

Post-LPN BN Clinical Preparation Guide

Preparing for clinical courses can be an overwhelming process. Please review the contents of this guide prior to signing up for clinicals to understand the requirements for each course and to find answers to the questions you may have.

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Connect Care

The implementation of Connect Care in AHS will impact all clinical students. Please review the following information.

Alberta Health Services and Covenant Health began the process of implementing a new computer software program called *Connect Care* in late 2019. *Connect Care* is a client-centered health information system that will replace the more than 1300 independent health information systems currently in place (Alberta Health Services, June 2021). Alberta Health Services expects to have *Connect Care* fully operational throughout Alberta by the end of 2024.

How will Connect Care Impact Students?

- Students are required to complete online e-learning modules.
- Connect Care training is mandatory for all students placed in Connect Care sites. This impacts **ALL NURS 401 placement sites**.
- **NURS 401:** Two mandatory (8-hour) in-person Instructor-Led Training (ILT) sessions must be completed up to 14 days prior to commencing clinical. *No exceptions*. **NURS 437 and NURS 441:** ILT in-person training hours vary on clinical placement location and Connect Care role requirements.
- BN Clinical Placement will advise students if they require Connect Care for their placement. If you are attending a Connect Care placement site, an email with your user ID will be automatically generated by AHS and sent to your Athabasca University email. Use this AHS login ID to access MyLearningLink for the online learning modules.
- Training days are scheduled by Alberta Health Services *without input* from Athabasca University. **There is no ability to change the date or time. Students are not permitted to reach out to AHS to change their dates; doing so is a breach of contract and will result in removal from clinical.**
- Out-of-province students will be required to travel to Alberta for training *prior to* clinical commencing. **The training dates may not coincide with your clinical placement dates. Alberta Health Services attempts to schedule training within 14 days of your clinical dates, but this is not guaranteed. There may also be short notice of these training dates.**

Note: Information on Connect Care training will be sent to you via your AU learner email, your AHS email if you are an AHS employee, and/or be on your MyLearningLink page through your AHS login whether you are an AHS employee or not.

Please review the following links for current Connect Care information:

- Additional information about [Connect Care](#)
- [Student Onboarding Checklist](#)
- [Student FAQs](#)

Clinical Requirements

Students are expected, with guidance from instructors or preceptors, to progress toward meeting the [College of Registered Nurses of Alberta \(CRNA\) Entry level Competencies for the Practice of Registered Nurses](#) in all clinical courses. The clinical evaluations are based on meeting these competencies.

CLPNA Requirements

Post-LPN BN students registering in professional practice (clinical) courses must be prepared to demonstrate, at a minimum, the knowledge, skills, and clinical behaviors outlined in the [College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta, Competency Profile for LPN's, 5th edition, February 2020](#).

Students are required to complete self-remediation as needed **prior to** registration in NURS 401, NURS 435, and NURS 437.

GPA Requirements

A Program GPA of 3.0 is required for all clinical courses and for NURS 435.

Pre-requisite Requirements

Please review all clinical course prerequisites found in each course syllabus linked below. All final grades for prerequisite courses, including NURS 250 and NURS 328, must be showing on your academic record (DegreeWorks) **before** you sign up on the Course Eligibility List. **Plan to complete all your course requirements 4 to 6 weeks prior to the sign-up deadline to allow sufficient time for marking and grade processing.** Please review AU's [service standards](#) for more information regarding marking timelines. Please contact our academic advising team (bnadvisor@athabascau.ca) for assistance with degree planning. Students are strongly encouraged to create a draft plan early in their program to map out their full degree program. These draft plans are for students' planning purposes only and they may be shared with our academic advising team for feedback. This is particularly impactful regarding the clinical sign-up process. In order for students to successfully plan their degree, they must understand the clinical sign-up process.

Note: Clinical courses in progress are the only exception to the clinical sign-up deadline. All nursing theory courses must be completed prior to the sign-up date for NURS 441. If you intend to take your final Cluster B clinical course alongside your final nursing theory course (a common practice for students seeking full-time loan funding), this will result in a one-term gap in your studies immediately prior to NURS 441. Please contact our academic advising team (bnadvisor@athabascau.ca) for course sequencing guidance.

