

Home Support Worker/Personal Care Attendant

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this program is to ensure that support workers are prepared to deliver appropriate care, assistance and support services in either the home or institutional settings. Through the use of classroom laboratory and supervised field/clinical practicums in the client's home and nursing homes, the program will educate and equip graduates with the necessary knowledge, skills and ability to deliver appropriate, timely, and respectful client-focused care to the elderly, persons with disabilities or those recovering from illnesses or injuries and their families. In community settings, support workers will provide personal care, light housekeeping, meal assistance and other support services as determined by the employing agency. In both nursing home and community sectors, home support workers and personal care attendants are integral members of the interdisciplinary team and are responsible to provide support to clients in all aspects of daily living through companionship, physical, spiritual and psychosocial care. Duties are performed, often under the direction of a nurse or other health professionals, and are in keeping with the philosophy of client-centered care in which the worker openly displays the attitude and belief that clients and families are the focus of care and activities.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Home Support Workers may find employment with an agency specializing in home care or with an individual client, often referred to as self-managed care. Throughout the curriculum, there is reference to the term, "the employer". In the case of the agency employee, the employer is the individual at the agency to whom the worker must report. In self-managed situations, the employer is the client. A home support worker or personal care attendant will not perform a medical/nursing procedure unless it is formally delegated by the appropriate health professional to ensure the client receives safe and competent care.

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PREREQUISITES

- Grade 12, Adult High School Diploma, or High School Equivalency (GED);
- Mature applicants with a minimum of Grade 10 may be considered for this program and must pass a high school equivalency test;
- Clear Conduct Certificate;
- A Vulnerable Sector search is required;
- Mentally and physically able to complete requirements for job;
- Provide their own transportation that is acceptable to their clinical agency;
- Complete a standardized health form and proof of immunization;
- Demonstrate proficiency in English at a minimum of Level 8.

Clear Conduct Certificates: Students acquiring a Clear Code Conduct Certificate for admission into a program take on the reasonableness of its validity. Students are solely accountable for any offences not uncovered by the investigation being discovered and precluding the student from subsequent practicum or employment.

Practicum: You may be required to go out of town for your practicum. You may incur additional costs associated with the practicum (i.e. travel, accommodations, etc.). At this time, practicums occur only in Canada.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

All modules, external certificates, laboratories and practicums must be successfully completed before students are eligible for graduation. In order to graduate students must:

- Obtain an overall minimum of 70% in each program component;
- Pass the laboratory examination;
- Demonstrate successful performance of all skills;
- Successfully complete the practicums;
- Provide a satisfactory and completed HSW/PCA Competency Assessment Tool.

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Course	Hours		
Introduction to the HSW/PCA Program	6		
Introduction to the Health Care Sector	6	Alzheimer Disease and Other Dementia	
Personal and Professional Development	44	Care Course	30
Communication and Documentation	35	Software Lab: Computer Fundamentals	40
Environmental Safety	24	HCP Standard First Aid/CPR Level C	16
Safe Client/Resident Handling and Movement	31	Canadian Restaurant and Foodservices Association, National Food Safety Training Program	8
Household Management	15	Practicums	10 Weeks
Growth and Development	23		
Body Structure, Function and Related Health Issues	70	TOTAL HOURS	930
Personal Care	110	CLASS HOURS	
Nutrition and Meal Preparation	37	Core HSW/PCA classes run 6 hours per day, 5 days per week. Software Lab classes run 4 hours per day, 5 days per week. Practicum weeks require a minimum commitment of 35 hours week.	
Mental Health and Social Issues	40		
Medication Awareness	15		
Palliative and End of Life Care	30		

MODULE DESCRIPTIONS

Introduction to the HSW/PCA Program

This module provides an introduction to the HSW/PCA program by providing an overview of the program. It explores employers' expectations for the HSW/PCA graduate in the Long Term Care and Community Support Services sector. It also introduces the student to the philosophy and policies that set the framework for the delivery of long term care and community support services. This philosophy will be integrated throughout the program and is the basis of all learning, both in the classroom and in practicum areas.

Introduction to the Health Care Sector

This module provides an introduction to the Health Care Sector. The student will discuss health care services in Newfoundland and Labrador including legislation, funding and health care system reform. Components of the health care system including long term care, home support, community health, public health, acute care, and mental health across the continuum will also be discussed. The private health care sector will also be discussed.

Personal and Professional Development

This module will enable the student to acquire and demonstrate the necessary knowledge and skills to be a contributing member of the health care team. As such, the HSW/PCA must demonstrate professional behavior that reflects an understanding of personal values and beliefs, as well as ethical and legal obligations. The student will explore how lifestyle choices and personal health practices contribute to the personal and professional development of the HSW/PCA.

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Communication and Documentation

The focus of this module is on developing and maintaining respectful relationships through effective oral and written communication. The student will practice a variety of effective communication strategies that will be used within the diverse long term care and community support services sector. A strong emphasis is placed on the importance of documentation and the development of documentation skills.

