The Professional Standards for Psychiatric Nursing integrates two documents: the RPNC Standards of Psychiatric Nursing Practice, adopted in March 2010 by CRPNBC, and the former CRPNBC Standards of Practice, which have been retained as interpretive criteria as they harmonize well with the national standards. Professional Standards, along with the Code of Ethics, address the overarching professional requirements for all Registered Psychiatric Nurses practicing in B.C., while Practice Standards set out requirements for specific aspects of practice.

**RPNC STANDARD 1: THERAPEUTIC INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS**

Registered Psychiatric Nurses establish professional, interpersonal, and therapeutic relationships with individual, groups, families, and communities.

1. INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINE: CRPNBC Standard 7 – Collaborative

**RPNC STANDARD 2: APPLICATION AND INTEGRATION OF THEORY BASED KNOWLEDGE**

Registered Psychiatric Nurses apply and integrate theory-based knowledge relevant to professional practice derived from psychiatric nursing education and continued life-long learning.

2. INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINE: CRPNBC Standard 1 - Assessment
3. INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINE: CRPNBC Standard 2 - Planning
4. INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINE: CRPNBC Standard 3 - Implementation
5. INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINE: CRPNBC Standard 4 – Evaluation

**RPNC STANDARD 3: PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY**

Registered Psychiatric Nurses are accountable to the public for safe, competent, and ethical psychiatric nursing practice.

6. INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINE: CRPNBC Standard 5 - Legal
7. INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINE: CRPNBC Standard 8 – Professional

**RPNC STANDARD 4: PROFESSIONAL ETHICS**

Registered Psychiatric Nurses understand, promote, and uphold the ethical values of the profession.

8. INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINE: CRPNBC Standard 6 – Ethical
9. INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINE: CRPNBC Standard 9 - Independent Practice/ Community Mental Health
10. INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINE: CRPNBC Standard 10 – Administration
INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINE: CRPNBC Standard 7 - Collaborative

The Registered Psychiatric Nurse functions effectively with other members of the interdisciplinary health care team.

RATIONALE:
The delivery of effective health care requires a collaborative effort by all personnel.

CRITERIA:
1. Functions competently as a member of an interdisciplinary team.
2. Identifies relationship of own role to the health care system.
3. Assumes required leadership roles.

PERFORMANCE FACTORS:
1.1 Identifies own role and roles of other team members in the local community in which the RPN practices.
1.2 Uses appropriate communication channels.
1.3 Demonstrates respect for colleagues.
1.4 Role models positive professional, interpersonal and therapeutic relationships.
1.5 Participates in planning, implementing, and evaluating selected programs to meet the community’s mental health needs.
2.1 Identifies components of health care system.
2.2 Identifies role of employing agency in the health care system.
2.3 Identifies own role in relation to employing agency.
3.1 Describes expectations of leadership roles in employing agency.
3.2 Identifies appropriate situations for assuming leadership role.
3.3 Demonstrates ability to supervise other staff as appropriate.
4.1 Identifies basic ethnic, cultural and socio-economic factors and their effects on mental health concerns.
4.2 Recognizes current social issues that influence the nature of mental health concerns.
4.3 Participates with other members of the mental health team in assessing community mental health needs.
4.4 Collaborates and advocates with individuals, families, groups and communities.
4.5 Creates authentic partnerships in professional, interpersonal and therapeutic relationships.
4.6 Recognizes and addresses power imbalances in professional, interpersonal and therapeutic relationships.
INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINE: CRPNBC Standard 1 – Assessment

The Registered Psychiatric Nurse systematically collects, analyses, and synthesizes data about a client’s health status.

RATIONALE:
Systematic collection of data is a prerequisite for realistic assessment of a client’s, family’s*, or community’s needs for the formulation of the entire care plan.

CRITERIA:
1. Systematically collects data about the client from all available sources.
2. Organizes and analyses the data using a nursing model and psychiatric nursing theories.
3. Formulates and organizes by prioritizing actual and potential nursing diagnoses.
4. Identifies health strengths.
5. Uses theory-based knowledge in psychiatric nursing practice and provides evidence based rationale for psychiatric nursing practice.

