



PROGRAM OUTLINE

Program Title: Personal Support Worker Program
Program Code: PSW
Level: Credit
Delivery: 25 weeks
Credential: Certificate
Eligible for RPL:

Location:

Division: Health and Wellness

Prepared By: Chair, Health and Wellness

Date: November 14, 2023

Previous Outline Dated: _____

Reviewed/Revised By: _____

Approval Date: _____

And BOG Motion # _____

Program Description:

The Personal Support Worker (PSW) program is designed to provide students with opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to provide person-centered care in promoting and maintaining the health, safety, independence, comfort and well-being of clients and their families within the community and continuing care environments. Under the direction and supervision of a regulated health professional, graduates from the PSW program will function as front-line caregivers and an essential member of the health care team.

The program is 25 weeks, with applied learning activities infused throughout the curriculum, and a community- based field practicum. Additional certifications in Standard First Aid/CPR C, WHMIS and Food Safe Level I will be required.

The program integrates a culturally competent perspective throughout the curriculum with an emphasis on advocating and capacity building in Northern communities.

Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit:

The Personal Support Worker program is based on the principle of Pijisirniq (serving and providing for families and communities). Respecting others, building relationships, and caring for individuals, families and communities is the essence of a caring practice. The program is guided by the eight IQ principles, developed by the Government of Nunavut, which reflect Inuit Societal Values. These principles are integrated throughout the Personal Support Worker curriculum. Each course will highlight the principles which are emphasized within the course content and delivery.

Career Opportunities:

Graduates of this program may seek employment in a variety of practice settings including home support, assisted living, group homes, complex care, special care units, other home and community care settings and acute care.

Program Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of the Personal Support Worker Program, graduates will be able to:

1. Provide safe, competent, and ethical person-centered care and support which optimize and/or maintain the clients health and well-being, safety, autonomy and comfort.
2. Work collaboratively with the client, client's care partners, and other members of the health care team to set and achieve common goals.
3. Act in a positive, empathetic, and non-judgmental way, displaying respect for others, commitment to excellence in care, professional behavior and ongoing learning and personal development.
4. Maintain a safe environment focused on the prevention of harm to the client, care partners and health care members in accordance with legislation, standards, employer job description, policies, procedures and guidelines.
5. Develop positive working relationships with colleagues, supervisors, community partners and clients that adhere to professional, legal, and ethical standards of the field.
6. Advocate for appropriate access to resources for clients and healthcare team.
7. Advocate for change strategies that promote the dignity of clients and challenge patterns of oppression and discrimination.
8. Develop strategies to solve problems and collaborative working relationships.
9. Provide culturally safe care.
10. Develop and maintain the practice of self-awareness, self-care, and safety in personal and professional life.
11. Communicate in a caring, empathetic, and respectful manner with clients, co-workers and the public.
12. Work in a manner which support the growth and development of individuals, families and communities.

Program Delivery Model:

Applied learning, classroom, seminars/workshops, guest speakers/Elders, with one practicum experience and other opportunities to connect with the community through field trips and project work.

Admission Requirements:

Applicants must be:

- Age 17 or older
- Completion of Grade 10 English
- Assessment tested at 130 Level English reading/writing

Mature Students

- Age 19 or older
- Out of high school for one year or more
- Mature students must meet acceptable scores on College Assessment Test (writing and reading)

All applicants must provide:

- A letter of intent
- 2 references (non-family)

All applicants will be interviewed in person or by telephone.

Selection Process:

- Submission of application documents
- Interview (phone or in person if the application is in the community)
- Criminal Record and Vulnerable Sectors (required for practicum and not admission).
- Complete appropriate Arctic College placement exams for Math and English with acceptable scores

Applicants will be admitted to the program based on space availability and their ability to meet the entrance requirements. The program admissions committee will conduct interviews with students to assess qualifications. In some cases, students may be required to meet special conditions before entry or enter the program on a probationary basis.

Graduation Eligibility:

To graduate from this program, students must successfully complete all courses in the program structure by obtaining a mark of 50% or higher in each course, in each semester with the exception of the Practicum which require a successful pass. The passing weighted average for promotion through each semester and to graduate is 60%.

Other Important Information:

Previous course work, employment, or experience in related areas of Personal Support Worker practice can enhance the student's understanding of course materials. Maturity, stress management and organization of one's time are important for successful completion of the program. Class sizes are small, allowing instructors to assist students with learning needs. Students are encouraged to seek assistance when needed. Some course credits may be transferable to the Practical Nursing Diploma program.

Mandatory Courses:

PROGRAM STRUCTURE – 25 weeks

Name of Course	Course Code	Credits	Hours
Personal Care Skills I	PSW 101	4	60
Pathophysiology	PSW 102	3	45
Relational Communications	PSW 103	3	45
Cognitive and Mental Health Challenges	PSW 104	4	60
Introduction to Anatomy and Physiology	PSW 105	3	45
Continuing Care Practicum	PSW 106	3	90
Personal Care Skills II	PSW 107	4	60
Palliative and Plan of Care	PSW 108	4	60
Legal and Ethics	PSW 109	3	45
Personal and Community Wellness	PSW 110	3	45
Growth and Development	PSW 111	3	45

Total Credits: 37
Total Hours:600

Electives:

No Electives Required

Practicum or Work Experience:

The practicum course is an essential component of the Personal Support Worker program as it provides students with the opportunity to observe and acquire the practical work skills needed for a successful career as a Personal Support Worker.

