



DOUGLAS COLLEGE

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## Bachelor of Science in Psychiatric Nursing Program

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# Why Psychiatric Nursing?

This is the perfect time to become a Psychiatric Nurse

There is no waitlist 😊

RPNs are in HIGH demand

100% of our students get employment upon graduation

Government financial incentives

Work as a Mental Health and Substance Use Worker after 2nd year (\$31 per hour)

Work as an employment student nurse (\$32.13 per hour)

Excellent benefits & pension plans

Excellent wages (starting RPN wage \$41.42 per hour) plus shift differential and premiums

Rewarding and meaningful career

Our grads feel well prepared for the workforce.

# Small and engaging classes



## History of Psychiatric Nursing Education

- 2900 RPNS in BC and > 6000 RPNs in Canada (RN 40,000 in BC and >300,000 Canada)
- Registered Psychiatric Nurses in BC are governed by the Health Professions Act (1996)
- Distinct independent health care profession regulated by a Regulatory College (BCCNM)
- Educated in the 4 western provinces
- Douglas College has offered Psychiatric Nursing Education for 30+ years
- RPNs' practice involves working with individuals, groups, families, & communities that are experiencing mental health and substance use issues

# What Does a Registered Psychiatric Nurse (RPN) DO?

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Registered psychiatric nurses specialize in psychiatric/mental health care & substance use.

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Registered psychiatric nurses provide holistic mental & physical health nursing care while addressing the complex relationships between mental, emotional, and physical health, as well as the influence of social, culture and spiritual factors.

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Registered psychiatric nurses use advanced mental health assessments (e.g. mental status exams and risk assessments), communication skills & therapeutic relationships to provide quality psychiatric nursing care.

# What Does a Registered Psychiatric Nurse (RPN) DO?

Registered psychiatric nurses assess client/patient needs & develop and evaluate treatment plans in collaboration with other health care team members; provide counselling (advanced skill).

Registered psychiatric nurses study pharmacology, psychomotor skills, and sciences such as anatomy & physiology, pathophysiology and microbiology, to provide evidence-informed care.

# Students practicing in our Simulation Lab



# Is This Program Right for Me?

Psychiatric Nurses are regulated by the BC College of Nurses and Midwives (BCCNM) and are required to meet a minimal level of requisite skills and abilities.

Check the [Requisite Skills and Abilities for Psychiatric Nurses](#) on the BCCNM website.

There are some personal characteristics that indicate this might be a good career choice, you are:

- really interested in helping and working with people
- empathic and caring
- tolerant and respectful of others' differences
- works well as a part of a team
- good writing and language skills (for documenting patient concerns, communication with the health care team and your patients)
- computer proficiency
- commitment to lifelong learning to keep up to date with best practices
- physically, mentally, and emotionally healthy.



# Employment Opportunities

Registered psychiatric nurses are regarded as the employee of choice by most mental health employers.

Registered psychiatric nurses experience excellent employment rates.

New psychiatric nursing graduates are often offered full time employment upon graduation

## Mobility opportunities & challenges

- Registered psychiatric nurses work in western Canadian provinces currently
- Registered psychiatric nurses practice in many Commonwealth countries around the world (not U.S.)

Wages: Registered psychiatric nurses starting wage is \$41.42 per hour (2024)

Bachelor of Psychiatric Nursing (BSPN) can earn a Master's degree in fields such as psychiatric nursing, leadership, counselling, or education

# Broad Range of Career Opportunities

- Psychiatric units in general hospitals
- Tertiary mental health units
- Hospital emergency rooms
- Outpatient Programs
- Child & youth programs
- Older Adults/gerontology
- Substance misuse & Addictions programs
- Corrections services
- Forensic psychiatric hospital and outpatient services
- Non-Profits offering Mental Health Services
- Eating disorder programs
- Palliative care
- Community mental health Teams
- Assertive Case Management Teams
- Developmental Disabilities
- Community outreach programs
- Crisis intervention
- Group homes & Clubhouses
- Primary care clinics
- Long term & Extended care facilities
- Rehabilitation centers
- Education
- Private practice (more education necessary)

# Registered psychiatric nursing Roles

Direct care nurse

Managers, Team  
leaders, Supervisors

Clinical nurse  
educator

Clinical nurse  
specialists

Case managers

Educators  
(university/college)

Researchers

Independent Private  
Practice or  
Consultants  
(Advanced Practice)

# Academic Foundations for Potential Psychiatric Nursing Applicants (AFPN)

- **First step is to apply online:**
  - Academic Foundations for Potential Psychiatric Nursing (AFPN) Applicants
  - Effective November 18, 2024 a two-year temporary variance was approved, reducing the admission requirement to Douglas College's General College Admission Requirements.
  - First qualified, first admitted until seat capacity reached
  - 30 UT credits AFPN courses:
    - English, Human Anatomy & Physiology, Microbiology, Pathophysiology, Psychology, Statistics, Open Elective courses
  - **C+ required** in each course
  - Completion of 30 UT courses is **academic admission requirement** for BSPN Program
  - Separate application required for BSPN program after completion of AFPN
  - Designated Seats into AF and BSPN Program (Indigenous, High School and Douglas College Mental Health and Substance use graduates)