PERFORMANCE FACTORS:
1. Collects and documents pertinent client data. The data may include but is not limited to:
   1.1. Ability to remain safe and not be a danger to self or others – client’s presenting concerns, and symptoms, mental health examination, physical health examination, history of family* and significant others
   1.2. Physical, mental, developmental, cognitive and emotional health status
   1.3. Daily activities, addictions, functional health status, health habits, social roles
   1.4. Interpersonal relationships, communication skills, and coping patterns; spiritual or philosophical beliefs and values; strengths and competencies that can promote wellness
   1.5. Other contributing factors that promote health such as living situation and ability to manage the environment

* The term "family" is used in a generic sense throughout the document, but could include all of the persons who may be appointed by a client as a "near relative," as defined in the BC Mental Health Act. The Near Relative designation can include: wife, mother, grandmother, daughter, sister, half sister, husband, father, grandfather, son, brother, half brother common-law spouse, same-sex partner, friend, companion, legal guardian, caregiver, committee of person.
2.1 Describes the nursing model being used.
2.2 Collects information that is consistent with the model described.
2.3 Interprets the data in accordance with the described conceptual model.
2.4 Interprets the data taking into consideration the interdisciplinary plan of care.
2.5 Validates the data collection with the client and, whenever possible, with the family.
3.1 States nursing diagnoses that are consistent with the model being used.
3.2 States the criteria used to establish priorities.
3.3 Documents the nursing diagnoses in order of priority.
3.4 Modifies the diagnoses or the priorities based on the changing needs of the client or family.
3.5 Considers the client and, whenever possible, collateral information from the family in developing the diagnoses, arranging priorities, and modifying care.
3.6 Identifies priority of needs in collaboration with the client and other relevant persons.
3.7 Identifies and intervenes appropriately with unexpected and/or atypical client responses.
4.1 Documents the health strengths of the client or family.
4.2 Incorporates the health strengths into the formulation and development of diagnoses.
4.3 Diagnoses conform to accepted classification system—for example: The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, North American Nursing Diagnosis Association (NANDA), and others.
4.4 Applies diagnostic reasoning including critical thinking to the nursing process.

**INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINE: CRPNBC Standard 2 - Planning**

The Registered Psychiatric Nurse develops a specific psychiatric nursing care plan for a client, based on the nursing diagnosis. The Registered Psychiatric Nurse synthesizes and applies recognized theories or frameworks to engage in innovative problem solving.

**RATIONALE:**
Planning is the definite, specific plan of care, based on thorough and ongoing assessment, and is needed to develop the goals and the interventions required to meet the client’s needs and to provide a specific outline for continuity of care.

**CRITERIA:**
1. Acknowledges the client’s right to participate in decisions affecting care.
2. Whenever possible, incorporates observations and reports by the client and the family in developing and modifying the psychiatric nursing care plan.
3. Incorporates observations, reports and collateral information of other members of the interdisciplinary health care team in developing and modifying the psychiatric nursing care plan.
4. Devises goals that are client-oriented, therapeutically sound, measurable, and achievable behavioral outcomes.
5. Formulates nursing interventions in relation to identified goals.

