



# PERSONAL SUPPORT WORKER INFORMATION SESSION



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# The Personal Support Worker Program at St. Albert Adult Learning Centre

Students intending to pursue a career as a Personal Support Worker will encounter the following benefits as a result of choosing St. Albert Adult Learning Centre:

- A 625 hour program delivered on a full-time basis (depending on student demand), class times from 8:45am to 3:00pm, Monday to Friday
- A teaching team of certified teachers and registered nurses
- Attainment of 6 senior high school co-op credits upon successful completion of the PSW Program
- A flexible and friendly learning environment
- CPR and First Aid training provided on site (and included in the cost)
- Text (included in the cost)
- High student employment rate

## *PSW Program Requirements*

In order to be granted admission into the Personal Support Worker Program, candidates must:

- Possess an Ontario Secondary School Diploma of at least the general level or equivalent and provide a transcript of such

### **OR**

Be a minimum of 19 years of age and have successfully completed up to the Grade 10 Level and provide transcript of such (Grade 10 = completion of no less than 16 credits)

- Participate in a casual information session
- Successfully complete a basic literacy assessment
- Provide a clean Criminal Record Check that includes the Vulnerable Sector Screen
- Provide a reference letter on letterhead from your present or past employer/volunteer organization that addresses your reliability, punctuality, and a recommendation that the candidate work with a vulnerable population
- Proof of identification: due before or on day 1 of class. **One** of the following types of I.D. will be accepted: birth certificate, passport, permanent resident certificate, landed immigrant certificate, Canadian refugee travel document, certificate of Canadian citizenship, certificate of Indian status, divorce decree, legal change of name document, adoption papers, baptism certificate, Canadian certificate of birth abroad, Canadian refugee certificate of identity
- If your name has changed, we require a legal change of name certificate

Once admitted into the PSW Program, students will be required to provide the following:

- A negative 2-step Mantoux (tuberculosis) test
- Documentation of hepatitis B inoculations
- Documentation of the flu shot

First Aid/CPR, Level C training is mandatory for the co-op portion of the program and is scheduled in the classroom portion before placement for your convenience.

## ***Funding***

Some government agencies fund students to take the PSW Program. If you are affiliated with any of the following agencies, you may want to inquire about possible funding.

- Ontario Works
- Native Friendship Centres
- Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB)
- Second Career Program

## ***Cost of the PSW Program***

The cost of the Personal Support Worker Program is **\$1500.00** (price subject to change without notice). The cost of the program covers the textbook, First Aid/CPR training, equipment rental fees, student fees, pin, administrative fees, and managerial costs. Additional costs of the PSW student will be limited to the cost of inoculations, the criminal record check, and uniforms/shoes for placement.

**St. Albert Adult Learning Centre will accept payment by certified cheque or money order- no personal cheques will be accepted.**

## **Personal Support Worker Program Breakdown**

The full program provides 330 hours of theory and lab practice, and 295 hours of experience in the local community and long-term care facilities, for a total of 625 hours (and 6 high school credits). First Aid/CPR will be offered within the time frame of the course program. The student who is taking full-time studies must complete both placements. Exemptions are not given.

## ***Length of Program***

- Full-time: approximately 5-6 months including placements
- The in-class portion of the program runs Monday to Friday, from 8:45am to 3:00pm.
- The facility and community placements are non-traditional hours and are done on a full-time basis.
- The student needs to be available full-time for placements
- The facility placement is 200 hours long. The first 100 hours are supervised
- The community placement is 95 hours and is completed with an agency, group home, supportive housing unit, or a day-away program. This is a precepted practicum and your teacher will organize the placements

## ***Modules***

Students will cover 14 modules during the in-class portion of the program, as detailed in the back of this booklet. With each module, you are required to submit an assignment and successfully pass a test. Students will need to devote 1-1 ½ hours each day to complete assignments and prepare for tests. The program requires a mark of at least 70% on both the

assignment and test in order to successfully complete the program. Please see the Missed Module Policy within this booklet.

### ***Attendance***

Students must attend 75% of each module and 85% over all of the modules. Without a 75% module attendance rate, assignments will not be accepted and students will not be permitted to write the test.

Students must be committed to the program.

## **The PSW Practicum**

All students will complete 295 hours of practicum, divided into two placements: 95 hours of community placement and 200 hours of facility placement. It should be understood by the student that they may have to adjust their work and/or personal schedule in order to complete their placements.