NURS 401: Professional Practice with Adults Experiencing Health Alterations:

<https://www.athabascau.ca/syllabi/nurs/nurs401.html>

**NURS 435: Professional Practice in Mental Health Promotion*

<https://www.athabascau.ca/syllabi/nurs/nurs435.html>

***This is a paced online theory course with scheduled videoconference sessions*

NURS 437: Professional Practice in Family and Community Health Promotion:

<https://www.athabascau.ca/syllabi/nurs/nurs437.html>

NURS 441: Consolidated Professional Practice

<https://www.athabascau.ca/syllabi/nurs/nurs441.html>

Clinical Placement Process

Clinical placements are at the sole discretion of AU. There are no guarantees that students will receive clinical placements in the term, location, dates, or clinical setting of their choice. There may be more requests for clinical placements than there is capacity at one time. Clinical Course Eligibility lists fill quickly. Leaving all clinical courses until the end of the program is not recommended. Doing so often causes delays in program completion and may lead to course stale-dating implications or may prevent students from completing the program within the 7 year required timeline.

Students are **not** authorized to contact clinical placement sites, including management/managers, clinical educators, or staff, to try to request/arrange their own clinical placements. AU is bound by the terms of Student Placement Agreements that stipulate clinical placement requests are to be completed by the educational institution only. **Students who contact clinical sites without authorization will be removed from Course Eligibility Lists.**

Clinical courses are offered three times per year, over a 4-month term. **Only one clinical course can be taken per term:**

- Winter semester: January – April
- Spring semester: May – August (**NURS 401: April – July**)
- Fall semester: September – December

How to Sign up for a Clinical Course

The Course Eligibility Lists (for clinical course sign up) are in a “course” — **Clinical Course Preparations** — and they open at midnight MT. Lists are created each term. Login a few days ahead of the clinical sign-up dates listed below to ensure that you can view *Clinical Course Preparations* and to familiarize yourself with where the lists are located.

Fall term: May 1 Winter term: September 1 Spring term: January 2

Funded students in Spring term only: Do not sign up for a NURS 401 course start during a Spring term. NURS 401 has a start date of April 1st and does not qualify for student loans.

NURS 401, NURS 435, and NURS 437

Students need to sign up through the course **Clinical Course Preparations** for the term in which they would like to enroll (e.g., Fall or Winter or Spring). Each clinical course has a Course Eligibility List and a waitlist. **Students may ONLY add their name to ONE Course Eligibility List or waitlist per term.** Students who sign up on more than one Course Eligibility List will have their names removed from the lists and will be unable to enroll in any clinical course that term.

NURS 441

The sign-up process for the final preceptorship is different from the other clinical courses. Login in to the **NURS 441 Placement Suggestion Process** “course”. Please note associated deadlines regarding the NURS 441 Placement Suggestion form.

Wait Lists

The order in which students enroll in clinical courses is not prescribed; however, the demand for clinical courses is unpredictable and varies each term. We are committed to being transparent about availability and to supporting program completion within the 7-year time limit.

We understand the challenges associated with waiting for clinical placements. We are working within a placement process that is governed by contractual obligations between Alberta Health Services, academic partners, and Student Placement Agreements.

Sign-Up Tips

- Remember: September 1 at midnight Mountain Time means the night of August 31st, and so on. Plan to stay up late. This is the best option as the alternative, 0800, is a busier time at work and for families.
- Set your phone to the world clock on Alberta Mountain Time for the exact time.
- Plug your computer into your router if you have weak, or spotty internet connection.
- Shutdown and update your computer as needed on the day of sign up.
- Refresh your screen at 23:59 MT.

Confirmation of an Approved Clinical Placement

Students will receive an email, via their AU learner email address, notifying them of their clinical placement and granting permission to register in the course. Notifications of placement confirmations will be sent when most of the approvals have been received from the clinical partners, prior to the term registration deadlines of August 10, December 10, and April 10 (March 10 for NURS 401). Being on the Course Eligibility List does not guarantee that a clinical placement space will be available for registration. There may be terms when our academic partners cannot support all requests.

Do not send an email or submit a webform requesting professor approval for registration in NURS 401, 435, 437 or 441. The registration process is different for these courses.

Please be patient. Refrain from emailing/calling about placement confirmation during these times. Responding to emails takes time away from organizing and confirming clinical placements.

