tests; and 3. prescribing of medications. 					
1.4 The curricular goals and outcomes reflect the competency requirements for beginning nurse practitioners.					
1.5 The curricular teaching and learning activities address the current and emerging trends and realities in health, health care, nursing practice, education and research.					

1.6 Learning activities (courses, laboratory work, clinical practicums, teaching strategies) provide students with the opportunity to meet program goals and outcomes.				
1.7 Systematic and continuous evaluation of all curriculum components, including the goals/objectives/outcomes, learning activities and student evaluation methods, is carried out to ensure ongoing development, maintenance and enhancement of the curriculum.				

- * 3 - Met
- * 2 - Partially met
- * 1 - Not met

Additional Information

- Overview of the nurse practitioner curriculum as per table 1
- Copy of curriculum
- Statement of philosophy
- Description of the conceptual framework
- Objectives of the clinical experience
- A list of clinical nurse practitioner competencies

Table 1

Nurse Practitioner Curriculum

1. GRADUATE CORE COURSES	Content found in: (List course # and title) *
Research	
Theoretical Foundations of Nurse Practitioner	
Statistics	
Other required course(s):	
2. NURSE PRACTITIONER PROGRAM COURSES	
Advanced Health and Physical Assessment (across the lifespan)	
Advanced Pharmacology (across the lifespan)	
Advanced Physiology and Pathophysiology	
Health Promotion & Disease Prevention (across the lifespan)	
Community-Based Practice	
Professional Role Development	
Clinical Decision-Making	
Clinical Practicum (identify practice area)	
OTHER REQUIRED COURSES	
Family Theory	

* **Submit all course descriptions, objectives, outlines, required readings and evaluation methods.**
Source: Adapted from: National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties, Washington, DC

STANDARD II: PROGRAM

The program has sufficient fiscal, human, physical, clinical resources, facilities, services and policies to support students to achieve the competencies required for beginning nurse practitioners as defined by the Nurses Association of New Brunswick.

Indicators			Documents from school	Follow-up during visit
2.1 Nursing faculty possess theoretical nursing knowledge and maintain clinical expertise appropriate to their teaching responsibilities.				
2.2 Nursing faculty members meet the NANB criteria for registration as a nurse and as a nurse practitioner.				
2.3 Appropriate resources (fiscal, physical, human, clinical) are used to facilitate the creation and implementation of the curriculum and to foster its ongoing improvement.				
2.4 Learning activities and clinical placement occur in a variety of primary health care settings.				
2.5 The program provides a minimum of 700 hours of relevant clinical practice for students.				
2.6 Research and scholarly activities that contribute to the extension and expansion of nursing knowledge and curriculum development are conducted by nursing faculty.				
2.7 Representatives of key stakeholder groups are provided with opportunities to participate in learning activities and evaluating program goals and outcomes.				

2.8 Partnership with key stakeholder groups are in place to assist with selecting, planning and evaluating learning and clinical experiences that will facilitate achievement of the competency requirements for nurse practitioners.				
2.9 Ongoing program evaluation using feedback from students, faculty, preceptors and employers is used to guide program revisions.				

- * 3 - Met
- * 2 - Partially met
- * 1 - Not met

Additional Information

- Program brochure
- List of full-time and part-time faculty, as per table 2
- List of nurse practitioner clinical practicum sites, as per table 3
- A sample contractual agreement between the university and the agency/individual used for students' clinical experiences
- Method used to ensure liaison between the nursing faculty and the provincial professional association.
- Copy of program's evaluation form used by the student.
- Copy of faculty's evaluation form used by the student.
- List of new skills needed and/or acquired since last approval.

Name	Academic Preparation	Date of Initial App't	Tenure Track (Status)	Non Tenure Track	Major Focus of Teaching	Relevant NP Preparation	Research Responsibility (Percentage of time spent)	Administration Responsibility (Percentage of time spent)

Source: CAUSN Accreditation Program, 1995

Nurse Practitioner Clinical Practicum Sites *

Name and Address of Site:

Type of Site (nursing home, private practice, clinic, hospital)	Experiences Available during Practicum

Name of Preceptor(s)	Academic Preparation	Practice area	Years of Practice in this Area	Previously Precepted NP students (Y/N)
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				

* Complete one table for each clinical practicum site.

Source: Adapted for National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties, Washington, DC

STANDARD III: STUDENTS

Students meet the admission criteria and during their participation in the nurse practitioner program, demonstrate progress towards achieving the competencies required for beginning nurse practitioners as defined by the Nurses Association of New Brunswick.

Indicators				Documents from school	Follow-up during visit
3.1	Students meet established university graduate admission requirements.				
3.2	Students' progress toward the goals/objectives/outcomes of the program is evaluated, documented and communicated systematically to students throughout the program.				
3.3	Students have access to learning resources in sufficient quantity to meet curriculum goals.				
3.4	University policies and procedures dealing with student promotion, failure, withdrawal, appeal, readmission, and graduation are followed.				

* 3 - Met

* 2 - Partially met

* 1 - Not met

Additional Information

- Copy of policy regarding student's admission, promotion, graduation, appeal.
- Statistics for past five years, on student application, admission, attrition and completion.
- Copy of student clinical evaluation form(s) used by faculty, preceptor, and student.

STANDARD IV: GRADUATES

Graduates of the nurse practitioner program are prepared to practice according to professional practice and ethical standards and have achieved the competencies required for beginning nurse practitioners as defined by the Nurses Association of New Brunswick.

Indicators			Documents from school	Follow-up during visit
4.1 Graduates meet the NANB <i>Standards of Practice for Nurse Practitioners</i> and the <i>Competencies for Beginning Nurse Practitioners</i> as documented by graduates, faculty, employers, and users of nurse practitioner services.				
4.2 Graduates meet the NANB requirements for registration as a nurse practitioner.				

* 3 - Met

* 2 - Partially met

* 1 - Not met

Additional Information

- Copy of Evaluation Tool (employer and graduate)
- For each graduate, indicate number of years to complete the program.