Environmental Safety

In this module, the student will gain an understanding of his/her role as a HSW/PCA in providing a safe and secure environment. She/he will become familiar with strategies, rules, regulations and protocols that help him/her to minimize workplace risk. There is an emphasis on infection control.

Safe Client/Resident Handling and Movement

In this module the student will be introduced to the principles of body mechanics and Safe Client/Resident Handling and Movement techniques necessary to perform all client/resident handling activities in the classroom, laboratory and practicum settings. She/he will acquire and demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to ensure his/her own safety and that of the client/resident when assisting with activities of daily living, including positioning the client/resident.

Household Management

This module is designed to enable the student to develop the skills required for the basic safety and cleanliness of the client's home or facility residential settings according to the scope of employment policies. It prepares the HSW/PCA to organize and complete daily household tasks. She/he will also learn how to set priorities and develop time management skills.

Growth and Development

In this module the HSW/PCA will understand and apply the principles of growth and development to meet the client/resident's needs appropriately and adequately. Knowing the client/resident's level of physical, emotional and social development is crucial to planning and providing care. This module emphasizes how these needs change as the client/resident progresses through the life cycle.

Body Structure, Function and Related Health Care Issues

This module will enable the student to acquire a basic knowledge of the normal structure and function of the body. It provides an introduction to common health issues and the implications for care.

Personal Care

In this module the student will be introduced to the principles relating to personal care using a client-centered philosophy of care approach. She/he will learn, practice and demonstrate the practical skills necessary for respectfully, safely and effectively providing personal care to client/residents across the life cycle.

Nutrition and Meal Preparation

In this module the student will focus on nutrition and the role of the HSW/PCA in meeting the dietary needs of client/residents of all ages. She/he will plan menus, prepare and serve meals to meet client/resident specific nutritional needs.

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Mental Health and Social Issues

This module is designed to prepare the student to recognize and support clients/residents who are experiencing mental health issues as well as various types of abuse and neglect. It explores strategies to maintain mental health and social well-being. Community resources are also identified. Challenging/responsive behaviours are briefly discussed but are explored in further detail in the Alzheimer Disease and Other Dementia Care module.

Medication Awareness

This module focuses on awareness of medications and the role of the HSW/PCA in supporting the needs of the client. It provides an introduction to commonly used medications as well as some basic principles of pharmacology.

Palliative and End of Life Care

This module introduces students to the philosophy and practice of Palliative and End of Life Care. The Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association defines palliative care as the combination of active and compassionate therapies designed to support individuals living with, or dying from, a progressive life-threatening illness, their families, their friends, and includes bereavement support. Many home care clients and nursing home residents are living with a life limiting illness and are experiencing loss which may involve the final stage of their life cycle. Therefore, this module will focus on the role of the HSW/PCA in providing care and support to the client/resident and family during the palliative and end of life phases, including care required during the dying process and bereavement period.

Alzheimer Disease and Other Dementia Care Course

Dementia is a progressive disease of intellectual deterioration characterized by poor thinking ability, inappropriate behavior and memory loss. There are various types of dementia. Alzheimer disease is the most common form of dementia. It is a progressive, degenerative disease that affects each area of the brain and results in the loss of certain functions or abilities. This results in specific symptoms or changes in behavior. It is important to remember that once an ability is lost it can rarely be relearned. Although the disease results in changes, it does not affect the person's ability to appreciate, respond to and experience feelings such as joy, anger, fear, love and sadness.

Software Lab: Computer Fundamentals

Through a combination of theory and hands-on-practice, this module examines the role and use of the computer in today's workplace. Emphasis is placed on those computers outfitted with the Microsoft Windows operating system. Students will review basic computer concepts, Windows OS usage, and complete hands-on training exercises in business-standard software applications, including Microsoft Outlook and Microsoft Word. Keyboarding skills are also honed via daily keyboarding exercises and drills.

Home Support Agency Practicums

Home support practicums provide students with the opportunity to further develop their skills in the home support setting. Students gain practical experience in meeting the Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) and Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs) needs of clients under the supervision of an assigned on site employee of the home support agency and RN/LPN instructor. All home support practicum hours must be completed by students to meet program requirements.

Nursing Home Practicums

Nursing home practicums provide students with the opportunity to further develop their skills in the long term nursing home setting. Students gain practical experience in meeting the Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) and Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs) needs of residents under the supervision of an instructor. All nursing home practicum hours must be completed by students to meet program requirements.

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Preceptorship Practicum

This practicum provides students with the opportunity to further enhance their knowledge and skill in a selected area of practice in either the nursing home or home support agency setting. In addition students will gain practical independent experience in meeting the Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) and Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs) needs of clients/residents under the indirect supervision of an instructor or preceptor. All practicum hours must be completed by learners to meet program requirements.

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