**PERFORMANCE FACTORS:**
1.1 Assesses the client’s abilities and resources to participate in care planning.
1.2 Explains the rationale for participation to the client.
1.3 Provides the client with relevant information about health problems.
1.4 Consults with the client prior to making decisions affecting care.
1.5 Verifies the identification of diagnoses, goals, and the methods of achieving, evaluating, and revising them.
1.6 Verifies the appropriateness of the plan before proceeding.
1.7 In consultation with the client, identifies client’s responsibilities.
1.8 Supports the client’s independence.
1.9 Discusses progress in attaining stated goals.
1.10 Discusses alternatives that may be selected to deal with health problems.
1.11 Documents the client’s involvement in care planning.
2.1 Assesses the family’s and community’s abilities and resources for participation in care planning.
2.2 Explains the rationale for participation to the family.
2.3 Provides the family with relevant information.
2.4 Consults with the family prior to making decisions, as appropriate.
2.5 Verifies the identification of diagnoses, goals, & methods of achieving, evaluating, & revising them with the family.
2.6 Verifies with the family the appropriateness of the plan before proceeding.
2.7 In consultation with the family, identifies family responsibilities.
2.8 Supports family in carrying out care.
2.9 Discusses with the family, progress toward goals.
2.10 Discusses with the family, alternative strategies for care.
2.11 Documents the family’s involvement in care planning.
3.1 Involves other members of the nursing team in formulating the plan of care.
3.2 Delegates aspects of data collection & implementation to allied nursing personnel in line with their job descriptions.
3.3 Communicates relevant information to allied nursing personnel.
3.4 Obtains feedback from allied nursing personnel.
3.5 Communicates with appropriate members of the interdisciplinary health care team about the management of the client.
3.6 Formulates expected outcomes congruent with those of other members of the interdisciplinary health care team.
3.7 Participates in the formulation of overall team goals and plans.
3.8 Verifies the client’s achievement of actual outcomes with other members of the care team.
3.9 Identifies psychiatric nursing knowledge, skills, and activities, and articulates information so that it is coordinated with other health team members.
3.10 Provides psychiatric nursing consultation to other team members.
3.11 Incorporates observations and reports of others in developing and modifying the psychiatric nursing care plan.
3.12 Uses small group decision-making process to facilitate team activities.
3.13 Provides for appropriate community follow up to insure continuity of care.
4.1 Records goals, which include expected outcomes stated in measurable terms.
4.2 Records goals with specified time for accomplishment.
4.3 Records long term goals.
4.4 Records short term goals.
4.5 Communicates nursing goals to other members of the interdisciplinary health care team.
5.1 Formulates a plan of care which reflects the Registered Psychiatric Nurse’s identification of health problems.
5.2 Identifies a variety of interventions designed to achieve goals.
5.3 Selects interventions that reinforce the strengths of the client.
5.4 Uses scientific principles in selecting the interventions.
5.5 Includes interventions which are the responsibility of the client.
5.6 Includes interventions to achieve expected physiological outcomes.
5.7 Includes interventions to achieve expected psychological outcomes.
5.8 Determines the method of measuring effectiveness of interventions.
5.9 Determines time frame for interventions,
5.10 Records client based nursing interventions.
5.11 Modifies interventions according to changes in health status.
INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINE: CRPNBC Standard 3 - Implementation

The Registered Psychiatric Nurse carries out the planned interventions in assisting the client achieve optimal health.

RATIONALE:
Psychiatric/mental health nurses use a wide variety of interventions to prevent mental and physical illness and to promote, maintain and retain health. The Registered Psychiatric Nurse selects interventions according to their level of practice. The basic level nurse may select counseling, case management, self-care activities, group therapy, health teachings, and a variety of other approaches to meet the mental health needs of clients. The advanced level nurse may engage in psychotherapy, and act as a consultant in addition to the basic level interventions. All mental health nurses create therapeutic environments in diverse practice settings.

CRITERIA:
1. Initiates or supervises the initiation of the psychiatric nursing care plan.
2. Implements nursing orders until they are no longer required are observed to be ineffective, or need revision.
3. Modifies priorities on an ongoing basis to meet the client’s needs.
4. Provides consistent support and reassurance to the client and whenever possible, to the family while implementing the care plan.
5. Encourages the client to maintain active involvement in the ongoing therapeutic program.
6. Whenever possible encourages the family to discuss, question, and explore feelings and concerns about past, present, and projected therapies.
7. Promotes the realization of optimal health in individuals through the use of psychotherapeutic interventions,
8. Promotes the realization of optimal health in clients through health teaching.
9. Provides information regarding referral to available community resources that may assist the client and/or the family to meet identified goals.
10. Performs psychiatric nursing procedures as defined by the employing agency.

