



## Basic Hand & Foot Nail Care

### Education Requirements & Competencies for Nurses

This document establishes the educational requirements & competencies for all nurses responsible for providing basic nail care to clients but who have not acquired the basic nail care theory and/or skill as part of their nursing education program. This document is used at the health authority/agency's direction.

#### Practice Level - British Columbia

In order to provide basic nail care, Registered Nurses, Registered Psychiatric Nurses, and Licensed Practical Nurses must:

- Follow their health authority/agency's policy/standard that supports basic nail care practice for their designation.
- Have the competency (knowledge, skill, ability) to perform basic nail care.
- Follow the health authority/agency approved nail care guideline and procedure.

Each nurse is responsible for maintaining their competency in basic nail care.

#### Practice Level - Yukon:

Registered Nurses, Registered Psychiatric Nurses, and Licensed Practical Nurses, refer to organizational policy and practice in accordance with regulatory bodies.

#### Prerequisites

None

#### Learning Plan

The plan lays out the learning activities which need to be done for basic nail care knowledge acquisition and skill development as well as the resources available to support this learning.

#### Competency Checklist

The checklist consists of skills which need to be demonstrated to a Nurse Mentor to show basic nail care competencies; knowledge acquisition is demonstrated by obtaining 100% on the quiz. The use of the Competency Checklist is determined by health authority/agency process.

#### Definitions

**Client:** generic term used to describe a recipient of care regardless of care setting; patient in the hospital, client in community; resident/person-in-care in long-term care.

**Competencies:** The knowledge, skill, attitudes, and judgement required to provide safe, competent, and ethical care within an individual's practice or in a designed role or setting<sup>1</sup>.

**Nurse Mentor:** A Clinical Nurse Educator, a Nurse Specialized in Wound, Ostomy & Continence (NSWOC), a Wound Clinician (WC), or a designated nurse (RN, RPN, LPN) competent in the skill being demonstrated.

#### References

1. British Columbia College of Nurses & Midwives. (2026). <https://www.bccnm.ca/Pages/Default.aspx>

#### Document Management

Created By:	British Columbia Provincial Nursing Skin & Wound Committee and NSWOCs/WCs from across all Health Authorities.
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**Basic Hand & Foot Nail Care  
Learning Plan for Nurses**

Learning Activity	Resources	Date Done
1. Review health authority/agency specific policies and practice standards for basic nail care.	If needed, discuss with your Nurse Mentor where to find these.	
2. Read the guideline to gain an understanding of the general theory of basic nail care and specific nursing responsibilities regarding provision of basic nail care.	Read/review <a href="#">the Basic Hand &amp; Foot Care: Guideline</a>	
3. Read the procedure which lays out the steps for performing basic nail care.	Read/review the <a href="#">Basic Hand &amp; Foot Nail Care: Procedure for Nurses</a>	
4. Complete the learning module: Basic Hand & Foot Nail Care - Nurses (approximately 10 min).	The learning module is found on the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning Hub</li> <li>• IHA I-Learn</li> <li>• Yukon Learning System</li> </ul>	
5. Complete the Basic Nail Hand & Foot Module Quiz (100% is needed to successfully complete the course).	The quiz is part of the Learning Module (see above).	
6. Look in the client's chart to find where to documentation of the care provided.	Discuss with your Nurse Mentor.	
7. Find where the nail care equipment and supplies are kept on the unit/site.	Discuss with your Nurse Mentor.	
8. Check what is your unit/site's process for cleaning and disinfecting the single-patient-use thumb clippers.	Discuss with your Nurse Mentor.	
9. As per your health authority/agency process; with your Nurse Mentor, complete the Basic Hand & Foot Nail Care Competency Checklist.	See next page.	
10. Complete any additional competency validation and compliance requirements of the health authority/agency.	Discuss with your Nurse Mentor.	

**Basic Hand & Foot Nail Care  
Competency Checklist for Nurses**

	Date Met	Mentor's Initials
<b>Knowledge</b>		
Knowledge acquisition tested by the quiz (100% needed to complete the quiz).		
<b>Skill</b>		
1. Demonstrate setting up a safe workspace for the care activity.		
2. Demonstrate the correct technique for trimming nails		
3. Demonstrate the correct technique for filing nails		
4. Demonstrate charting the care provided.		
5. Demonstrate the correct cleaning, disinfecting and storage of the client-specific nail care equipment and supplies.		

**Learner**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Print: \_\_\_\_\_

**Nurse Mentor** (to be signed off as per HA/agency process)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Print: \_\_\_\_\_ Initials: \_\_\_\_

**Learning Plan for Unmet Skills:**