



**Nurses Association**  
OF NEW BRUNSWICK

Becoming a Registered Nurse in  
New Brunswick:

# Requisite Skills and Abilities



## **Mission**

The Nurses Association of New Brunswick is a professional regulatory organization that exists to protect the public and to support nurses by promoting and maintaining standards for nursing education and practice, and by promoting healthy public policy.

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## Introduction

The Nurses Association of New Brunswick (NANB) has the legislated authority through the *Nurses Act* to establish, maintain and promote standards for nursing education and to approve nursing education programs within New Brunswick. Under the *Nurses Act*, NANB is responsible for governing and regulating registered nurses in a manner that protects the public. Meeting this responsibility requires that graduates of nursing education programs have the knowledge, skill and judgement to provide safe, competent and ethical nursing care.

The NANB *Standards for Nursing Education in New Brunswick*, inform and support the development and maintenance of high quality nursing education in the interest of patient safety and public protection. Approved nursing education programs in New Brunswick prepare future registered nurses as generalists<sup>1</sup>, capable of safe, competent and ethical nursing practice in a variety of settings with clients across the lifespan and the continuum of care.

Upon completion of their nursing education program, all nursing students must demonstrate the ability to meet the NANB *Entry-Level Competencies for Registered Nurses in New Brunswick* which describe the knowledge, skill and judgement required of an entry-level registered nurse. In turn, entry-level registered nurses must be able to practise in accordance with the NANB *Standards of Practice for Registered Nurses*. The standards of practice articulate the conduct and performance required of registered nurses. In the interest of patient safety, certain skills and abilities are required to achieve entry-level competencies and gain initial entry to the nursing profession.

This document is intended to provide information to potential nursing students, guidance counsellors, admission officers, nursing faculty, disability service providers and the public about the skills and abilities required of nursing students to successfully progress through a nursing education program and achieve the established entry-level competencies for registered nurses in New Brunswick.

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<sup>1</sup> Registered nurses prepared to practise safely, competently and ethically, and in situations of health and illness, with people of all genders, across the lifespan, in a variety of settings, with individuals, families, groups, communities, and populations.

## **Requisite Skills and Abilities**

Requisite skills and abilities are the foundational skills and abilities that enable nursing students to successfully complete a nursing education program and achieve the knowledge, skill and judgement –required of a registered nurse to provide safe, competent and ethical nursing care in the best interest of the public. Requisite skills and abilities are needed to meet the NANB registration requirements, which include passing the national registration examination.

### **Categories of Requisite Skills and Abilities**

The requisite skills and abilities are organized in seven categories with examples of entry-level registered nurse practice. The examples following each requisite skill and ability are included to provide a snapshot of the nature and kind of activities involved in typical entry-level registered nurse practice. The examples are for illustration purposes only and do not reflect the depth, breadth and complexity of registered nurse practise.

The seven categories of requisite skills and abilities are:

1. Cognitive
2. Communication
3. Behavioural
4. Interpersonal
5. Psycho-motor
6. Sensory
7. Environmental

Requisite Skills and Abilities	Examples of entry-level registered nurse practice
<p><b>1- Cognitive requirements</b></p> <p>Ability to perform skills that demonstrate thinking capacity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remember information over a period of time</li> <li>• Remember information from past experiences</li> <li>• Problem solve and make judgements based on facts</li> <li>• Focus on and manage multiple pieces of information at the same time</li> <li>• Apply mathematical skills and abilities in order to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Add, subtract, multiply and divide</li> <li>○ Calculate ratios, percentages and apply algebraic equations</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>The entry-level RN:</b></p> <p>When administering a pain medication, critically analyzes client assessment data (observation of the client, recalls from the past, recalls information from colleagues), chooses from appropriate interventions (amount of pain medication), calculates correct medication dosage, safely administers the medication, recognizes untoward effects and intervenes as necessary.</p>
<p><b>2- Communication requirements</b></p> <p>Ability to express and receive written, verbal and non-verbal communication and ability to interact with others in a respectful and professional manner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speak, read and write in English or French at a level that provides for safe and accurate understanding of words and meanings</li> <li>• Recognize one’s own and others’ non-verbal cues and interpret them while considering individual differences in expression and associated meaning</li> </ul>	<p><b>The entry-level RN:</b></p> <p>Listens effectively to clients; elicits and attends to information from clients while taking a health history; communicates clearly and accurately with other health care team members about clients in a timely manner; reads and understands client record.</p>

