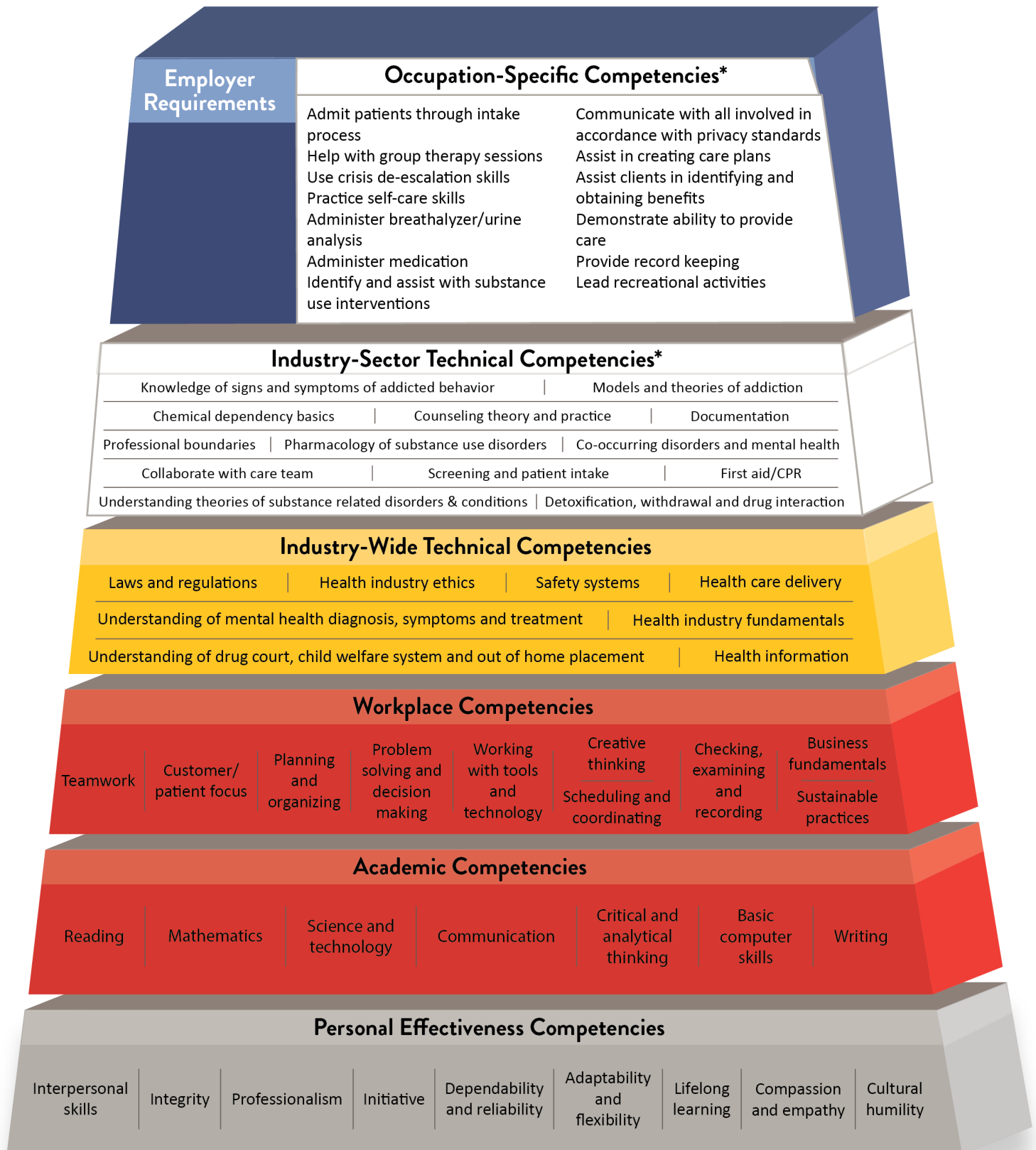


Minnesota Dual-Training Pipeline

Competency Model for Health Care Services

Occupation: Chemical Dependency and Addiction Technician



Based on: Fundamentals of Health Care Competency Model, Employment and Training Administration, United States Department of Labor, February 2025. For more detailed information about competency model creation and sources, visit dli.mn.gov/business/workforce/health-care-services.