PERFORMANCE FACTORS:
1.1 Initiates or supervises the initiation of client focused, goal-directed interventions.
1.2 Uses the care plan to guide interventions.
1.3 Records the care plan.
2.1 Follows through with the plan of care in an organized fashion.
2.2 Attends to all elements of care within a time period realistic to the situation.
2.3 Continually updates the plan of care.
3.1 Records the effects of the care plan.
3.2 Modifies priorities to meet the changing needs of the client.
4.1 Selects interventions based on the highest probability of acceptability and effectiveness to the client and/or family.
4.2 Encourages participation by the client and/or family in implementing the plan.
4.3 Provides positive feedback to the client and/or family.
5.1 Encourages the client toward independence and self-direction.
5.2 Assists the client to identify, test out, and evaluate constructive patterns of living.
5.3 Reinforces positive behavior.
6.1 Employs principles of communication.
6.2 Employs principles of problem solving and critical thinking.
6.3 Encourages the family to discuss, question, and explore their feelings about the client’s problem.
6.4 Encourages the family to discuss, question, and explore their feelings about the client’s treatment.
6.5 Encourages the family to discuss, question, and explore their feelings about the client’s and their own coping strategies.
7.1 Identifies the learning needs of the client.
7.2 Uses appropriate teaching techniques to meet the client’s learning needs.
7.3 Evaluates the teaching carried out.
7.4 Records the teaching plan.
8.1 Incorporates diversity concepts to maintain a therapeutic milieu.
8.2 Employs a variety of psychotherapeutic interventions to assist clients to achieve and maintain their optimal health.
8.3 Documents interventions.
9.1 Involves the client, family, the health team, and appropriate community resources.
9.2 Is aware of and refers clients and families to appropriate community resources.
10.1 Demonstrates competent psychomotor skills.
10.2 Promotes physical health.
10.3 Performs procedures as defined.
10.4 Records procedures and their effect on the client.

**INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINE: CRPNBC Standard 4 - Evaluation**

The Registered Psychiatric Nurse observes and evaluates the client’s health status in accordance with the plan of care which is designed to assist the client achieve optimal health.

**RATIONALE:**
Evaluation is part of the ongoing nursing process. The Registered Psychiatric Nurse observes and evaluates the effectiveness of intervention so appropriate changes can be made in the treatment and nursing plans of care, incorporating the contributions of the client, family, and other members of the interdisciplinary health care team.

**CRITERIA:**
1. Observes, evaluates, reports, and records the effects of therapies and nursing interventions on an ongoing basis.
2. Whenever possible, discusses with the client and the family the client’s progress toward goals.
3. Recommends changes in the treatment plan to other members of the interdisciplinary health care team.
4. Modifies the plan of care based on the attainment of goals, the effectiveness of the treatment plan, and whether or not a positive change has occurred.

**PERFORMANCE FACTORS:**
1.1 Selects criterion standards that guide observation.
1.2 Relates the criterion standards to the diagnosis and goal.
1.3 Collects information on the effectiveness of all portions of the care plan.
1.4 Assesses the care plan in relation to identified diagnoses, goals and interventions.
1.5 Adapts the care plan to meet the changing needs of the individual.
2.1 Involves client and family in assessment of nursing care in perception of their health needs.
2.2 Involves the individual and family in revising the plan of care.
3.1 Incorporates observations and reports of other health care professionals in developing and modifying the care plan.
3.2 Recommends changes in the treatment plan to other members of the interdisciplinary health care team.
4.1 Modifies the care plan as required on the basis of evaluation.
4.2 Implements the revised nursing interventions.
4.3 Records the effects of therapies and interventions on an ongoing basis.
4.4 Continues the nursing process in a cyclical fashion until the relationship is terminated.
INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINE: CRPNBC Standard 5 - Legal

The Registered Psychiatric Nurse practices within the limitations established by law and by taking responsibility to create and maintain professional boundaries.

RATIONALE:
Knowledge of the legal boundaries governing psychiatric nursing practice is necessary to protect the public, the client, and the Registered Psychiatric Nurse.

CRITERIA:
1. Knows relevant legislation and regulations governing psychiatric nursing.
2. Knows relevant legislation governing rights of clients.
3. Takes appropriate action to ensure that own and others’ practice conforms to acceptable standards.
4. Maintains membership in good standing in the professional regulatory body.
5. Assumes responsibility and accountability for professional practice.