### ⑩ After completion of the ACPN courses:

- ⑩ Apply to the Bachelor of Science in Psychiatric Nursing Program
- ⑩ Two intakes per year (Fall & Winter)
- ⑩ Non-Academic Admission Requirements: Potential Interview, Immunization Record, Criminal Record Check, Tuition Deposit (\$350)
- ⑩ Application dates: Oct (for following Fall) and Feb (for following Winter)
- ⑩ First qualified, first admitted seat capacity reached (40 students)
- ⑩ No wait lists (applicants need to reapply for each intake)
- ⑩ BSPN program: 90.5 credits (Years 2, 3, 4)
- ⑩ Minimum C+ grade in each BSPN course
- ⑩ Online BSPN Degree Completion Pathway (for Diploma prepared practicing RPNs)

# Are you nervous about taking statistics?

- Do you need a refresher of math skills that you haven't used for a long time?
- Take MATU 0500 Set for Stats
- This 6-week online synchronous program will prepare you to take the required math courses and set you up for success with introductory statistics.
- Build your skills and confidence in a low-pressure (no letter grades) course, with others just like you
- **Tuition is free for domestic students.**

# BSPN PROGRAM DESIGN



Academic Foundations Required Courses- Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
<b>ENGL 1130 (3) Academic Writing</b>  <b>BIOL 1103 (3) Human Anatomy and Physiology I</b>  <b>BIOL 1203 (3) Human Anatomy and Physiology II</b>  <b>PSYC 1100 (3) An Introduction to Psychology I</b>  <b>PSYC 1200 (3) An Introduction to Psychology II</b>  <b>MATH 1160 (3) Introduction to Statistics Or</b> <b>PSYC 2300 (3) Data Analysis in Psychology Or</b> <b>BUSN 2429 (3) Business Statistics</b>	<b>Semester One</b>  PNUR 2101 (4.5) Psychiatric Nursing Concepts I PNUR 2121 (1.5) Therapeutic Relations I PNUR 2130 (1.5) Clinical Procedures I PNUR 2175 (3) Psychiatric Nursing Research PNUR 2170 (1.5) Trauma Informed Practices 1 PNUR 2171 (3) Family Health Promotions PHIL 3125 (3) Ethics for Psychiatric Nursing	<b>Semester Three</b>  PNUR 3301 (4.5) Psychiatric Nursing Concepts III (Episodic) PNUR 3321 (1.5) Therapeutic Relations III PNUR 3330 (1.5) Clinical Procedures III PNUR 3361 (5) Psychiatric Nursing Clinical Practice II (Episodic Health Challenges I) PNUR 3350 (3) Psychiatric Nursing Pharmacology	<b>Semester Five</b>  PNUR 4572 (3) Psychiatric Nursing Community Concepts PNUR 4573 (3) Psychiatric Nursing of Children and Adolescents PNUR 4521 (1.5) Therapeutic Relations V PNUR 4562 (5) Psychiatric Nursing Clinical Practice IV (Complex Health Challenges) PNUR 4501 (3) Nursing Leadership and Management
	Total 18 Credits	Total 15.5 credits	Total 15.5 Credits
<b>BIOL 2401 (3) Introduction to Microbiology</b>  <b>BIOL 2200 (3) Pathophysiology</b>  <b>ENGL Elective (3)</b>  <b>One Open UT Elective (3)</b>	<b>Semester Two</b>  PNUR 2201 (3) Psychiatric Nursing Concepts II PNUR 2221 (1.5) Therapeutic Relations II PNUR 2230 (1.5) Clinical Procedures II PNUR 2261 (5) Psychiatric Nursing Clinical Practice I PNUR 2285 (3) Psychiatric Nursing in Addictions and Mental Health	<b>Semester Four</b>  PNUR 3401 (4.5) Psychiatric Nursing Concepts IV (Episodic) PNUR 3421 (1.5) Therapeutic Relations IV PNUR 3430 (1.5) Clinical Procedures IV PNUR 3441 (1.5) Group Theory and Process PNUR 3462 (5) Psychiatric Nursing Clinical Practice III (Episodic Health Challenges II/ Older Adult) PNUR 3403 (3) Psychiatric Nursing and the Older Adult	<b>Semester Six</b>  PNUR 4670 (1.5) Trauma Informed Practices II PNUR 4661 (9) Psychiatric Nursing Clinical Practice V
	Total 14 Credits	Total 17 Credits	Total 10.5 Credits
<b>Total 30 Credits</b>			

# BSPN Program Clinical Practice Courses

Semester Focus	Clinical Practice Focus
Semester 1 <b>Focus: Health &amp; Wellness</b>	
Semester 2 <b>Focus: Ongoing Health Challenges</b>	7 weeks tertiary mental health setting & 7 weeks medical unit
Semester 3 <b>Focus: Episodic Health Challenges</b>	7 weeks acute psychiatric setting & 7 weeks acute medical/surgical unit
Semester 4 <b>Focus: Episodic Health Challenges</b>	7 weeks complex older adult setting & 7 weeks acute medical/surgical unit
Semester 5 <b>Focus: Complex Health Challenges</b>	7 weeks acute psychiatric setting & 7 weeks community mental health setting
Semester 6 <b>Focus: Preceptorship/Integration</b>	11 weeks full time practice with RPN/RN preceptor across a variety of settings