### ***Facility Practicum***

Facility practicum will be held in local long-term care facilities and are arranged by St. Albert Adult Learning Centre. The student is required to complete a 200 hour placement that is to be completed in full shifts. The student is expected to follow the facility's procedures in regards to appropriate uniforms, footwear, jewelry, cosmetics, and fragrance policies. The student is also expected to follow all Co-op policies for placements. In the first 100 hours of facility placement, the student will be matched with an experienced PSW or equivalent to act as a preceptor and the teacher will be on site to guide, direct, and assess student performance. In the last 100 hours of placement, the student will be matched with the preceptor and the teacher will visit periodically to assess the student's work.

### ***Community Practicum***

The community practicum is completed with local community home support agencies, group homes, day-away programs, and supportive housing programs. The placement of 95 hours consists of matching the student with a PSW or equivalent who will act as a preceptor.

## **Other Requirements**

### ***2 Step TB Test (Mantoux)***

The cost of this test is approximately \$30 and is available from family doctors or at walk-in clinics. **Documentation of the test must be provided to St. Albert's.**

## ***Hepatitis B Inoculation***

The cost of the Hepatitis B inoculation is approximately \$65 and is available at the local Health Unit or at your family doctor. If you are considered to be “at risk”, the local Health Unit will provide the inoculations free of charge. The hepatitis B inoculation is administered in a three-step process. A doctor will administer the first inoculation and month from that time; the second inoculation will be given. Six months after the first inoculation, the third and final shot is given. *We require the first two inoculations for course purposes*, but it is important that students receive the final inoculation to ensure greater protection against the hepatitis B virus.

It is possible that some students received the hepatitis B vaccination while in high school. This vaccination is effective for 15 years. If documentation of past vaccination is unavailable, see a doctor to have a blood test completed to confirm that immunization has been given and obtain documentation of such. In some cases, a booster shot will be required. **It is imperative that documentation of immunization is obtained.**

## ***Flu Shot***

The flu shot is available *free of charge* at flu shot clinics held throughout the city. If you do not receive the flu shot and a patient becomes ill in the facility where you are placed, the management will send you home until everyone is well again. This may cause you to lose time in the first 100 hours of your placement and it is possible that you would have to repeat the facility placement with the next class (numbers permitting). **Remember to ask for documentation that you received the flu shot.** The flu shot should be obtained as soon as possible as the current flu shot serum is not always available all year long.

## ***Criminal Record Check- Vulnerable Sector Screening***

The cost of the Criminal Record Check is approximately \$25-\$35 (the cost varies from detachment to detachment). Students must produce a clean criminal record check that includes a **vulnerable sector screen**. Students who cannot produce this check will not be admitted into the PSW Program. If students are taking the part-time program, an additional current VSS may be required when starting placement.

## ***Uniform***

St. Albert Adult Learning Centre PSW’s must wear pre-approved coloured scrubs. Khaki Beige and Olive are designated as St. Albert’s PSW uniform colours. You will be given a particular style number and colour number and a list of which merchants carry this brand. The fit must be appropriate – no bellies or backs exposed when caring for clients.

## ***Shoes***

Shoes should stress good support and comfort- a good quality running shoe or light duty work shoe. Shoes must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Closed toe and heel
- Lace-up or Velcro closure

- Non-slip sole
- White (small amount of colour is acceptable)
- Indoor shoe (shoes are to be worn only indoors)

## PSW Defined and Described

A Personal Support Worker provides care to individuals and families in a variety of settings, such as long term care facilities and community home care. Our PSW Program will provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to assist clients of all ages with activities of daily living including: personal care, home management, nutrition, and family responsibilities.

The Personal Support Worker Program has been implemented in order to combine and replace the certificate programs formerly known as “Health Care Aid” and “Home Support Worker” (Levels II and III).

A student exploring a career as a PSW can expect the following types of duties:

- Assisting client to transfer from one position to another
- Assisting in the support of the client’s family
- Assisting the client to maintain safety in his/her environment
- Assisting client with personal hygiene (bathing, grooming, shaving, dressing, etc.)
- Assisting the client with toileting
- Assisting with palliative care
- Assisting clients who have dementia
- Assisting clients with chronic and/or terminal illnesses
- Check vital signs (temperature, pulse, blood pressure, respiration) as per employer policy
- Communicating with clients on a regular basis
- Implementing effective strategies of communicating with clients who have experienced sensory and language loss
- Observing and documenting behaviours and changes in health conditions
- Observing and documenting reactions to different therapies and medicines
- Preparing meals and assisting with daily household management routines
- Providing an optimal level of support to the client in order to maximize the client’s abilities and minimize disabilities.