NOTE: The registration timeframe may be short. Please, check your AU learner email account frequently prior to and on the registration day. Late registrations cannot be accommodated.

Pre-requisite Clinical Documentation (not required for NURS 435)

NURS 401, NURS 437, and NURS 441: Pre-requisite clinical placement documentation (as outlined below) must be completed and uploaded to the appropriate clinical placement preparation drop box, for the correct term, by the document submission deadlines:

Fall term: **July 10**

Winter term: **November 10**

Spring term: **February 10 for NURS 401; March 10 for NURS 437 and 441**

Students are responsible for accurately completing and correctly submitting the required documentation in the course **Clinical Course Preparations**. Some documents take time to complete/process and students must account for this time beforehand.

Individual reminders are not sent to students regarding document submissions. The submissions will show as “marked” if they meet the requirements or “returned” for additional follow up with instructions provided in the *Feedback* area. **Do not** email/call to ask whether documents have been checked or to indicate that you have submitted/resubmitted specific documents.

Students will be removed from being considered for a clinical course if there are any outstanding requirements after the dates listed above.

Required Documentation

Refer to the instructions posted to each drop box when completing the requirements below:

Athabasca University (AU) Student Oath of Confidentiality: Must be updated annually.

HSPnet Consent Form: Dated prior to the first clinical course and is valid for the duration of the program if continuously enrolled. Can be currently dated if original form is unable to be located.

Alberta Health Services (AHS) Confidentiality User Agreement: Must be updated annually. Proceed to the [AHS site](#). Complete the module. The two-page AHS Confidentiality and User Agreement certificate will be generated upon completion of the module. Ensure the "Role" (on page 1) checkbox is indicated as: **Student or Educator (Educational Institution Liaison)**. The certificate is valid for one year.

Health Care Provider CPR: Must be Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada, BLS Provider level or equivalent. Online courses without hands-on skills testing by a certified instructor are not accepted. The card must show a valid date related to the date of the clinical course. **If the card expires during the specific clinical dates, it is a student’s responsibility to recertify prior to the start of clinical and to submit a valid CPR certification to the drop box.**

CLPNA Registration (Practice Permit): Active the same year as clinical course dates. An invoice or payment receipt is not acceptable. **For Winter placements only:** Permit submissions are accepted until the end of December. Active registration is also required for students completing the final NURS 441 course in Winter term outside Alberta.

Police Information Check with Vulnerable Sector Screening: Must be dated within 90 days prior to the first in-person clinical term (NURS 401 or NURS 437) start date. It is valid for the remainder of the program if continuously enrolled. Note: Toronto Police Service area students: Contact bnclinical@athabascau.ca to receive direction, as there is a specific process.

Athabasca University Bachelor of Nursing Photo ID: All students must have a wearable Nursing Student ID Card to participate in clinical. Complete the [Student Photo ID Request Form](#) Indicate that you are an AU nursing student in the Bachelor of Nursing Program. The Photo ID card must be **updated each academic year** by requesting an annual update sticker. [New stickers](#) are available mid- to late-August.

N95 Mask Fit Test: Documentation must show a valid date corresponding with the clinical course dates. If the N95 Mask Fit expires during the specific clinical dates, it is the responsibility of the student to get a N95 Mask Fit Test prior to the start of clinical. If the N95 Mask Fit test has an expiry date displayed on the reverse side of your documentation, please submit images of both sides.

N95 respirator inventory includes the following:

3M models:

- 1870+ (preferred model – please try first)
- 1860
- 1860s

KC models:

- o KC 46727 (regular)
- o KC 46827 (small)

Network Questionnaire for IT Access: Must be completed prior to all clinical courses in Alberta. Indicate your CLPNA number in the "Professional ID #" area. It is important that you provide both month and day of birth. If applicable, please list all AHS/Covenant Health user IDs such as Network access, Sunrise Clinical Manager (SCM), Meditech, Connect Care.

When you receive your user ID from AHS it is important that you retain this information. Your user ID is used throughout all your clinical placements sites within AHS. **We do not keep this information on file for you.** If this information is lost or forgotten, you will need to contact AHS IT department at your next clinical placement.

