

Registered Nurse: Alternative Careers

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



Contents

1. Registered Nurse: Alternative Careers.....	2
2. Employment Outlook	8
3. Retraining.....	10
4. Searching for Jobs.....	11
5. Volunteering in the Field	12
6. Helpful Resources	13

1. Registered Nurse: Alternative Careers

In BC, registered nurses provide direct nursing care to patients and deliver health education programs. You work in a variety of settings, including hospitals, nursing homes, doctors' offices, clinics, community agencies, companies and private homes, or you may be self-employed.

You may find that your international training and experience as a nurse are not immediately accepted in B.C. The skills you have acquired (compassion, patience, self-discipline, problem-solving and communication skills) can be used in these alternative careers:

- Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)
- Medical Office Assistant (MOA)
- Health Care Assistant (HCA)
- Home Support Worker

Alternative Careers:

Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) (NOC 3233)

Also look for these job titles: registered nursing assistant, operating room technician

In BC, licensed practical nurses (LPNs) work as frontline health care professionals caring for a wide range of clients at all stages of life in collaboration with other members of the health care team. You work in hospitals, nursing homes, rehabilitation centres, doctors' offices, clinics, private homes, educational facilities and community health centres.

Duties include:

- provide nursing services to patients under the direction of medical practitioners and registered nurses
- give medication and record therapeutic effects
- provide personal and comfort care before and after an operation
- keep an eye on patient progress, evaluate effectiveness of nursing interventions and talk with appropriate members of the health-care team

Licensed Practical Nurses working as Operating Room Technicians:

Duties include:

- prepare patients for surgery by washing, shaving and sterilizing the body area to be operated on
- help get operating rooms ready by laying out instruments, setting up equipment and sterilizing operating room equipment and instruments
- help surgical teams with gowns and gloves and pass instruments to surgeons

Requirements:

- completion of college/vocational program for LPNs
- successful completion of the Canadian Practical Nurse Registration Examination
- registration with British Columbia College of Nursing Professionals

You may be eligible for practical nurse registration if you have completed nursing training in another country.

- For more details see:

https://www.bccnp.ca/Registration/lpn/how_to_apply/IEApplicant/Pages/IE.aspx

Operating Room Technicians:

- additional academic training in operating room techniques or on-the-job training is required

Skills:

- good observation, communication and problem-solving skills
- patience, self-control, and empathy
- good with people

Wages:

- median hourly wage: \$27.32

Source: <https://www.workbc.ca/Job-Seekers/Career-Profiles/3233>

Medical Office Assistant (MOA) (NOC 1243)

Also look for these job titles: medical secretary

You perform a variety of secretarial and administrative duties in doctors' offices, hospitals, medical clinics and other medical settings.

Duties include:

- schedule and confirm medical appointments; receive and communicate messages for medical staff and patients
- enter and format electronically based medical reports and correspondence and prepare spreadsheets and documents for review
- interview patients in order to complete forms, documents and case histories
- prepare financial statements and billing procedures

Requirements:

- secondary school completion; some employers require completion of a college MOA program
- training in medical terminology or pharmacology, management software and basic medical office procedures may be required

Skills:

- ethical, tactful and discreet, good judgement
- strong communication skills
- detail-oriented and organized
- ability to adapt to new software programs, e.g. electronic medical records (EMR)
- clerical ability

Wages:

- median hourly wage: \$23.00

Source: <https://www.workbc.ca/Job-Seekers/Career-Profiles/1243>

Health Care Assistant (HCA) OR Nurses Aides (NOC 3413)

You assist people, especially older adults, who require basic nursing care. You also help to promote and maintain clients' physical, emotional, and social well-being. HCAs work within a health care team in care facilities or independently within the community.

Duties:

- assist clients with the tasks of daily living
- help deliver care and rehabilitation programs to people with disabilities and chronic medical conditions
- provide for the comfort, safety and well-being of clients
- assist with recreational activities

Requirements:

- 5-7 month post-secondary certificate program may be required
- criminal record check

You may be eligible for registration if you have completed international health care training in another country.

