



Physician Delegation to a Licensed Practical Nurse





CLPNS

COLLEGE OF LICENSED PRACTICAL
NURSES OF SASKATCHEWAN

2208 Victoria Ave E.
Regina, Saskatchewan
Canada S4N 7B9
www.clpns.com

Phone: 306-525-1436
Toll Free: 888-257-2576
Fax: 306-347-7784

College of Licensed Practical Nurses
2208 E Victoria Ave, Regina, Saskatchewan S4N 7B9

practice@clpns.com

www.clpns.com

©2023 – College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Saskatchewan (CLPNS) - All Rights Reserved

First issued: July 2021

Current version: April 2023

Previous versions: July 2021

Reviews: 2024

Approved by: CLPNS Council

Responsible for review: Professional Practice and Standards Ethics

The legislated mandate of the College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Saskatchewan is to protect the public through the regulation of Licensed Practical Nurses.

The Medical Profession Act, 1981 was amended in September 2014, giving the **College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan** (CPSS) the authority to create bylaws to authorize **duly qualified medical practitioners** to delegate the performance of acts in the practice of medicine specified in the bylaws to other health professionals specified in the bylaws.¹

The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan amended its bylaws in 2019 to allow a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) to receive delegations to perform specific medical procedures.² The treatment or procedure that a physician can delegate to an LPN is within the scope of the practice of medicine and is authorized by the CLPNS as being within the Professional Scope of Practice for an LPN under specific conditions.

The conditions to be met are outlined in this document.

What is a Physician Delegation?

A **physician delegation** is a process that allows a physician to determine that an LPN can **safely perform** specific procedures that fall within the practice of medicine.

A physician may not delegate any treatment or procedure for which they do not have authorization from the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan (CPSS). The CPSS Regulatory Bylaws outline the parameters under which a physician may delegate a treatment or procedure to an LPN.³

The physician retains overall responsibility and accountability for the task. However, the LPN accepting the delegation is responsible for performing it competently.

The delegation will be from one specific physician to one specific LPN.

Can an LPN accept a delegation?

Yes, however, an LPN *may carry out a physician delegation only where the LPN practises under the supervision of a duly qualified medical practitioner who has assessed the patient and established a treatment plan and is on-site and/or has direct contact by other means and is available to assist as necessary.*⁴

How does a physician delegate an activity to an LPN?

A physician may only delegate to an LPN the act to:

- inject bioactive agents for ANY purpose, or
- administer laser and light-based therapy for medical purpose.

The following excerpt from the CPSS Bylaws further explains:

A physician may only delegate to an LPN the act to inject bioactive agents or administer laser and light-based therapy for a medical purpose, as noted in the following excerpt from CPSS Bylaws:

¹ The Medical Profession Act, 1981, 6 (2) (j) (j.1)

² The Saskatchewan Gazette, September 27, 2019, page 2398

³ College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan, Regulatory Bylaws, Section 23.3 (b) – (j) and Section 23.4

⁴ CLPNS Regulatory Bylaws, Section 21.5(1)

A duly qualified medical practitioner may delegate to a Licensed Practical Nurse the authority to inject agents which have an effect on or elicit a response from living tissue (bioactive agents), but only when the physician has first assessed the patient and established a treatment plan for the injection and is also subject to the limitations set out in Section 23.3(b) to (h) of the CPSS bylaws.⁵

*A duly qualified medical practitioner may delegate to a **duly qualified laser technician**⁶ the administration of laser and light-based technologies for a medical purpose, but only when the physician has assessed the indications and potential contraindications for each patient. The physician must personally assess each patient undergoing invasive laser or light-based procedures, including ablative laser skin resurfacing or vascular procedures. The physician must be available to attend at the same location as the laser or light-based therapy is provided should circumstances arise where they are required to assist non-physician providers or to manage misadventure or complications arising from the procedure. "Available to attend" in this context means that:*

- a) A policy must be in place for emergent complications, including but not limited to anaphylaxis, allergic reaction or acute embolic event, and the authorized non-physician providers present must be appropriately trained to recognize emergent complications;
- b) In the event of an urgent or semi-urgent complication, the physician most responsible for care must be available to attend within a reasonable time consistent with the nature of the complication.⁷

An LPN may accept a delegation from a physician only for the following two treatments or procedures:

- to inject bioactive agents for ANY purpose, or
- to administer laser and light-based therapy for a medical purpose

An LPN **may not** accept a delegation from any other healthcare provider, including a Nurse Practitioner, for any other reason.