PPE Certificate

Please complete the [virtual simulation module](#) on personal protective equipment (PPE) from Alberta Health Services (AHS). This certificate must be updated prior to each clinical course. Please note that we are aware that the formatting of the certificate is not ideal as your name will overlap the date.

Preventing Workplace Harassment and Violence Certificate

Students are required to complete the [online training course](#) and submit a certificate of completion to the appropriate drop box. This online module must be completed prior to your

first in-person clinical course. Please retain a copy of your certificate of completion for future drop box submissions.

AHS supports students and instructors in knowing how to stay safe during their placement and how to appropriately prevent and safely respond to incidences of worker-to-worker, patient-to-worker and domestic violence aligning with provincial Occupational Health and Safety legislation. Please review the [Respectful Workplaces and the Prevention of Harassment and Violence policy](#).

Influenza Vaccine Documentation: Annual influenza vaccination is required. **For Fall placements:** If your in-person clinical placement is in September or October, please submit proof of influenza vaccination during your clinical placement. If your in-person clinical placement is in November, please submit proof of influenza vaccination prior to your clinical placement.

Immunizations

Copies of records and/or bloodwork indicating immunity is required:

- dTap: At least one dose after age 18 years followed by Td boosters every 10 years
- MMR: Two documented doses for healthcare workers, regardless of year of birth. *Rubella immunity is a legislated requirement in Alberta
- Hepatitis B
- Varicella
- TB skin test/chest x-ray: after starting the LPN-BN program and dated no more than four months prior to the first clinical course with an in-person component (NURS 401 or NURS 437)
- COVID-19: if applicable to your province

Students may have to request and to pay for vaccinations to meet AHS requirements. **It may take several months to plan and complete appointments for immunizations with health care providers so please plan accordingly.**

Information is also available in the AHS Standard for Immunization of Post-Secondary Health Care Students and Students in Other High-Risk Occupational Programs, the Public Health Agency of Canada, and the National Advisory Committee on Immunizations websites. Clinical placement units/agencies may not accept students if immunizations are not completed and may cancel or end clinical rotations prior to completion in the event of an outbreak. Students may have to repeat the clinical hours to meet the clinical competencies and tuition will not be refunded.

Contact bnclinicalplacement@athabascau.ca if you have immunizations questions.

Clinical Course Preparation Topics

Topics 1 and 2 are required prior to the Pre-placement Clinical Documentation submission deadline indicated in this guide. Once the course commences, your instructor will advise if any placement specific modules are required under the other Topics, i.e.,: It's Your Move, BeLite, AccuCheck, Pyxis.

Clinical Course Information

All clinical courses are accessible on the first day of each term (e.g., September 1, January 1, or May 1 (April 1st for 401). The courses are paced, which means they begin and end in a usual 4 month term, unlike most theory courses. There is coursework in addition to the clinical hours. Please review the courses, evaluations, and expectations thoroughly in week 1.

Required dress in acute care placements: a plain, white nursing uniform top with bottoms of any colour. Community placements: "business casual" attire. Students are expected to discuss attire with their preceptor prior beginning of the placements. Student signatures on any written form or documentation must be followed by NS, AU.

NURS 401: Professional Practice with Adults Experiencing Health Alterations

- NURS 401 is an instructor-led, paced course with a blended format of online and in-person learning.
- An invigilated Medication Safety and Calculation Quiz must be successfully completed in the first month of the course, prior to the four-week clinical rotation. The passing grade for the quiz is 80%, with 3 attempts permitted.
- NURS 401 includes a clinical rotation of four consecutive weeks of eight-hour shifts Monday through Friday, with an instructor on an acute care medical/surgical unit in Calgary or Edmonton.
- Students are required to attend several synchronous meetings with their instructor and classmates via an online video conferencing platform. **These meetings are mandatory.** Dates and details regarding meetings will be provided by your instructor at the beginning of the course.

NURS 437: Professional Practice in Family and Community Health Promotion

- NURS 437 is an instructor-led, paced course, with a blended format of online and in-person learning. Students are required to attend several synchronous meetings with their instructor and classmates via an online video conferencing platform. **These**

meetings are mandatory, and students are expected to rearrange schedules as needed to attend. Dates and details regarding the meetings and skills testing will be provided by your instructor at the beginning of the course.

