



THE CANADIAN PSW NETWORK

The Professional Voice For PSWs

www.canadianpswnetwork.org

PSW Standard of Practice

Personal support workers (PSWs) play a crucial role in helping vulnerable people live their best lives. They usually work with seniors who need extra support with daily living tasks.

Personal support workers help clients maintain their dignity, stay safe, and remain as independent as possible.

Care is given following the principles of D.I.P.P.S. (Dignity, Independence, Preferences, Privacy, Safety), ensuring the health and well-being of the patient as a whole.

Personal care is hands-on service provided by appropriately trained “Unregulated Care Providers” (UCPs). The UCPs work as a member of a Healthcare team under the supervision of either a Primary Care Planner or a Registered Health Professional (RHP) to meet the supportive, physical and psychosocial needs of individuals. Supervision is required when performing certain delegated tasks by a RHP under the Regulated Health Professions Act. Personal Support Workers (PSWs) provide care to person(s) who require personal assistance with activities of daily living. PSWs may also provide additional care delegated by a RHP as needed, and when it can be performed safely as it falls within Provincial legislation.

The care is provided in the person’s home, which can include any of the following settings:

- Their own private home
- Supportive housing
- Assisted Living
- Group Homes
- Retirement homes
- Long term care facilities (LTC)
- Hospitals
- Adult day programs
- Hospice

Personal support workers help with tasks that people can no longer do on their own because of age, illness, injury, or disability. Some PSWs choose to specialize in caring for clients with specific health care conditions and needs. Their goal is to help clients live safely and comfortably. The specific job duties will be a bit different depending on where you work and what your clients need. PSWs who work in a long-term care facility likely won't drive a client anywhere or carry out many housekeeping tasks. Some of these tasks may include:

- ✓ Ambulation, lifting and transferring those who have difficulty moving around on their own
- ✓ Assist person(s) with activities of daily living (ADLs) such as bathing, dressing, grooming, skin care, oral hygiene, toileting
- ✓ Reminding clients to take their medications at the appropriate times (in accordance with established employer or government policy)
- ✓ Light Housekeeping ie: sweeping/vacuuuming floors, tidying rooms, and washing dishes
- ✓ Changing sheets and doing laundry
- ✓ Planning and preparing meals according to specific dietary requirements
- ✓ Shopping for groceries and picking up prescriptions
- ✓ Chatting and spending time with clients (providing companionship and emotional support)
- ✓ Escorting clients to appointments and social outings
- ✓ Helping clients carry out prescribed exercises
- ✓ Observing and reporting changes in clients' behaviour, attitude, or overall health to a supervisor or nurse
- ✓ Perform delegated tasks which have been delegated by an RHP in compliance with the RHPA for which transfer of functional training has been completed

The Canadian PSW Network Core Standards:

1. PSWs & Members are accountable to, and provide care under, relevant laws and The Canadian PSW Network's standards of practice and Code of Ethical Conduct. They will uphold professional conduct at all times.
2. PSWs & Members recognize and work within the limits of their knowledge, skill and judgment as well as their legal scope of practice.
3. PSWs & Members must always identify themselves in a professional & courteous manner.
4. PSWs & Members must refrain from using "pet names" for their patients by always addressing them by their appropriate and preferred name.
5. PSWs & Members must continuously observe patients and their environments and document any changes observed.
6. PSWs & Members will communicate and demonstrate basic information to person(s) in relation to activities of daily living, including light housekeeping, meal planning and preparation, in accordance with the pre-established Plan of Care.
7. PSWs & Members will complete and maintain related records and documentation such as communication books and progress notes as required by the employer either manually or digitally.