Requirements to accept a delegation

Before an LPN can accept a delegation from a physician, all of the following conditions must be met:

- The LPN must have:
 - The knowledge, skill, and judgment to perform the treatment or procedure safely and ethically
 - While it is the physician's responsibility to ensure that the LPN has the appropriate skill and knowledge specific to the delegated activity, the LPN is responsible for complying with the CLPNS's Standards of Practice and the Code of Ethics.
 - A therapeutic nurse-client relationship with the client.
- The LPN is expected to ensure that:
 - The physician is licensed to practice medicine in Saskatchewan and is permitted to delegate the treatment or procedure (duly qualified)
 - Performing the delegated treatment or procedure is appropriate, keeping the client's best interests and needs in mind

⁵ College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan, Regulatory Bylaws, Section 23.3

⁶ College of Physician and Surgeons of Saskatchewan (CPSS) considers an LPN to be a duly qualified laser technician for the purposes of a physician delegation within the Bylaws of the CPSS

⁷ College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan, Regulatory Bylaws, Section 23.4

- The **Context of Practice** supports the LPN providing the treatment, including:
 - having sufficient safeguards and resources available to perform the delegated treatment or procedure safely and ethically.
- **FOR BIOACTIVE AGENTS:** The physician has first assessed the patient and established a treatment plan for the injection
- **FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF LASER AND LIGHT-BASED THERAPIES FOR MEDICAL PURPOSE:**
 - A physician may delegate to a duly qualified laser technician when they:
 - Have assessed, in person, the indications and potential contraindications for each patient
 - Are available to attend at the same location the laser or light-based therapy is provided should circumstances arise where they are required to assist non-physician providers or to manage misadventure or complications arising from the procedure.
- The LPN has the training to recognize emergent complications
- A policy is in place for emergent complications, including, but not limited to, anaphylaxis, allergic reaction, or acute embolic event.
- In the event of an urgent or semi-urgent complication, the physician most responsible for care must be available to attend within a reasonable time consistent with the nature of the complication..
- They document the particulars of the delegation:
 - The authority to delegate must be provided in writing to the LPN and must contain:
 - a specific description of the delegated treatment or procedure
 - any conditions or restrictions associated with the delegation (e.g. only to be exercised after prior consultation with a physician, to be exercised if a patient has a specific medical condition, any time limitation on the delegated authority, etc.)
 - the date the delegation occurred
 - the name of the physician delegating the procedure to the LPN
 - any conditions that may apply to the delegation.

How long is a delegation valid?

A delegation is only valid:

- if the LPN accepts the delegation, AND
- while the delegating physician is generally available to provide oversight and advice to the LPN.

If the physician who has delegated the activity no longer has oversight responsibility for the delegated activity, the delegation is no longer valid.

The delegating physician may revoke a delegation at any time.

The delegation will end when any of the following apply:

- The physician is no longer licensed or duly qualified to provide the delegation
- The LPN rescinds their acceptance of the delegation
- The LPN is no longer working with the physician that provided the delegation
- The LPN is no longer competent to provide the delegated treatment or procedure
- The LPN is no longer authorized by the CLPNS to accept the delegation.

Glossary

College of Physician and Surgeons of Saskatchewan	The medical regulatory body responsible for the licensing of medical practitioners
Context of Practice	Determines the appropriate application of LPN practice with the collective consideration of conditions or factors affecting the status and needs of the patient, the abilities and attributes of the individual LPN, and the characteristics and resources of the environment. The context of practice guides individual decision-making in specific practice settings or situations
Duly qualified laser technician	The CPSS considers an LPN to be a duly qualified laser technician for the purposes of a physician delegation within the CPSS Bylaws.
Duly qualified medical practitioner	A physician or surgeon licensed by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan to practice medicine in Saskatchewan.
Therapeutic nurse-client relationship	A therapeutic relationship allows nurses to apply their professional knowledge, skills, abilities, and experiences towards meeting the client's health needs. This relationship is dynamic, goal-oriented, and client- and family-centered because it is designed to meet the client and family's needs. Regardless of the context or length of interaction, the therapeutic nurse-client relationship protects the client's dignity, autonomy, and privacy and allows for the development of trust and respect.
Physician delegation	A process that allows a physician to determine that an LPN can safely perform specific procedures that fall within the practice of medicine.
Safely perform	The LPN is competent, and the Context of Practice supports the procedure to be provided.



References

- College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba. *Delegation by Physicians Under the Regulated Health Professions Act*. Retrieved from <http://www.cpsm.mb.ca/assets/RHPA/DELEGATION.pdf>
- College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan. *The Medical Profession Act, 1981, Section 6(2)(j.1)*. Retrieved from <https://pubsaskdev.blob.core.windows.net/pubsask-prod/882/M10-1.pdf>
- College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan. (2020). *Regulatory Bylaws*. Retrieved from <https://www.cps.sk.ca/iMIS/Documents/Legislation/Legislation/Regulatory%20Bylaws.pdf>
- Mayo Clinic. (2020). *Laser resurfacing*. Retrieved from <https://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/laser-resurfacing/about/pac-20385114>
- National Council of State Boards of Nursing. (2018). *A Nurse's Guide to Professional Boundaries*. <https://www.ncsbn.org/3757.htm>
- College of Licensed Practical Nurses Saskatchewan. (2023). *LPN Practice in Saskatchewan*, Retrieved from [Document Library | CLPNS](#)
- College of Licensed Practical Nurses Saskatchewan. (2023). *CLPNS Regulatory Bylaws*. Retrieved from [Document Library | CLPNS](#)
- College of Licensed Practical Nurses Saskatchewan. (2023). *The Licensed Practical Nurse Act, 2000*. Retrieved from [Document Library | CLPNS](#)
- College of Registered Nurses of Saskatchewan (2021). *Physician to RN Delegation*. Retrieved from [Physician to RN Delegation - College of Registered Nurses of Saskatchewan \(CRNS\)](#)