

Title: <b>Prescriptive Authority for Regional Registered Nurses</b>		NUR-CCHC-SOP-004
Document Path: Community Clinics & Health Centres/ Policies & Procedures/Scope of Practice		
Approved By: VP of Nursing		Version: 1.0
Effective Date: 01/11/2016	Status: Current	Page 1 of 4

**Policy Name: Prescriptive Authority for Regional Registered Nurses**

**Purpose:**

To provide Regional Registered Nurses with guidelines regarding their prescriptive authority.

**Policy / Standard:**

The Regional Registered Nurse will follow the drug classification system in the formulary as reflected in the [scope of practice](#). There are four classifications (A, B, C and D).

- **Class A:** Regional Registered Nurses can prescribe independently based on their assessment of the client's health history, disease, condition, stage of life and individual circumstances. No limitation on duration of treatment.
- **Class B:** Regional Registered Nurses can prescribe after consultation with a physician or nurse practitioner. Duration and frequency is specified by physician or nurse practitioner. Note that controlled substances meeting criteria for emergency administration are further identified by a plus sign (i.e. B+). Refer to emergency situations in the Prerequisites to Providing Controlled Substances included in the Formulary.
- **Class C:** Regional Registered Nurses may prescribe and provide one course. A course is defined as several successive doses of medication over time. The time is the period that the specific drug is expected to produce therapeutic effects. If the client's symptoms recur, the condition does not resolve or first-line therapy fails, the nurse will consult a physician or nurse practitioner. If further medication is needed, a physician or nurse practitioner order is required.
- **Class D:** Regional Registered Nurses may prescribe one dose in an emergency situation, reassess client and consult physician or nurse practitioner if further treatment is required.

All drugs not listed in the Formulary are to be considered as Class B drugs. The classifications from 'most lenient' to 'most restricted' are: A, C, D and B.

The controlled substances authorized for emergency administration are coded as B drugs and are further identified by a plus sign (i.e., B+) in the Drug Classification System.

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**Materials Required:**

[FNIHB Nursing Station and Drug Classification System](#)

[FNIHB Clinical Practice Guidelines for Nurses in Primary Care](#)

[FNIHB Pediatric Clinical Practice Guidelines for Nurses in Primary Care](#)

[Telephone Advice Log for Curtis Memorial Hospital](#)

[Telephone Consultation Log for Labrador Health Centre](#)

**Related Policies:**

[Regional Registered Nurse Scope of Practice](#)

[Telephone Consultation Log](#)

**Procedure:**

The Regional Registered Nurse is responsible to:

1. Complete a thorough client history and assessment of the client.
2. Refer to the First Nation and Inuit Health Branch [Adult](#) (FNIHB) and [Pediatric](#) Clinical Practice Guidelines for Nurses in Primary Care
  - If a medication is part of the recommended therapeutic plan then the Regional Registered Nurse must determine the classification of the medication.

If a client requires a controlled substance in a non-emergency situation the Regional Registered Nurse is responsible to:

1. Complete a client assessment and determine the care treatment plan.
2. Obtain a verbal order from a physician and complete the telephone advice log.

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3. Administer the client the amount prescribed by the physician, i.e., a single dose or course of treatment.
4. Prepare and provide the client with appropriate instruction regarding the pharmaceutical and therapeutic suitability.
5. Dispense medication in a proper container with a label, indicating the client's name, the medication name, dosage, route of administration, strength, directions for use, quantity of the medication, date provided and nurse's signature.
6. Monitor the client and assess that the therapeutic intent is reached.
7. Provide care according to the Labrador-Grenfell Health policies and the Association of Registered Nurse of Newfoundland and Labrador standards.

When a client requires controlled substances in an **emergency situation**:

In an emergency situation the Regional Registered Nurse is authorized to administer a maximum of one dose of selected controlled substances pending communication with a physician. The Regional Registered Nurse is responsible to:

1. Asses the client's condition and determine if a controlled substance is warranted.
2. Explain the risks and benefits to the client.
3. Be reasonably prepared to deal with the predicted outcome.
4. Select the appropriate substance, prepare and administer to the client and take steps to ensure its pharmaceutical and therapeutic suitability.
5. Monitor the client and evaluate the response and to determine if therapeutic intent was achieved.
6. Complete the telephone advice log once the client's condition is stabilized.

**Definitions:**

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**Drug classification system**- a formulary that is designed to be used in conjunction with both the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB) [Adult](#) and [Pediatric](#) Clinical Practice Guidelines for Nurses in Primary Care.

**Emergency situation** - An immediate urgent and critical health concern that may seriously endanger or threaten the life, health or safety of the client and where immediate access to a physician/dentist is not available.

**Regional Registered Nurse:** Works in a geographically isolated facility, assuming a high level of autonomy and responsibility, and exercises considerable judgment and initiative in performing client care. The Regional Registered Nurse follows Clinical Practice Guidelines for Primary Care Nurse for communicating diagnosis, ordering diagnostic tests, dispensing medications and consulting with other health professionals. This is accomplished by completing comprehensive clinical assessments and using complex problem-solving skills, advanced interpersonal skills, and clinical expertise

**References:**

Association of Registered Nurses of Newfoundland and Labrador. (2013). *Standards of Practice for Registered Nurses.*:  
[http://arnnl.ca/sites/default/files/documents/Standards\\_of\\_Practice\\_for\\_Registered\\_Nurses.pdf](http://arnnl.ca/sites/default/files/documents/Standards_of_Practice_for_Registered_Nurses.pdf)

Health Canada. (2012). *First Nations and Inuit Health Branch:Adult Care* from Health Canada: <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/services/nurs-infirm/clini/adult/index-eng.php>