

## Definition of Terms

### **Nurse Practitioner**

Nurse practitioners are health professionals who have achieved the advanced nursing practice competencies at the graduate level of nursing education required for registration as a nurse practitioner with the College of Registered Nurses of British Columbia. They are self-governing practitioners who work with physicians and other health professionals to provide comprehensive and continuous care for patients. They offer preventive health education and planning that encourages clients to be as healthy as possible and take an active role in health care decisions (CRNBC, 2010). Nurse practitioners work in a variety of settings including acute care, residential care, mental health and community practice.

The legal authority for nurse practitioners' scope of practice is set out in the Nurses (Registered) and Nurse Practitioner Regulation under the Health Professions Act [http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws\\_new/document/ID/freeside/284\\_2008](http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/284_2008). The Regulation assigns restricted activities actions to nurse practitioners for activities such as making a diagnosis to identify a disease, disorder or condition; ordering diagnostic services; and prescribing and dispensing drugs. As specified in the Regulation, these activities are provided in accordance with standards, limits and conditions established by the College of Registered Nurses of BC. To learn more about the regulation and registration of nurse practitioners visit the College of Registered Nurses of BC's website: <https://www.crnbc.ca/Pages/Default.aspx> .

The College of Registered Nurses of BC's requires all registered nurse practitioners to participate in an ongoing Quality Assurance Program. The goals of the Quality Assurance Program are to promote high practice standards and to ensure that clients continually receive competent and ethical care. Additional Quality Assurance Program requirements is available at: <https://crnbc.ca/QA/Pages/Default.aspx>

### **Encounter Records**

The record of a service(s) a nurse practitioner provides to a patient/client is called an encounter record. Nurse practitioners are required to submit encounter records to the Medical Services Plan /Health Insurance BC. The information included in a nurse practitioner's encounter record serves the same purposes as a medical claim submitted by a physician or other health care practitioner. Therefore, for administrative purposes, an encounter record is considered by Medical Services Plan /Health Insurance BC to be equivalent to a medical claim. For more information on Encounter Records [click here](#)

### **Encounter Codes**

Nurse practitioner encounter codes are part of the encounter record. A list of encounter codes nurse practitioners submit for services provided to patient/clients, including detailed explanation of the codes.

[Click here](#) for Encounter Codes.

Also see Diagnostic Code Descriptions (ICD9).

<http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/msp/infoprac/diagcodes/index.html>

## **Medical Services Plan /Health Insurance BC**

The Medical Service Plan/Health Insurance BC is BC's publicly funded health insurance program. It provides coverage for medically necessary services provided by nurse practitioners and other health care practitioners to eligible beneficiaries.

Health Insurance BC is the agency contracted by the government to handle the administrative operations of the Medical Services Plan and PharmaCare, including Fair PharmaCare, on behalf of the Ministry of Health. Health Insurance BC, on behalf of Medical Services Plan, is responsible for:

- enrolling beneficiaries;
- administering premium assistance programs for low-income beneficiaries;
- registering all health care practitioners, including nurse practitioners; and
- adjudicating and processing health care practitioners' fee-for-service billings.

Medical Services Plan/ Health Insurance BC:

<http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/msp/infoprac/contacts.html>

## **Medicare Protection Act and Medical and Health Care Services Regulation**

The Medical Services Plan is administered under the Medicare Protection Act (1995) and Regulations. The Medicare Protection Act and The Medical and Health Care Services Regulation establishes the rights and duties of the Medical Services Commission to set policies and conduct audits for the Medical Services Plan, and governs eligibility and enrolment of beneficiaries, establishment of premiums for medical coverage, enrolment and responsibilities of medical and health care practitioners, and approval of diagnostic facilities.

## **Practitioner Number**

The practitioner number is a unique number given to each healthcare practitioner. It allows nurse practitioners to submit encounter records through the Medical Services Plan/ Health Insurance BC claims processing system for services provided to eligible beneficiaries. All encounter records require a practitioner number. A nurse practitioner's *practitioner number* is used for billing purposes by specialists and diagnostic facilities when nurse practitioners make referrals for those services.

## **Payment/Payee Number**

The payment number (also known as the payee number) is the number HIBC/MSP associates with nurse practitioner encounter records. All nurse practitioners will have a payment/payee number for encounter record submissions. For nurse practitioners the *payment number* used for encounter record submission may identify the clinic, facility or health authority where she/he is employed and allows claims submitted to HIBC for diagnostic tests and imaging ordered by nurse practitioners to be processed. Click here for more information about payment numbers. [Click here](#) for more information about Payment/Payee Numbers.