PERFORMANCE FACTORS:
1.1 Describes specific legislation affecting RPN practice in employment setting.
1.2 Describes regulations affecting RPN practice in employment setting.
1.3 Discusses relationship of legislation to RPN practice with other team members.
2.1 Describes legislation that governs client rights.
2.2 Explains legislated rights to clients and others.
2.3 Monitors own practice in relation to client’s rights legislation.
3.1 Follows accepted procedures in identifying breaches of care standards,
3.2 Follows accepted procedures in acting on identified breaches of care standards.
3.3 Recognizes own limitations and refers the client to appropriate resources whenever necessary.
3.4 Uses professional judgment in carrying out dependent care.
INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINE: CRPNBC Standard 8 - Professional

The Registered Psychiatric Nurse demonstrates responsibility for personal growth, contributes to the professional growth of others and practices in a manner that reflects positively on the profession.

RATIONALE:
All Registered Psychiatric Nurses have a responsibility to contribute to the growth of self and of the profession.

CRITERIA:
1. Participates in activities of the professional regulatory body.
2. Participates in continuing professional education activities.
3. Promotes and participates in activities designed to improve psychiatric nursing practice and care.
4. Creates authentic partnerships in professional, interpersonal and therapeutic relationships.
5. Assumes responsibility and accountability for continuing competence.
6. Participates, promotes, and utilizes research as an integral part of professional psychiatric nursing.

PERFORMANCE FACTORS:
1.1 Attends meetings of the College at the local and provincial level.
1.2 Participates in committees of the College.
1.3 Participates in projects and other special activities of the College.
2.1 Takes part in in-service education offered at place of employment.
2.2 Participates in non-credit continuing education activities.
2.3 Participates in post-basic credit practice-related educational opportunities.
2.4 Shares in identifying the educational needs of other members of the nursing team.
3.1 Applies and shares knowledge and skills to improve psychiatric nursing practice.
3.2 Accepts accountability for own psychiatric nursing practice.
3.3 Seeks peer review of care plan effectiveness.
4.1 Utilizes nursing research findings to guide psychiatric/mental health nursing practice.
4.2 Remains current in knowledge relevant to the professional practice setting.
4.3 Engages in lifelong learning.
4.4 Participates in nursing research projects when opportunity arises.
4.5 Refines abilities to collect, organize, categorize and analyze research data.
4.6 Suggest research questions that need to be addressed to improve the practice of psychiatric/mental health nursing.
INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINE: CRPNBC Standard 6 - Ethical

The Registered Psychiatric Nurse practices within the boundaries established by the CRPNBC Code of Ethics.

RATIONALE:
A guide to ethical behavior is required to ensure safety to the public. The psychiatric/mental health nurse engages in therapeutic interactions and relationships that promote and support health. Boundaries must be established to safeguard the client’s well-being and to prevent the development of intimate or sexual relationships.

CRITERIA:
1. Provides care within the boundaries established by the Code of Ethics.
2. Conducts all professional relationships in accordance with the Code of Ethics.
3. Interprets the Code of Ethics to others.
4. Maintains a therapeutic and professional relationship at all times.
5. Practices in a way that reflects positively on the Psychiatric Nursing profession
6. Uses ethical principles to guide practice.

PERFORMANCE FACTORS:
1.1 Identifies the parts of the Code of Ethics related to client care.
1.2 Identifies the relationship between the content of the Code of Ethics and own RPN practice,
2.1 Identifies those parts of the Code of Ethics relating to professional relationships.
2.2 Identifies ethical dilemmas and seeks available resource to help resolve dilemmas.
3.1 Discusses the Code of Ethics with colleagues and others.
3.2 Describes the relationship of the Code of Ethics to RPN practice.
3.3 Uses ethical principles to guide psychiatric nursing practice.
3.4 Reports abuse of client’s rights, unethical, incompetent and illegal practices.
3.5 Recognizes and mitigates the risks of exploiting power imbalances in psychiatric nursing practice.
3.6 Supports client’s rights to make informed decisions.
3.7 Applies the principles of confidentiality and consent in psychiatric nursing practice.
3.8 Acts as a role model for positive professional and therapeutic relationships.
4.1 Functions as a client advocate.
4.2 Delivers care in a nonjudgmental and nondiscriminatory manner,
4.3 Integrates cultural safety into psychiatric nursing practice.
4.4 Discusses with client boundaries of the client-nurse relationship. Maintains boundaries between professional and personal relationships

4.5 Does not promote or engage in intimate or sexual relationships with clients.

4.6 Uses professional judgment and practices with personal integrity to develop, maintain and terminate professional, interpersonal and therapeutic relationships.

