

How to Engage with an NP

If you use a clinic or service that has an NP providing you care, remember, we are here to provide guidance and treatment options, and work with you to better understand and navigate the often confusing healthcare landscape.

BC's Nurse Practitioners



*Creating Positive Change
in the Health of all
British Columbians.*

Our relationship with you guides assessment and planning, investigations, and referrals to physician specialists, specific clinics, home support or other services.

Ask questions. We are open to discussing our role and involvement in your care.

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What Nurse Practitioners Do

Nurse Practitioners (NPs) are advanced practice nurses with who have enhanced university education and training. NPs are educated to at least a Master's level. (Source: CRNBC website (www.crnbc.ca.)

NPs can diagnose and treat disease and illness. NPs take a holistic view on health when working with patients, taking care of the physical, emotional, and social aspects of a person's health needs.

NPs must complete annual licensing requirements, and the credentialing process administered by the *College of Registered Nurses of BC*, which regulates all NPs.

NPs also carry liability insurance administered by the *Canadian Nurses Protective Society*.

NPs in British Columbia *can*:

- ✓ Assess, diagnose, and treat health issues.
- ✓ Order medical imaging, blood work and specialized tests.
- ✓ Prescribe medical and psychosocial treatments.
- ✓ Prescribe medications and write orders to be carried out by other health providers (e.g., dietary orders, oxygen therapy, physical therapy, etc.)
- ✓ Complete health and extended benefits forms.
- ✓ Work autonomously with teams in acute, primary and residential settings.

The NP role varies depending on the population they serve and the teams in which they work.

Where to Find NPs in BC

BC NPs work in a number of settings with a wide range of patients and families:

- In hospitals in acute care, such as Emergency departments.
- On wards or clinics that attend to specific patient populations such cardiac, renal or respiratory conditions.
- In family practice clinics where they work with physicians, nurses, and other NP's to provide primary care to people of all ages.
- In nursing care homes, palliative care or hospice services.
- In specialized clinics that work with vulnerable populations such as immigrants or those who are displaced.

Some NPs work only with adults or older adults, some with children, and others with the entire age spectrum.

In general, a patient can access an NP only if the role is part of the team providing treatment they are receiving. This is due to how NPs are funded: NPs are currently funded through a health authority or hospital.

Unlike physicians, NP's cannot directly bill the BC Medical Services Plan for consultations and patient care visits.

BCNPA is working with the Ministry of Health to strategize on maximizing the role of BC's NPs in the provincial health system.