<p><b>3-Behavioural requirements</b></p> <p>Ability to conduct oneself in a professional manner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond appropriately in situations that are stressful and may involve conflict</li> <li>• Respond appropriately to giving and receiving physical touch and working in close proximity with a full range of clients</li> <li>• Engage in self-reflection</li> <li>• Fulfill responsibility as part of a team</li> <li>• Manage time appropriately</li> </ul>	<p><b>The entry-level RN:</b></p> <p>Recognizes client priorities; manages time and sets priorities in the face of multiple demands; maintains calm presence with clients regardless of the client’s behaviour; reflects on actions taken.</p>
<p><b>4- Interpersonal requirements</b></p> <p>Ability to establish professional relationships with other people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop relationships and rapport with individuals and groups</li> <li>• Recognize the needs of clients and colleagues</li> </ul>	<p><b>The entry-level RN:</b></p> <p>Provides appropriate support to a client during a painful procedure; identifies that others have needs and perspectives that may be different than one’s own; maintains professional boundaries with clients.</p>
<p><b>5- Psycho-motor requirements</b></p> <p>Ability to perform each of the following requirements in order to participate in educational activities and provide client care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stand and maintain balance</li> <li>• Carry out tasks requiring manual dexterity</li> <li>• Move within limited spaces</li> <li>• Push and pull</li> <li>• Perform repetitive movements</li> <li>• Perform complex tasks requiring hand-eye coordination</li> <li>• Bend</li> </ul>	<p><b>The entry-level RN:</b></p> <p>Provides CPR to a client; assists a person to get out of bed and walk; climbs stairs carrying supplies for a home visit; helps lift, turn and/or transfer clients; prepares and administers injections; changes a dressing on a wound and removes sutures.</p>

<p><b>5- Psycho-motor requirements (Continued)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reach</li> <li>• Lift</li> <li>• Walk</li> <li>• Climb</li> <li>• Carry objects</li> </ul>	
<p><b>6- Sensory requirements</b></p> <p>Ability to perceive with each of the following senses in order to participate in educational activities and provide care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sight</li> <li>• Hearing</li> <li>• Touch</li> <li>• Smell</li> </ul>	<p><b>The entry-level RN:</b></p> <p>Sees well enough to read numbers and lines of demarcation on a syringe; feels a pulse; perceives differences in temperature with hand touch; hears patient call systems and alarms on equipment; hears through a stethoscope to note heart rate and breath sounds; hears a client’s voice without looking directly at the client; and recognizes abnormal odours.</p>
<p><b>7- Environmental requirements</b></p> <p>Ability to function in the presence of each of the following commonly encountered and unavoidable environmental factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noxious smells</li> <li>• Disease agents</li> <li>• Chemicals</li> <li>• Distractions</li> <li>• Noise</li> <li>• Unpredictable behaviour of others</li> </ul>	<p><b>The entry-level RN:</b></p> <p>Maintains focus while distracted or interrupted in the middle of a procedure; recognizes dangers in the client environment; tolerates disposing of body waste (urine, feces, vomit); and tolerates unpleasant and foul odors.</p>



## Conclusion

Prospective students concerned about whether or not they have the required skills and abilities for admission to or progression through a nursing education program should contact the program where they intend to apply to discuss these requirements. A prospective student with a disability should be prepared to disclose the nature of the disability and all relevant information to the nursing education program to assist in determining eligibility for accommodation. “Accommodation of students with disabilities involves making adjustments to their educational environment, or providing alternative arrangements, to eliminate any discriminatory effect they would otherwise have on the students because of their disability.” (New Brunswick Human Rights Commission, 2007, p. 9) However, accommodation of a nursing student must not compromise patient safety and well-being.

All nursing students are required to successfully complete the nursing program and demonstrate achievement of established entry-level competencies prior to becoming a registered nurse. “Accommodation does not require that post-secondary institutions lower academic or non-academic standards to accommodate students with disabilities or relieve the student of the responsibility to develop the essential skills and competencies expected of all students.”(Alberta Human Rights Commission, 2012, p.3) All entry-level registered nurses must be able to practise in a safe, competent and ethical manner, in accordance with the standards of practice for registered nurses.

Individuals considering a career as a registered nurse in New Brunswick should review this document and assess their ability to meet these requirements. The requisite skills and abilities serve as a benchmark, outlining the requirements to meet the minimum standard necessary to ensure patient safety and public protection.

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