## Missed or Incomplete Module Procedure

The student has one full year from the start date of the program in which to complete all in-class and placement work. **This provision is to allow the student a grace period to complete the program if they have succumbed to severe illness or major family disruptions.** If the student must stop placement for a period of time due to unforeseen circumstances, the student will be required to complete the full hours of the placement again from the beginning. The placement must be full-time.

## ***Full-Time***

Students must complete their in-class component in the time allotted to the course. Any modules missed or failed can be repeated for a period of up to one full year from the start date of the program. However, students need to be aware that failed or missed modules will affect the mark they receive in the course on their Provincial Report Card. The final evaluation for each credit course is completed at the end of the initial term.

After one year has elapsed, students who are still missing modules or co-op placement hours will be expected to repeat the entire PSW Program.

## **Cancellation, Withdrawal and Refund Policy**

### ***Definition of Terms:***

*Cancellation:* when registration is cancelled before the program start date

*Withdrawal:* when a student withdraws from the program ON or AFTER the program start date

*Refund:* amount of registration/program fee returned to registrant for cancellation or withdrawal from the program in which they were previously registered

### ***Refund Policy for Cancellation***

Students must contact the Program Co-ordinator at least 48 hours before the start date of the program in order to receive a full refund less the administration fee. A refund cheque will be issued to the individual or organization that initially paid the tuition fee subject to cheque processing time required. Please allow six to eight weeks to receive a refund cheque.

### ***Refund Policy for Withdrawal***

Students must submit in writing their notice of withdrawal from the program by the tenth day from the start date of the program. A refund will be calculated based on the amount of fees paid less any non-refundable items (as listed below). No refunds will be issued for time missed by the student during the duration of his/her program. A refund cheque will be issued to the individual or organization that initially paid the tuition fee subject to the cheque processing time required. Please allow six to eight weeks to receive a refund cheque.

### ***Non-Refundable Items***

- Administration fees: \$100
- Textbooks: \$100 (non-refundable if already received)
- Resource materials
- Early completion of program. Where a student completes the program before the stated end date, the full fee will apply.



- Incomplete program. Where a student fails to complete the program between the stated start and end dates, the full fee will apply unless St. Albert Adult Learning Centre is unable to provide the necessary facility, instruction and/or equipment required to complete the program.
- Termination. Where a student is terminated from the program, the full fee will apply.

## **Course Outline**

The theory component of the program is broken into 14 modules. The student must attain a mark of at least 70% on both the assignment and exam of each module and attend at least 75% of the module in order to pass.

The following is a brief summary of each of the fourteen modules in the PSW Program:

### ***Individuality of the Person (21 Hours)***

The work of the Personal Support Worker is based upon the individuality of the consumer/client and his/her relationship with family, friends, and others. Central to the PSW's work is the importance of the consumer's/client's involvement in directing the assistance required, to the extent that the person wishes and is able to do so.

This module introduces students to the concept of individuality of all persons, their experiences, rights, interests, and needs. Students will be given the opportunity to identify and examine their own beliefs, values, and attitudes about aging, disability, independence, and interdependence. The module encourages students to assume the consumer/client wishes to be involved, unless there are specific indications that s/he does not.

The concepts introduced in the module are expressed throughout all modules which follow. The intent of this module is to introduce, rather than to provide extensive opportunity to apply concepts.

### ***Role of the Worker (12 Hours)***

In this module, students will be introduced to the role and scope of practice of workers providing support to clients and families in individual homes and long-term care facilities. The variety of settings, work relationships, level of supervision, the need to adapt to varying settings, as well as time and stress management will be covered. Finally the student must recognize that they cannot be all things to all people and the client must not be exposed to unsafe practice. This module clearly outlines the scope of the Personal Support Worker's role, including consequences for exceeding that scope. Students will be introduced to the Regulated Health Professions Act. The steps to be taken when the worker has concerns in these areas will be discussed.

## ***Interpersonal Skills (27 Hours)***

Understanding the messages of others and expressing oneself so as to be understood by others is central to the PSW's ability to function. Using these skills to develop and enhance a positive/supportive relationship is central to the PSW's ability to function well.

This module introduces students to the importance of communication and interpersonal skills essential to establishing and maintaining effective relationships with clients. The components of messages, the ways in which they are given, and factors affecting communication are discussed. Problem solving and conflict resolution skills will be presented. Students will be provided with opportunity to practice these skills. Use of written materials, including documentation, will be covered.