8. PSWs & Members are professional with management, supervisors, colleagues, coworkers, peers and fellow PSWs within their workplaces, and treat them with respect, including on social media.
9. PSWs & Members take action to report and stop unsafe, incompetent, unethical or unlawful practice, including any type of abuse.
10. PSWs & Members do not share employer, colleague or patient information on social media.
11. PSWs & Members will follow employer guidelines, rules, policies & procedures for providing care.
12. PSWs & Members will advocate for patients and help them access appropriate care.
13. PSWs & Members will ask for consent and direction from appropriate decision-makers when patients are unable to do so
14. PSWs & Members will report and document unsafe conditions as well as behavioural, physical, and/or cognitive changes to an appropriate supervisor: i.e. family member, employer, care coordinator etc.
15. PSWs & Members must communicate clearly and effectively in providing information and instructions to patients and invite their feedback including acknowledging their right to express concerns, and right to be involved in their care.
16. PSWs & Members will follow employer guidelines, rules, policies & procedures regarding receiving gifts of any kind including, but not limited to cash, gift cards, items etc.
17. PSWs & Members do not act as POA or substitute decision-makers for patients.
18. PSWs & Members maintain integrity. They do not use their position or workplaces to promote or sell products for personal gain.
19. PSWs & Members do not engage in any sexual relationship with patients, or family members of patients while employed in a caregiver role to the patient.
20. PSWs & Members are accountable for their own actions and decisions.
21. PSWs & Members take prompt action to prevent and protect patients from harm.
22. PSWs & Members have a duty to report any error, behaviour, conduct or system issue that affects patient safety.
23. PSWs & Members will follow all employer rules, regulations, and policies on drug & alcohol abuse/impairment while caring for patients. PSWs & members will also not engage in drug/alcohol use/consumption with patients.
24. PSWs & Members are to ensure they are confident in the training and expectations that come with a delegated task. Where they are not, it is their responsibility to request additional explanation and/or training.
25. PSWs & Members will adhere to The Canadian PSW Network's Standards of Practice as well as the Code of Ethical Conduct at all times.

Note: Our professional code covers the term “professional conduct” as a blanket; encompassing conduct and behaviours equally in person, and in an “online presence” covering all facets of online social media and/or gaming platforms and anywhere a member of the public can view any/all content submitted within that platform. PSWs and healthcare workers who are members of The Canadian PSW Network are expected to follow this Code as well as our Standards of Practice explicitly, as well as follow and adhere to Ministry and Employer standards of practice, which provide more detailed guidance. If a PSW member (including those in Board, Director, and Advisory roles) fails to meet our standards, we will move forward to take appropriate action which can include, but is not limited to: revocation of membership, internal disciplinary action, mandatory public statement/apology for infractions that become public matter, involvement of authorities (if applicable as deemed by board vote).

Standards of Practice Glossary

Boundaries: The points at which a relationship changes from professional and therapeutic to unprofessional and personal. Crossing a boundary means a Healthcare worker is misusing their power and trust in the relationship to meet personal needs, or behaving in an unprofessional manner with the patient. Crossing a boundary can be intentional or unintentional

Collaborate: Work cooperatively together

Colleague: Health care providers, PSWs, nurses and students who are involved in the patient's care

Competence: A Healthcare worker's ability to consistently apply the required knowledge, skill and judgment for safe, ethical and effective healthcare practice

Continuing education: A way for Healthcare workers to demonstrate their commitment to continuing competence and quality improvement of their knowledge, skill and judgment through self-assessment, practice assessment, and peer assessment.

Culture: Learned values, beliefs, "norms" & way of life that influence a person's thinking, decisions & actions

Delegated task / delegation: the shifting of authority and responsibility for particular functions, tasks or decisions from one person (usually a leader or manager) to another

D.I.P.P.S: This acronym refers to Dignity – Independence – Preference – Privacy – Safety

Health Care Worker: Any regulated health professionals and any staff member, contract worker, student/trainee, registered volunteer, or other essential caregiver including PSWs currently working in a healthcare organization, including workers that are not providing direct patient care and are frequently in the patient environment.

Patient: An individual, family, group, community or population receiving care, including, but is not limited to, "clients" or "residents"

Personal gain: Advantage or benefit, financial or otherwise, that a Healthcare worker receives. A personal gain can be monetary (cash, gifts and rewards) or provide the Healthcare worker with other personal advantages. A personal gain includes interests of the Healthcare workers family, charitable causes or organizations the Healthcare workers supports. It does not include a Healthcare workers salary or benefits

Personal health information: Any identifying information about patients' physical or mental health, including information about the health history of their family

PSW: Personal Support Worker - a currently unregulated health care provider with no title protection on the use of the name/acronym. As a result, the skills, accreditation and supervision can vary widely in Canada. The National Occupational Classification (NOC) allows PSWs to also use the following titles: Health Care Aide, Patient Care Aide, Resident Care Aide, Nursing Attendant or a Hospital Attendant. The titles vary depending upon the healthcare facility or home care the personal support worker is providing.

Social media: Community-based online communication tools (websites and applications) used for interaction, content sharing and collaboration. Types of social media include, but are not limited to: blogs or microblogs (personal, professional or anonymous), discussion forums, message boards, social networking sites and content sharing websites

Standards of Practice: The Canadian PSW Network's expectations for how a competent PSW should perform. Standards of practice contribute to public protection

Substitute decision-maker: Person, identified by the Health Care Consent Act, 1996 who makes a treatment decision for someone who cannot make their own decision

Delegated task / delegation: - the shifting of authority and responsibility for particular functions, tasks or decisions from one person (usually a leader or manager) to another