

YOU'VE ASKED

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What is the difference between a student nurse and a student nurse employee?

The *Nurses Act* defines a student nurse as “any person enrolled in an approved nursing education program”. Student nurses, during the time they are enrolled in a program of nursing and are under the aegis of the university faculty, may perform the tasks, duties and functions required as part of a course of study, subject to such conditions, limitations and restrictions as determined by the educational institution.

When student nurses are in clinical settings and under the aegis of the university, registered nurses (RNs) remain responsible for the overall care of the clients; however, some components of client care will be shared. Nursing students are usually supervised by a clinical instructor who is responsible for assigning nursing tasks and for providing support and supervision to the nursing student. The RN must however be available for student and clinical instructor alike, for assistance or consultation with assigned activities. NANB's document *Supporting Learners: Practice Guideline* (2011) offers information on the role of RNs in supporting learners, such as nursing students.

It is common practice for student nurses to seek employment (for example, during the summer period). Student nurses in NB are not regulated and when employed as part of the health care team, they are unregulated care providers. As is the case for all other unregulated care providers, the employer is responsible to define their



NANB has developed the document Assigning, Delegating and Teaching Unregulated Care Providers: Practice Guideline (2011) that offers information and articulates the responsibilities of RNs when working with UCPs.

job description.

The Nurses Association of New Brunswick supports the employment of student nurses as UCPs as it provides an opportunity to further consolidate their theoretical knowledge and practical skills, while building self-confidence in the delivery of effective patient client care. Work experiences in a clinical setting also allow for the acquisition of the values, norms and accepted behaviors within healthcare environments. In order to support RNs when working with UCPs, NANB has developed the document *Assigning, Delegating and Teaching Unregulated Care Providers: Practice Guideline* (2011) that offers information and articulates the responsibilities of RNs when working with UCPs.

For more information about working with nursing students and with UCPs, contact NANB's Practice Department at 1-800-442-4417 or by email at nanb@nanb.nb.ca.

REFERENCES

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- Nurses Association of New Brunswick (2011). *Assigning, Delegating and Teaching Nursing Activities to Unregulated Care Providers*. Fredericton: Author.
- Association of New Brunswick (1984). *Nurses Act*. Fredericton: Author.
- Nurses Association of New Brunswick (2011). *Supporting Learners*. Fredericton: Author. ■