- For more details see:
<https://www.cachwr.bc.ca/Application/International.aspx>

Skills:

- demonstrate sensitivity and respect for clients' individuality and culture
- communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing
- ability to work as a member of a team
- physical ability to carry out the duties of the position, including safely operating lifts and other equipment
- ability to organize work and manage time

Wages:

- median hourly wage: \$21.00

Source: <https://www.workbc.ca/Job-Seekers/Career-Profiles/3413>

Home Support Worker (NOC 4412)

Also referred to as home care aide, long term care aide, personal care attendant, or resident care aide

You provide personal care and companionship for seniors, persons with disabilities and convalescent clients. Care is provided within the client's residence, where you may also reside.

Duties include:

- give bedside and personal care to clients under the direction of a health-care worker or nurse

- provide care and companionship for individuals and families
- may perform routine housekeeping duties such as laundry, washing dishes and making beds
- keep track of medications and help with feeding, bathing and personal hygiene

Requirements:

- Home Support/Resident Care Attendant (HSRCA) certificate or the equivalent from a recognized college may be required
- first Aid, CPR and FOODSAFE certification

Skills:

- well-organized and good at following instructions
- patient and understanding of clients' needs
- must enjoy meeting new people and helping others

Wages:

- median hourly wage \$18.00

Source: <https://www.workbc.ca/Job-Seekers/Career-Profiles/4412>

2. Employment Outlook

Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN):

A growing and aging population will require more health services, which will result in an increased demand for LPNs. The strong demand across B.C. tends to be higher in areas with more long-term care facilities or larger hospitals. You may find many openings in specialty areas, such as emergency and pediatric wards, and operating rooms.

Job Openings Outlook in BC (NOC 3233)



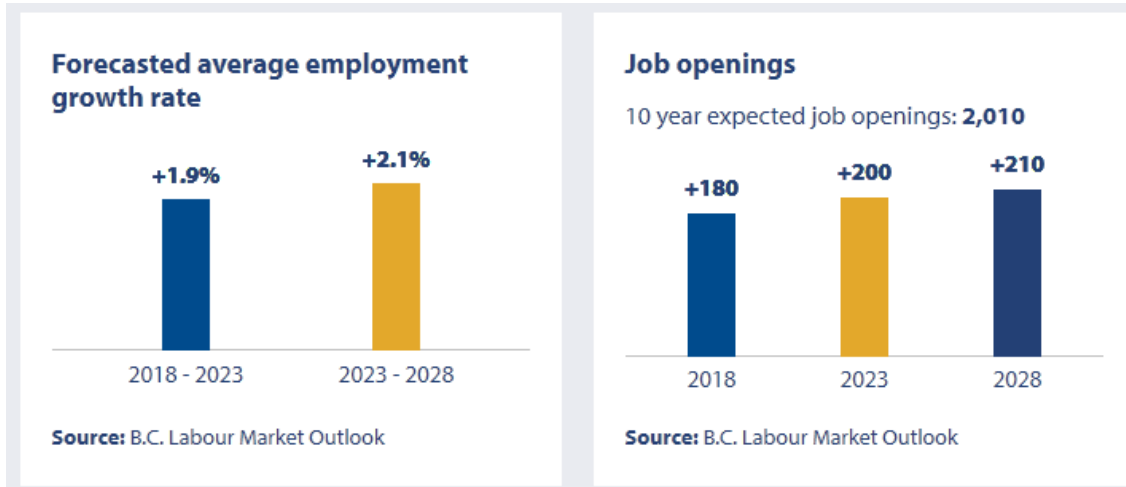
Source: <https://www.workbc.ca/>

Medical Office Assistant (MOA):

The majority of new job openings will result from retirements. You are in high demand if you have completed related post-secondary studies, good knowledge of computers and software applications, and previous experience working in the occupation.

Most employers now require the completion of a Medical Office Assistant or related certificate or diploma program.

