



POSITION STATEMENT

PROFESSIONAL IMAGE OF LPNS IN THE WORKPLACE

The College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Newfoundland & Labrador (CLPNNL) in accordance with the Licensed Practical Nurses' Act has the legislative responsibility for regulating the practice of Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. The mission of the CLPNNL is to promote safety and protection of the public through the provision of safe, competent and ethical nursing care. The CLPNNL is responsible for setting, monitoring and enforcing the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for all LPNs in Newfoundland and Labrador. As such, CLPNNL has developed position statements which describe the professional expectations for LPNs in specific areas of practice. These position statements will assist in clarifying professional issues for the registrant, other health care professionals, employers and the general public. The College supports and encourages LPNs to work to their full scope of practice within the clinical parameters defined by employers through policies and procedures.

Our professional image is one of our most valuable assets. CLPNNL is committed to ensuring a professional image by requiring that our Licensed Practical Nurses consistently present a professional image in attire, personal demeanor, communications and actions in all contacts with the public, employers, employees and colleagues.

CLPNNL has specified the professional standards expected of Licensed Practical Nurses through the entry level to practice competencies, the adoption of a Code of Ethics and the development of professional Standards of Practice. CLPNNL advocates for clients to be informed participants in their care. This directive is seriously hampered if the client, family members and/or colleagues do not know the professional designation of the person providing care or have concerns about the level of professionalism shown.

- * Licensed Practical Nurses must introduce themselves to clients when they establish a nurse-client relationship.
- * A uniform is considered appropriate clothing for Licensed Practical Nurses who work in institutional and/or community health settings where there is contact with clients. LPNs are expected to dress conservatively and/or to wear a uniform or cover up, e.g. lab coat when visiting settings where client care is provided. Type and style of clothing and the requirement for a uniform may vary with setting.
- * Name and title identification must be worn at all times by Licensed Practical Nurses and must be clearly visible and easily read when interacting with clients.
- * Licensed Practical Nurses who work in institutional health care settings must have designated footwear for work. CLPNNL believes that the appropriate footwear is nursing shoes, white running shoes that are specifically for the workplace, and/or footwear in keeping with occupational health standards.

- * A professional image is portrayed when hairstyle and make-up are conservative and jewelry is minimal.
- * Fingernails must be short and unpolished; artificial nails are inappropriate, and rings must be limited to those without stones and sharp edges or grooves.
- * Licensed Practical Nurses must maintain a scent free environment in the workplace.

It is each Licensed Practical Nurse's responsibility to portray a professional image and to identify themselves clearly to clients. To support all nurses to recognize and implement this responsibility, health care agencies should establish policies that reinforce the importance of a professional image, proper identification in the workplace, and prevention and spread of infection.

Licensed Practical Nurses and employing agencies are requested to consider this position statement when developing/revising dress code policies for employees. These policies should consider the importance of a professional image, identification of staff, and infection control for protection of health care workers and clients.

REFERENCES

College of Licensed Practical Nurses of NL Scope of Practice (August 2004)

Association of Registered Nurses of Newfoundland and Labrador. Professional Image of the RN in the Workforce (February 2005)

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