

Blueprint for Action for Community Health Nursing in Canada

©Community Health Nurses of Canada
2011

What is a blueprint?

It is a detailed plan or outline; a standard method of communication. Similar to architectural drawings, the *Blueprint for Action for Community Health Nursing in Canada* is like a first set of drawings provided for discussion and comment. The Blueprint articulates the key construction elements, connects the components, and suggests some of the processes required for implementation. It is the up to the people, organizations, partners, and community health nurses in all domains of practice to take the Blueprint to the next phase – the actual construction, the implementation of the plan – and communicate each step to each partner in action.

Guiding principles for action on the Blueprint include: action must be inclusive, collaborative and mutually beneficial to diverse partners; standing still is not an option – community health nursing must act on its strengths and be solution oriented; and activities must be sustainable over the long term.

What is Community Health Nursing?

Community health nursing involves collaborative action to promote, protect and restore the health of people in Canada within the context of the important places and experiences of their daily lives. Community health nurses acknowledge and attend to the diverse determinants that influence the opportunity for health across the lifespan. The basis for community health nursing includes a wide range of models and theories, such as: population health promotion and primary health care (where the focus is on promoting and maintaining health); disease and injury prevention; community participation; and community development (CPHA, 2010).

Priorities for action:

It is of paramount importance to achieve clarity on the scope and roles of community health nursing practice; and realize the nursing leadership that is needed to give voice to community health nursing. Concurrently, the health system, nursing education and resources that support workforce development can be influenced and leveraged through collaboration and partnerships.

Emerging issues:

1. The intersection of primary care and public health (including home health nursing)
2. Technology
3. Safety – patient safety AND safety of community health nurses, community health nursing faculty and students
4. Community health nursing and the continuum of care.

For further information:

The complete document “A Blueprint for Action for Community Health Nursing in Canada” is located on the CHNC website: www.chnc.ca.

1. Community health nurses need to work at full scope and with greater clarity for the role in all domains of practice

- ✓ Develop and adopt a shared national nursing regulatory framework (e.g., network of colleges/associations of nursing with a focus on community health nursing so that there is a degree of similarity in the provinces and territories in terms of scope of practice, practice roles and nomenclature, and the ability to accurately enumerate).
- ✓ Formulate a strong marketing campaign to increase the proportion of certified community health nurses in all domains of practice, including education.
- ✓ Partner broadly with intersectoral and interprofessional stakeholders to influence health policy that supports the role of community health work and promotes the health of Canadians across the life span.
- ✓ Design and implement a membership campaign to increase the number of CHNC members across Canada to give power to CHNC’s voice at policy tables.

2. Nursing leadership is necessary to support community health nursing practice and provide a voice for the profession

- ✓ Promote and advocate for chief nursing officers in community health organizations.
- ✓ Collaborate with community health partners (e.g., CPHA, CIPHI, CASN, HCAC) on targeted community health nursing leadership development programs and strategies.
- ✓ Describe leadership roles in community health nursing and what is needed to strengthen them.

3. Build on successful collaboration within nursing and strengthen partnerships with other professionals and sectors

- ✓ Continue the development of the Partners Meeting and collaborative interactions that move forward the issues of common concern in ways that are mutually beneficial.
- ✓ Strengthen the voice of community health nursing.
- ✓ Promote and support intraprofessional, interprofessional, and interdisciplinary education and continuing professional development.

4. Transform the health care system into a system for (community) health

- ✓ Work with partners to bring a unified voice to the health system decision-making table so that community health funding can be increased and stabilized.
- ✓ Explore innovations that advance the role of community health nursing in health system reform.

5. Support strong educational preparation in community health nursing

- ✓ Advance excellence in community health nursing education.
- ✓ Increase the voice of community health nursing education in CHNC.
- ✓ Explore options to assist transition from undergraduate education to the community health nursing workforce.
- ✓ Examine the non-nursing options for community health education and practice.

6. Improve access to a range of professional development resources to advance community health nursing capacity

- ✓ Articulate a unified national vision, scope and role statements, and values for community health nursing in Canada and ensure their uptake in curricula, research and practice settings.
- ✓ Set priorities for continuing professional development for community health nurses: health promotion theory; program evaluation; principles of epidemiology; nursing informatics; culturally relevant care; harm reduction; and emergency management.
- ✓ Support translation of evidence into best practice guidelines to enhance quality of care and client outcomes.
- ✓ Develop a workload measurement and complexity of care tool in community health nursing.