

PRESS RELEASE

Nurses and Nurse Practitioners of British Columbia (NNPBC) Welcomes Inclusion of Nurse Practitioners in Federally Insured Health Services for Canadians

January 20, 2025

Vancouver, BC — The Association of Nurses and Nurse Practitioners of British Columbia (NNPBC) commends the federal Minister of Health, Mark Holland, for releasing the *Canada Health Act* (CHA) Services Policy, as a key enabler to ensure that medically necessary services provided by nurse practitioners are fully covered under provincial and territorial health care plans by April 1, 2026.

This policy marks a significant step towards ensuring British Columbians have equitable access to health care through a range of care providers and acknowledges the critical role of nurse practitioners in the modern health system.

Nurse practitioners have consistently demonstrated the ability to provide high-quality, cost-effective care across a range of settings including underserved and rural areas where access to other primary care providers may be limited. Across these settings, in primary health care and increasingly in acute care settings, nurse practitioners (NPs) are working as the “most responsible provider,” which is essentially the health care provider in charge. By expanding the recognition of NPs as providers of insured health services, the federal government is taking a crucial step towards optimizing the health workforce and addressing the ongoing challenges within our publicly funded health care system.

“We are encouraged by the commitment of the federal government to ensuring that nurse practitioners are fully recognized as who we are: essential providers within Canada’s health care system,” said Dr. Sukhwant Jassar, Board Chair of NNPBC and President of the NNPBC NP Council. “This policy change aims to remove barriers to care, enabling NPs to deliver the full range of services we are trained to provide. It is a step toward ensuring more Canadians can access timely, high-quality health care from the right provider at the right time.”

The interpretation letter issued by Minister Holland is a call to action for provinces and territories. In leveraging the federal funds which underpin health care in BC, this policy change pushes our province to fully integrate NPs not only at the point of care but throughout all the systems that enable the delivery of care. To meet this call, our province must move toward a new vision for NP care provision, one that fully enables NPs’ ability to provide insured services.

As we move towards the implementation of the CHA Services Policy, NNPBC stands ready to work with the Government of British Columbia and our health care partners to ensure that these critical reforms are successfully realized. Together, we can strengthen our health care system, support our health care workforce, and ensure that every Canadian receives the care they need, when and where they need it.

About the Nurses and Nurse Practitioners of British Columbia

The Association of Nurses and Nurse Practitioners of British Columbia (NNPBC) is the professional association that represents the voice of all four nursing designations in BC – RNs, LPNs, RPNs and NPs. By bringing all nursing designations under one roof, our association is a first of its kind in Canada, and presents a stronger, united nursing voice to influence health and social policy and advance the nursing profession. Our mission is to promote excellence in nursing practice, education, research, and leadership by empowering nurses to actively influence and advocate for change to health and social policy, the nursing profession, and the health of individuals, families and communities.

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