## ***Providing Optimal Support/Care Planning (18 Hours)***

Support of various types is the main function of the PSW. The word "support" appears in the program title. Yet, support is more than providing help- it relies on a number of factors, not the least of which are skill and sensitivity. Optimal support refers to the ability to provide sufficient materials presented in the introductory module "Interpersonal Skills". It identifies the support to be provided and the significance of the support (and of the need for the support) to the client. Supporting the client to re-learn/regain routine abilities and issues of the rights of the client as a receiver of support will be presented.

The support/care plan or service contract is the framework within which the worker provides support to the client. The worker must know the purpose of planning, the ways in which planning is done, and the persons (client, support worker, caregivers, and professionals) who are involved. PSW's will learn about implementing parts of the plan and communicating information accurately and without judgment, as members of the support team. These activities are conducted in accordance with the guidelines of the employer (agency or client).

## ***Safety (18 Hours)***

This module deals with aspects of safety as they relate to both the client and the worker. One of the fundamental activities of the PSW is assisting the client with routine activities of living. It is essential that the PSW provide assistance in a manner that is effective, safe, and provides for the client's comfort. As part of this, the PSW must be aware of potential risks posed by unsafe equipment or settings and the appropriate actions to take if unsafe situations are identified.

Infection control methods will also be taught as infections can cause distress for both the client and the worker.

## ***Abuse (15 Hours)***

Family violence (incorporating child abuse, spousal abuse, and elder abuse) is a significant aspect of current society. As well, research indicates an increased awareness among

support workers of abusive behaviour toward clients. This module introduces students to the concepts of family violence and abuse, including its possible signs as well as appropriate actions to be taken (including legal requirements) if abuse is suspected. Personal beliefs and attitudes about family violence and abuse are examined, as is the concept of the worker abuse of the client. Finally, abuse of the worker is discussed.

### ***Household Management and Meal Preparation (18 Hours)***

In this module, students will learn to assist the client with their nutritional needs, household activities, and household management according to client preferences, comfort, and safety, within employer guidelines as required. Nutritional needs include planning balanced nutritious menus, preparing shopping lists, shopping, safe handling of food, storage and specific cooking techniques. Special dietary needs of infants, pregnant and nursing mothers, and persons with specific conditions (diabetes, feeding tubes, etc.) will be addressed, as well as persons with specific cultural and religious preferences. Students will have the opportunity to practice and demonstrate skills in a lab environment.

### ***Assisting a Person with Mobility (30 Hours)***

The Personal Support Worker practices good body mechanics in many aspects of the work s/he performs to ensure safety and comfort for him/herself and the client. It is recognized that workers in this field are at risk for developing back injuries from improper use of body mechanics. Consistency in transferring, lifting techniques, and the use of equipment increases safety and reduces client anxiety, confusion, and dependency.

This module also discusses promoting proper positioning in a bed or chair for the comfort and safety of the client

PSW's have the appropriate knowledge, skill, and attitude to assist the client with routine activities of living. They recognize the importance of providing assistance that supports the client's sense of self-determination and well-being in such a way that the client feels well served by the PSW's actions.

### ***Assisting a Person with Personal Hygiene (30 Hours)***

The PSW is required to have knowledge, skill, and sensitivity to provide appropriate assistance to another person, since a significant number of clients for whom the PSW provides service have disabilities which affect their ability to look after their personal hygiene. Sufficient knowledge about the structure, function, aging, changes, and common conditions of the skin is covered in this module to enable the PSW to understand why the specific personal hygiene methods are recommended. The necessity of a positive attitude and sound interpersonal skills when working with clients experiencing a disability is discussed. The importance of supporting the client's control over their own personal hygiene to the extent possible/desired is also covered, as is the need to respect the client's right to make choices as to how they wish assistance to be given. Throughout the module, sensitivity and respect for the client's dignity and privacy while providing assistance is stressed.

### ***Assisting the Family (18 Hours)***

This module assists students to understand the characteristics of today's families in terms of structure, functions, roles, lifestyles, and relationships. An understanding of the influence of cultural values, practices, and religious beliefs, as well as the effects of illness, stress, and disability on family relationships will be emphasized as central to the PSW's ability to provide effective support. This module also explores the PSW's role in providing respite to and assisting families/significant others and their children, including those with special needs.

Observation of selected commonly occurring conditions that are related to family functioning and life cycle events are included. A central focus is on the need to the PSW's awareness of and sensitivity to family reactions to the worker's presence, family routines, preferences, and involvement in decision making. Assisting the family/significant other with specific practical approaches in balancing care-giving and rest, skills related to infant and childcare, as well as assisting a child with special needs are addressed.