Competency Model for Chemical Dependency and Addiction Technician

Chemical dependency and addiction technician – This position is responsible for helping patients overcome dependence on drugs, alcohol, and destructive behaviors. Chemical dependency and addiction technicians provide general assistance and help intervene when patients are often at their lowest point in their struggle with addiction. These professionals typically assist licensed drug and alcohol counselors and may work in outpatient facilities, inpatient rehabilitation centers, or hospitals.

*Pipeline recommends the Industry-Sector Technical Competencies as formal training opportunities (provided through related instruction) and the Occupation-Specific Competencies as on-the-job (OJT) training opportunities.

Industry-Sector Technical Competencies

Related Instruction for dual training means the organized and systematic form of education resulting in the enhancement of skills and competencies related to the dual trainee's current or intended occupation.

- **First aid/CPR** – Know how to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation on a patient/client in need as well as perform first aid.
- **Collaborate with care team** – Understand how to effectively collaborate with colleagues for appropriate patient care.
- **Professional boundaries** – Understand what professional boundaries are and identify poor ones. Learn how to create healthy boundaries from the very beginning of the relationship.
- **Knowledge of signs and symptoms of addicted behavior** – Able to recognize the problematic pattern of use, which leads to clinically significant impairment or distress.
- **Chemical dependency basics** – Understand generally what happens when the body becomes dependent on a chemical and understand its effects.
- **Models and theories of addiction** – Have comprehensive knowledge of the various models and theories of addiction and other problems related to substance use.

- **Documentation** – Able to provide clear and professional documentation of client charts, records, etc.
- **Pharmacology of substance use disorders** – Understand the dynamics of addiction and uses, effects, and types of action of drugs.
- **Screening and patient intake** – Be able to conduct an initial screening and intake interview to understand primary needs of patient and prepare care team for treatment plans.
- **Counseling theory and practice** – Understand and be able to integrate basic principles and theories of crisis intervention, orientation, and client education.
- **Understanding theories of substance-related disorders and conditions** – Able to understand substance-related disorders and conditions including but not limited to post-acute withdrawal syndrome, traumatic brain injuries, and mental health conditions.
- **Co-occurring disorders and mental health** – Have a basic understanding of numerous other mental health disorders and how they may or may not occur at the same time an individual is suffering from alcohol and/or drug addiction.
- **Detoxification, withdrawal, and drug interaction** – Be able to identify the symptoms and length of time of detoxification methods and the harmful interaction of varying substances and support the individual through this period.

Occupation-Specific Competencies

On-the-Job Training is hands-on instruction completed at work to learn the core competencies necessary to succeed in an occupation. Common types of OJT include job shadowing, mentorship, cohort-based training, assignment-based project evaluation and discussion-based training.

- **Admit patient through intake process** – Able to perform the initial interview, intake process, and orientation to admit a patient to the chemical dependency and addiction treatment facility.
- **Help with group therapy sessions** – Ability to assist in planning, guiding, and helping to facilitate group sessions so that objectives are met effectively.
- **Use crisis de-escalation skills** – Understand and be able to employ a variety of psychosocial techniques aimed at reducing violent and/or disruptive behavior.
- **Practice self-care skills** – Be able to prioritize professional development activities and take time to support oneself in order perform the challenging work of the job that can impact the provider's own cognitive, physical, and emotional well-being.

- **Administer breathalyzer/urine analysis** – Able to operate tools that can be used to make informed decisions about alcohol and other substance use. Know how to interpret results of testing.
- **Administer medication** – Ability to prepare, educate the patient, and administer medications and/or observing patient self-medicate using safe and correct methods.
- **Identify and assist with substance use interventions** – Understand intervention techniques and assist with patient education as it relates to treatment and continuing care.
- **Communicate with all involved in accordance with privacy standards** – Understand the importance of including patient, referrer, and family as appropriate in assessment and care planning processes. May help facilitate family conferences and request supervision when required.
- **Assist in creating care plans** – Understand individualized care that includes multidisciplinary input as well as involvement of the patient and other appropriate collateral resources. Assist the licensed alcohol and drug counselor in developing, organizing, and conducting programs to prevent and resolve problems relevant to substance use.
- **Assist clients in identifying and obtaining benefits** – Be able to get clients connected to individuals who can refer the client to public or private agencies, as well as social and community services.
- **Demonstrate ability to provide care** – Understand the need to adjust approaches to providing care to reflect developmental levels and cultural differences.
- **Provide record keeping** – Understand the importance of records and be able to perform the documentation of visits, treatment plans and outcomes in order to maintain patient records.
- **Lead recreational activities** – Be able to lead patients/clients through safe recreational activities.

Updated October 2025