



***This standard of practice is to support the PSW in providing safe, respectful, and effective personal care to the public population in a dignified and ethical approach. Standards of Practice outline the expectations of the PSW and their responsibility in the delivery of care.***

### **Bowel Care - The act of facilitating bowel elimination.**

This may include the assistance of a person(s) with bowel routine, toileting, care of person(s) with bowel and continence issues using incontinence products, in some circumstances suppositories or enemas and digital stimulation as delegated by a Regulated Health Care Professional.

If the person(s) is unable to take care of their own bathroom needs or requires assistance to use incontinence products such as putting on and taking off products and garments, then the person(s) would require a Personal Support Worker. Assistance with bowel care may be performed by a PSW if the bowel care includes assisting the person(s) with bed pans, transfers to and from the bathroom or commode and changing clothing, undergarments, and pads during incontinent care.

The PSW may assist the person(s) using a suppository or enema. If a person(s) is unable to administer their own enema, a PSW may perform this only if the PSW has been properly delegated this procedure by an RN / RPN as per the RHPA. The PSW may assist the person(s) with an ostomy in handing the person(s) the ostomy equipment the person(s) needs to perform their own ostomy care. The PSW may then assist the person(s) in the cleanup of equipment and the surrounding area. The PSW may also perform ostomy care on a person(s) who cannot for any reason perform their own ostomy care.

***\*A stoma is an opening in the abdominal area that is surgically made to change the usual pathway for stool to be eliminated from the body.***

A PSW will never insert a finger, medication, or instrument beyond the opening of the stoma. The PSW may empty and change ostomy bags as taught in PSW certification. If the PSW for some reason has not been taught this procedure, then they must be taught and demonstrated the proper technique for this type of procedure by the RN / RPN. The RN / RPN must teach the importance of proper skin care around the stoma and how to prevent skin breakdown with proper cleansing and well fitted stoma bags to prevent leaking of feces.



***\*Delegation for enema and suppository administration is a delegated act.***

The RN / RPN then would need to document the PSW training and competency by utilizing and following the Regulated Health Professionals Act. The PSW can be engaged in changing the wafer that is applied to the skin to adhere the ostomy bag in place. The PSW may assist with transfers to the commode or bathroom if the person(s) must use a Hoyer Lift or Transfer Board for the transfer. The PSW may perform anal stimulation, enema administration if the PSW has been delegated and it is a part of the person(s) Plan of Care.

**PSW – Personal Support Worker**

**RN/RPN – Registered Nurse/ Registered Practical Nurse**

**RHPA – Regulated Health Professions Act**

**Resource - Sheila A. Sorrentino, PhD, RN, Leighann Remmert, MS, RN and Mary J. Wilk, RN, GNC(C), BA, BScN, MN, Mosby's Canadian Textbook for the Support Worker, 3rd Edition**