The field experience allows students to integrate and apply learning from the classroom to the work setting. The practicum completion requirement in the Personal Support Worker program requires students to participate in field experiences, complete detailed learning contracts, attain an acceptable overall practicum evaluation, and complete a self-evaluation and give a final presentation to their classmates outlining highlights from their practicum.

Students must complete all their courses to complete their practicum and achieve a 70% or higher in their practicum course in order to meet the requirements for program completion.

Students will require immunizations for practicum placement. It is the student's responsibility to ensure these immunizations are completed prior to their practicum.

Course Descriptions

PSW 101 Personal Care Skills I (4 Credits)

This hands-on course allows students to learn personal care and assistance skills specific to the Personal Support Worker role. It includes both classroom instruction and practical experiences in a laboratory setting. The course helps students apply theory to develop caregiving skills, with a focus on maintaining the comfort, safety, and independence of individuals in community and facility settings.

PSW 102 – Pathophysiology (3 credits)

This course concentrates on understanding the underlying physiological changes that lead to diseases and disorders throughout a person's life. It explores the clinical signs and treatments to provide a foundational grasp of diseases management resulting from physiological dysfunction within the scope of the PSW.

PSW 103 – Relational Communications (3 credits)

This course covers the essential principles of communication, focusing on building interpersonal, therapeutic relationships between PSWs and clients, as well as with the broader healthcare team. It delves into factors influencing effective communication and explores strategies to enhance positive interactions. Students will explore verbal and nonverbal communication, considering how culture, ethics, and rules of behaviour impact interpersonal communication. The course highlights the link between effective communication and client safety and introduces methods for managing and resolving conflict and anger within meaningful relationships involving clients, their families, and the community.

PSW 104 Cognitive and Mental Health Challenges (4 credits)

This course will assist students in exploring concepts and caregiving approaches that will allow them to work effectively with individuals experiencing cognitive and/or mental health challenges. Mental health will be examined through social and cultural lenses, addressing the stigma associated with disorders and impairments and the rights of clients in relation to the Mental Health Act. The course will cover strategies for self-care as a health professional and raise awareness of risk factors and root causes of elder abuse. Emphasis will be placed on supporting clients with dementia, recognizing responsive and reactive behaviors, and identifying person-centered intervention strategies.

PSW 105 – Introduction to Anatomy and Physiology (3 credits)

This course will focus on learning the basics of human anatomy, how the body works, and vocabulary and terminology associated with the medical field. Emphasis will also be placed on vocabulary and terminology associated with the skeletal, muscular, nervous, integumentary, sensory, and endocrine body systems.

PSW 106 Continuing Care Practicum (3 Credits)

This hands-on course offers practical involvement in the day-to-day responsibilities of a Personal Support Worker, providing mentorship under the guidance of a regulated healthcare practitioner in a client setting. Students will begin to explore the essential skills and practices needed to be effective PSWs. The practicum enables students to reflect on their professional values, attitudes, conduct and personal development. Theoretical knowledge gained in the program will be applied and integrated into the practical experience connecting classroom learning to real-world practice.

PSW 107 Personal Care Skills II (4 credits)

Building upon the foundation established in PSW 101- Personal Care Skills I, this course will further expand students' skill sets by introducing more advanced skills and in-depth knowledge for providing personal care and assistance within the PSW role. It includes a mix of classroom learning and supervised laboratory exercises, allowing the integration of theoretical knowledge from previous courses into the development of caregiving skills. The focus is on ensuring the well-being, safety, and autonomy of individuals in both community and facility settings.

PSW 108 Palliative and Plan of Care (4 credits)

This course provides students with a theoretical framework for practicing in the field of Personal Support Work (PSW). It explores the philosophical values and theoretical underpinnings essential for competent PSW practice, emphasizing concepts like caring, person-centered care, safety, protection, health, and healing. The course includes a problem-solving model, essentials of care planning, and guidelines for reporting and recording. Additionally, students will examine person-centered approaches within palliative and end-of-life care, addressing the challenges faced by individuals and families in this sensitive phase. The course encourages self-reflection, heightened awareness of personal experiences and thoughts related to end-of-life, fostering empathy, improving end-of-life care, and nurturing self-care strategies.

PSW 109 Legal and Ethics (3 credits)

This course introduces the role of the Personal Support Worker (PSW) within the healthcare systems of Nunavut and Canada. Students will familiarize themselves with the healthcare team, gaining insights into the specific roles and functions of PSWs and the impacts of the various legal and ethical considerations. The course provides opportunities for students to develop self-reflective skills crucial for competent practice.

PSW 110 Personal and Community Wellness (3 credits)

This course introduces students to a holistic view of health, exploring the diverse elements that contribute to a lifestyle that promotes well-being. Through self-reflection, students will consider their personal health experiences, recognizing challenges and resources influencing their lifestyle choices. The course introduces a model applicable across various subjects to comprehend the multifaceted dimensions of health and healing. It also explores the concept of health from both local and global perspectives, examining factors that impact community health.

PSW 111 – Growth and Development (3 credits)

In this course, students have the opportunity to establish a theoretical foundation for their practice. It introduces philosophical values and theoretical perspectives crucial for effective PSW practice. The course explores critical concepts, including basic human needs, human development, familial dynamics, cultural diversity, and their interconnectedness with health and the process of healing.