# Field Schools and preceptorship OPPORTUNITIES



- BSPN has partnered with the BSN program to offer students the opportunity to do a field school in GHANA (West Africa)
- Other field schools around the world are in development (stay tuned)
- Yukon for preceptorship placements & New Grad employment with BIG financial incentives.
- Out of town (Vancouver Island, Interior Health, Northern Health) preceptorship opportunities

# Nursing Grants

## Three Nursing Tuition Grants (approved until Winter 2026):

### 1. Nursing Tuition Grant:

For all Nursing students (BSN and BSPN)

\$2000 max per program year

### 2. Nursing Tuition Grant for Indigenous students:

For Nursing students (BSN) that self identify as Indigenous

\$5000 max per program year AND is stackable (potential of \$7000 max per program year)

### 3. Psychiatric Nursing Grant for Indigenous students

For Psychiatric Nursing students (BSPN) that self identify as Indigenous

\$5000 max per program year AND is stackable (potential of \$7000 max per program year)

- **No Application required, schools will apply the grant directly to your account if you are in an eligible program**
- **Students eligible to receive the grants are still eligible to apply for student loans, but may impact the funding approved**
- **Academic Foundation Certificate students are not eligible until admitted into BSN or BSPN programs**

# There are multiple Bursaries and awards given to BSPN students:

<https://www.douglascollege.ca/current-students/advising-services/financial-planning/financial-aid/awards-bursaries>

SOME SPECIFIC TO PSYCHIATRIC NURSING ARE:

- Anshu & Romia Arora Psychiatric Nursing Entrance Awards
- Currey Family Award
- Diana Gunderson Award of Distinction  
Jessie Fenton Canadian Daughters' League Award
- John Krushelniski Memorial Award of Distinction
- MPA Society Psychiatric Nursing Award of Distinction in Psychosocial Rehabilitation

- **Accessibility Services at Douglas College**

- Accessibility Services: If you are anticipating that you may need additional help or accommodation with your learning you should contact our Accessibility Services office. Accessibility Services works with students to remove barriers related to learning disabilities, ADHD, mental health issues, sensory impairments, or if you had an Individualized academic plan in high school it may be helpful to contact them to see if there are any accommodations or strategies that might be helpful while at Douglas college . I will add their contact information in the chat.

- **Indigenous Students**

Are you an Indigenous prospective student with questions about our academic programs, support services, application process or financial aid? Please contact our Indigenous liaison team:

[indigenousrecruiter@douglascollege.ca](mailto:indigenousrecruiter@douglascollege.ca)



**The Learning Centre** is available to help student be successful in your courses.



**Douglas has free tutoring services**



**Douglas counselling** provides free, accessible, confidential and professional support to students. We provide one-to-one support and workshops to help you learn the skills to better handle stress, relationship issues, depression, increase resilience, manage sudden personal challenges or just feel better.



**In the Psychiatric Nursing Program there is a peer mentorship service**

# Some considerations when choosing RPN

- There is currently no bridge program between the BSN and BSPN programs at Douglas College.
- Psychiatric Nursing is a different career path from regular nursing (BSN).
- If you want to go back to do your BSN, you will have to start the program from the beginning. Your psychiatric nursing courses will not count towards any of your BSN degree, except for your AF courses.
- Registered Psychiatric Nurses are currently limited to working in the 4 Western provinces (BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Yukon) & limited international opportunities, but there are some in Commonwealth countries. None in USA.
- Registered Psychiatric Nurses do not practice currently in pediatric (medical) & maternity settings.

# Current BSPN and BSN students with leaders



Coming soon in 2026.....

**LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSE ACCESS TO PSYCHIATRIC NURSING  
(BACHELOR OF SCIENCE) PROGRAM**

<https://www.douglascollege.ca/program/bspnurl>

For more information contact Michelle Hunt  
[huntm1@douglascollege.ca](mailto:huntm1@douglascollege.ca)





# Contact Information



## Questions about Transfer Credit?

Contact Academic Advising for drop-in, telephone, email or chat advice at:

<http://www.douglas.bc.ca>

## Questions about Academic Foundations for Potential Psychiatric Nursing Student?

[afcoord@douglascollege.ca](mailto:afcoord@douglascollege.ca)

Licensed Practical Nurse Access to Psychiatric Nursing (Bachelor of Science)

[Huntm1@douglascollege.ca](mailto:Huntm1@douglascollege.ca)

## Other General Questions

Contact our Program Support Specialist at:

[barlowf@douglascollege.ca](mailto:barlowf@douglascollege.ca)

Or 604 777 6406

Contact our Psychiatric Nursing Student Coordinator at:

[melletts@douglascollege.ca](mailto:melletts@douglascollege.ca)

604-777-6435

## Questions about the RPN Profession?

<http://www.bccnm.ca>