### ***Cognitive Impairment and Mental Health (30 Hours)***

Personal Support Workers recognize that behaviours or changes in behaviour can be related to illness or other conditions such as cognitive impairment, substance abuse, or mental illness. They identify factors that can increase the risk of suicide and recognize signs of possible suicidal behaviour. They use approaches and techniques to assist clients with these changes or conditions in keeping with the care/support plan and report observations to the appropriate team member.

This module will introduce the student to common psychiatric conditions (affective disorders and schizophrenia), substance abuse, and cognitive impairment. The possibility of multiple conditions such as Alzheimer's disease and depression will be discussed. The role of the family caregiver will be reviewed (Assisting the Family) as well as the importance of observation, documentation, and reporting (Interpersonal Skills).

### ***Assisting a Person to Manage Ongoing Conditions (48 Hours)***

As a result of an ongoing condition, many clients will require the assistance of another person in order to accomplish routine activities of living. Although PSW's will not be expected to make functional assessments, they will require an understanding of the effects of disability, disease, or condition on functioning in order to provide appropriate assistance. As partners in a support or care team (along with the client and others), workers need to understand why, what, when, and how maintenance, rehabilitation, and restorative care are used to benefit the client. They will likely assist the client in a variety of activities and must be able to interpret and carry out the instructions of clients and professionals involved with the client so the client receives the maximum benefit from their assistance.

This module introduces the student to basic concepts of assistance as well as the general effects on the person of common disabilities, ongoing conditions, and diseases.

Focusing on the importance of providing support safely, effectively, and comfortably, the student has the opportunity to gain skill in necessary techniques. Concepts of maintenance, rehabilitation, and restoration are discussed, as is the importance of the support team in providing assistance.

Activities which require additional training, who is responsible for providing the training, and transferability of these additional skills will be discussed.

### ***Assisting a Person with Medications (18 Hours)***

The PSW's ability to assist a client with medication may be essential in supporting the client's independence, or in supporting a family caregiver to attend to tasks or take needed respite. Students will identify: purposes of medication; required instruction/information about medications to be administered; and cautions with regard to medications. Students will develop and demonstrate skill in reading and interpreting information on prescription containers, and demonstrate assistance with oral/topical medications, as well as eye, ear, and nose drops. The importance of observation for both desired and undesired outcomes will be described. Finally, procedures to be followed in the event of concern about or problems with medications will be discussed.

PSW's are able to provide specific assistance with medications (oral, topical, eye, nose, or ear drops) to the client, in keeping with the directions stated in the client's care/support plan, and under the direction and monitoring of an appropriate person (health professional, caregiver, or family member). It is understood that this assistance is provided on the basis of case-by-case instruction by the appropriate person and is not generalized among clients or between support workers.

### ***Assisting A Person Who is Dying (15 Hours)***

This module allows students to discuss the concept of dying as a part of life and the possible impact of life-threatening illness on the person and their family. They will also have the opportunity to examine personal beliefs about life-threatening illness, dying, and the provision of support to the dying person and his/her family and friends. Assisting the dying person to maintain a desired lifestyle and respecting his/her right to make decisions with regard to support are also discussed. Specific approaches within the scope of the support worker to reduce discomfort or pain (within the context of a plan of support or care) are covered. Care of the person at the time of death, care of the body after death, as well as any procedures which must be followed, are discussed. Finally students will have the opportunity to examine personal reactions to the death of a client and to learn and demonstrate ways in which they may assist grieving family members.

### ***Orientations***

Initial Orientation:	2.5 hours
Co-op Orientation:	2.5 hours
First Aid/CPR	13.5 hours (included in calendar, but not credit hours)

## ***The PSW Practicum***

All students must complete 295 hours of practicum, divided into two placements: 95 hours of community placement and 200 hours of facility placement. It should be understood by the student that they may have to adjust their work or personal schedule in order to complete their placements.

### **Facility Placement**

Facility practicum will be held in a long-term care facility and is arranged by St. Albert Adult Learning Centre. The student is required to complete the 200 hours placement full-time. The student is expected to follow the agency policies on punctuality, attendance, appropriate uniforms, footwear, jewelry, make-up, and fragrance policies. In the first approximate half of the 200 hours, the student will be matched with an experienced Personal Support Worker or equivalent to act as a preceptor and the teacher will be on-site to guide, direct, and assess. For the last approximate half of the placement, the student is on-site with the preceptor and the teacher will visit periodically and carry out an assessment.

### **Community Practicum**

Community Practicum is held in conjunction with local community home support agencies, group homes, day-away programs, and supportive housing programs. The placement of 110 hours consists of matching the student with a Personal Support Worker or equivalent who will act as a preceptor.