Job Openings Outlook in BC (NOC 1243)



Source: <https://www.workbc.ca/>

Health Care Assistant (HCA):

Strong demand is contributing to higher salaries and increased opportunities to work in various environments. The provincial government is increasing the number of long-term care beds available in B.C., which will create more employment opportunities. Employment opportunities will be high throughout the province, especially in nursing homes, long-term care facilities and privately run institutions.

Job Openings Outlook in BC (NOC 3413)



Source: <https://www.workbc.ca/>

3. Retraining

You may want to consider upgrading your skills to increase your employment options in this field. The following courses can improve your current skills:

BCIT, Medical Office Assistant Associate Certificate (part time)

<https://www.bcit.ca/study/programs/6630acert>

Vancouver Community College, Medical Office Assistant for International Students: Six month, full time certificate program

<https://www.vcc.ca/international/programs/program-areas/business/medical-office-assistant/>

Nursing Unit Clerk programs:

Unit Clerks work with physicians and nurses; you process doctor's orders and instructions and perform other clerical duties. The complex and detailed nature of this job requires excellent communication, decision making and problem-solving skills to coordinate quality patient care. These are full time programs.

- **University of Fraser Valley:**

<https://www.ufv.ca/continuing-education/programs/nursing-unit-clerk/>

- **Vancouver Community College**, Health Unit Coordinator

<https://www.vcc.ca/programscourses/program-areas/health-sciences/health-unit-coordinator/>

Licensed Practical Nursing Diploma programs:

- BC College of Nursing Professionals list of LPN programs in BC

https://www.bccnp.ca/becoming_a_nurse/Pages/study_to_be_a_nurse.aspx

4. Searching for Jobs

BC's Provincial Health Authorities

BC's health authorities provide health services in all BC regions

- **Vancouver Coastal Health Authority**
<https://careers.vch.ca/>
- **Fraser Health Authority**
<https://careers.fraserhealth.ca/search-jobs.aspx>
- **Interior Health Authority**
<https://www.interiorhealth.ca/careers/Pages/default.aspx>
- **Northern Health Authority**
<https://careers.northernhealth.ca/>
- **Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA)**
<http://www.phsa.ca/careers>
- **Island Health Authority**
<https://www.islandhealth.ca/careers>

Providence Health Care

<http://www.providencehealthcare.org/careers>

Indeed.ca

www.indeed.ca

Neuvoo

<https://neuvoo.ca/>

Privately funded residential care facilities

<https://www.bcsla.ca/senior-housing-career-opportunities/>

Health Match BC

<https://www.healthmatchbc.org/>

5. Volunteering in the Field

Volunteering in health care facilities can help you to explore a new career and learn more about the health care system in BC. You will meet new people and build a network of contacts that can lead to information on job openings and inside connections with potential employers.

The following organizations accept volunteers in hospitals, residential care facilities, palliative care and other community settings.

Vancouver Coastal Health Authority

<http://www.vch.ca/get-involved/volunteer/>

Fraser Health Authority

<http://www.fraserhealth.ca/about-us/volunteer/>

Providence Health Care

<http://www.providencehealthcare.org/volunteers>

Community Care Facilities, BC Ministry of Health

Other volunteer opportunities may be available from individual care facilities across BC:

<http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/ccf/survey/index.php/displaycommunity/index>

Canadian Mental Health Association

<https://cmha.ca/get-involved/volunteer/>

Volunteer BC

<https://volunteerbc.bc.ca/>

6. Helpful Resources

British Columbia College of Nursing Professionals

<https://www.bccnp.ca>

Medical Office Assistants' Association of BC

<https://moaabc.ca/>

Canadian Home Care Association

<http://www.cdnhomecare.ca/index.php>

Click on 'Job Search Resources' at <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca> for help on:

- resumes & cover letters
- getting Canadian work experience
- networking for employment
- online social networks
- Canadian workplace culture

This project is made possible through funding from the Government of Canada with support from the Province of British Columbia.

Questions? Please ask the Information Staff in the Central Library, Vancouver Public Library or telephone 604-331-3603.

Please note that the information in this guide is also available online through the Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre website at <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca/>.