- NURS 437 includes a clinical rotation of four consecutive weeks with a RN preceptor in a community health nursing setting in Calgary, Edmonton, and surrounding rural areas (we make every attempt to place northern and rural Alberta students close to their home communities). The four-week clinical rotation usually occurs within weeks 6-14. **Students may be required to drive up to 125km one way for their placement.**
- A vehicle is required for the clinical portion of NURS 437 for most placement sites. Please see communication below on carpooling.

NURS 441: Consolidated Professional Practice

- NURS 441 is an instructor-led, paced course with a blended format of online and in-person learning.
- Most clinical rotations start on week 3 of the course.
- Students are required to complete a minimum of 380 practice hours under the guidance of an RN preceptor. Shifts vary in length and include days, evenings, nights, and weekends. **Students must follow their preceptor's schedule.**
- Be prepared to attend a virtual orientation within the first week of the course start date.

Carpooling

Athabasca University students are not permitted to car share or carpool with AHS employees during their NURS 437 or NURS 441 practicums in community or public health. Students are required to have their own vehicle to travel between practicum sites, i.e.: schools and home care visits.

AHS employees may not be insured to have students in their vehicles for work-related purposes and AU does not provide insurance coverage for these purposes. If an accident were to occur, the student may not be covered under Workers Compensation Coverage.

25. Can an AHS employee drive a student between worksites during a student placement?

An AHS employee who drives a personally owned vehicle for business purposes is required to contact their automobile insurer to discuss how the vehicle is used and the type of passenger being transported on behalf of their employment with AHS. AHS does not have a policy in place that precludes AHS employees from transporting students in their

personal vehicle. Many educational institutions have policies in place which do not permit students to travel with staff. Students are required to follow the direction of their educational institution (Alberta Health Services, 2022, p.13-14).

b. What is the process if an AHS employee transports a student via a personal or rental vehicle to lunch or home at the end of the day?

An AHS employee who drives a personally owned vehicle for business purposes is required to contact their automobile insurer to discuss how the vehicle is used and April 22, 2022 Talent Acquisition, Human Resources the type of passenger being transported on behalf of their employment with AHS. AHS does not have a policy in place that precludes AHS employees from transporting students in their personal vehicle. Many educational institutions have policies in place which do not permit students to travel with staff. Students are required to follow the direction of their educational institution. WCB coverage would not apply if WCB determines that the AHS employee was not acting within the scope of employment at the time of the motor vehicle accident. Some no-fault benefits exist that are available under the automobile policy which are subject to policy conditions. Additional compensation may be available under the liability insurance policy of the responsible party (Alberta Health Services, 2022, p.13-14).

Alberta Health Services (2022). [Student Placements Frequently Asked Questions](#).

Please review [WCB's Student Coverage Worker Fact Sheet](#) for more information about student coverage.

Clinical FAQ

Why are clinical placements limited?

- There are a finite number of clinical placements in Alberta and across Canada.
- Nursing program placements include students enrolled in Practical Nursing, Psychiatric Nursing, Baccalaureate Nursing and Nurse Practitioner programs. There are also other healthcare professional programs requiring placements.

Why are NURS 437 and NURS 401 only offered in Alberta and not in other provinces?

- Healthcare agency partners must provide placement opportunities for their local schools, followed by other schools in their province or territory. For example, an accepting agency in BC must first accept all students attending BC post-secondary institutions.

- The requirement for Alberta-based clinical placements are clearly identified on the [Post-LPN BN Program webpage](#) and [Undergraduate calendar](#)

Why do I need to pay for a yearly CLNPA license?

This is an external regulatory requirement for AU to offer the Post-LPN BN program. Please review the [Specific Program Regulations](#) for the Post-LPN Bachelor of Nursing program, proof of active registration/licensure must be maintained throughout the duration of the program.

Additional Post-LPN BN Program Contacts

Questions regarding degree planning, course sequencing, program regulation requirements, and end-of-program documentation: **bnadvisor@athabascau.ca**

Questions regarding clinical placements and placement preparation: **bnclinical@athabascau.ca**

Immunization inquiries, NURS 441 Placement Request Form inquiries, Connect Care access when registered in a clinical course: **bnclinicalplacement@athabascau.ca**

Students must use their AU learner address and always include their AU student number in all written correspondence.