4.7 Consistently applies deliberate consciousness/self-awareness within professional practice.

4.8 Recognizes that to engage in intimate or sexual relationships with former clients is unusual to accepted practice.

4.9 Recognizes own professional and personal limitations and seeks assistance when necessary.

4.10 Assumes responsibility and accountability for continuing competence.

**INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINE: CRPNBC Standard 9 - Independent Practice/ Community Mental Health**

Please see [CRPNBC Guidelines for RPNs in Independent Practice](#)

**INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINE: CRPNBC Standard 10 - Administration**

The Registered Psychiatric Nurse in administration is an advanced level nurse qualified by education and experience. The nurse executive or nurse manager uses communication, motivation, leadership, management, problem solving and decision making skills and functions to promote, develop, and maintain an organizational climate conducive to quality nursing practice and effective management of nursing resources.

**RATIONALE:**
The delivery of effective health care requires management of the interdisciplinary health care team and resources to ensure quality of client care and promotion of psychiatric nursing practice and mental health service delivery.

**CRITERIA:**
1. Maintain proficiency in clinical practice.
2. Implement and evaluate the operations and goals of the organization on the clinical unit, assigned work area or program area.
3. Interact with clients and/or clients’ families both directly and indirectly.
4. Contribute to client and staff well-being by ensuring that quality care is given by staff.

**PERFORMANCE FACTORS:**
1.1 Act as a clinical resource, rendering expert direction and service to client care.
1.2 Serve as the official supervisor of an assigned program to plan, direct, coordinate, implement, control, evaluate, and improve the quality of client care delivered.
1.3 Demonstrate knowledge of standards of psychiatric nursing practice, interdisciplinary standards and legal and ethical practices.
1.4 Demonstrate systems/critical thinking, encourage and support innovation and champion change.
1.5 Advocate for, and develop policies and practices consistent with the standards of the profession.
2.1 Align decisions with the organizational vision, mission, values, strategic and operational plans.
2.2 Establish and maintain standards, goals, objectives, priorities, and facilitates change based on the needs of clients and their families, allied health staff, and on the results and recommendations of audits or other organizational change, patient safety or quality improvement initiatives.
2.3 Participate in the development of and supervise the allocation of resources, remaining accountable to an established budget.

2.4 Establish an effective working relationship with the interdisciplinary health care team.

2.5 Enforce agency and nursing service policies and procedures.

2.6 Set direction and take action to implement decisions.

3.1 Interaction with clients and/or clients’ families may include but is not limited to:
   3.1.1 Answering questions and requests related to the interdisciplinary team, staff, clients, and families.
   3.1.2 Direct client care.
   3.1.3 Receiving reports on client status.
   3.1.4 Reviewing client records.
   3.1.5 Care planning and clinical problem-solving

3.2 Direct or personally engage in client/family teaching for optimal recovery and health.

3.3 Demonstrate commitment to a client-focused model of service delivery and a client-centred model of care.

3.4 Act to promote safe, competent, appropriate and ethical care to clients.

3.5 Support the client’s right to be informed and to make informed choices.

4.1 Ensure competent, well-qualified nursing personnel by identification of skill needs and recommendation of formal education and developmental activities.

4.2 Maintain timely documentation and anecdotal records on staff to be used in the preparation and conducting of performance appraisals.

4.3 Contribute to creating and maintaining a positive work environment that encourages staff engagement, staff morale, motivation, commitment and excellence in patient care.

4.4 Foster the development of others through personal mentoring and coaching.

4.5 Build partnerships and networks to create results.

Approved by the CRPNBC Board of Directors
November 29, 2012