

## RNs and RPNs Collaborative Practice

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**Background:** This study explored collaborative practice between Registered Nurses (RNs) and Registered Practical Nurses (RPNs) in Specialized Acute Care (SAC) units like Nephrology, Transplant, and Emergency Rooms, using Action Research. With ongoing nursing shortages, a skilled-mix model was introduced to SAC units, integrating RNs and RPNs in roles traditionally filled by RNs alone. This shift led to challenges affecting patient outcomes and job satisfaction.

**Purpose:** To identify barriers to collaboration and develop strategies to strengthen teamwork between RNs and RPNs on SAC units.

**Method:** Using Action Research and frameworks like Convergent Care and Systems Theory, the study involved semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions.

**Results:** The interview results revealed that 94% of nurses lacked an understanding of each other's scope of practice, while 80% of RPNs felt they were working outside their scope. Additionally, 87.5% of RPNs reported experiencing verbal hostility, and 75% felt unwelcome on SAC units. Focus group discussions emphasized the need for clear Scope of Practice definitions, stronger enforcement of collaborative practices by organizational leadership, and the importance of team building and education on respect to foster positive collaboration between RNs and RPNs.

**Implications for Nephrology Care:** Enhanced collaboration between RNs and RPNs in nephrology improves patient outcomes, optimizes workflow, and supports a positive work environment.

**Conclusion:** Improving collaboration requires a comprehensive strategy involving leadership, education, and the integration of collaborative principles into daily routines. This fosters an environment of teamwork and mutual respect.

### Biography

Prof. Alicia E Jones is an experienced patient care coordinator with a demonstrated history of working in the hospital & health care industry. She is skilled in the Research, Management, Clinical Research, and an Educator. She has a Strong skills in the healthcare services with a professional studies at University of Toronto and York University, Canada.

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