Fact Sheet: Volunteering as a Nurse

Volunteering is an important part of our culture with benefits to both the recipients of services and the volunteers themselves by building trust, solidarity, and a sense of community among those involved. This fact sheet is intended for nurses[1] who are considering engaging in a volunteer role.

Registration Requirements

If you are planning to provide services as a nurse in a volunteer role in New Brunswick, you must hold an active registration with the Nurses Association of New Brunswick (NANB). Please refer to the Registration Services webpage for more information.

If you are not actively registered, you cannot hold yourself out as a nurse nor are you authorized to provide nursing services.

Accountabilities

Nurses are accountable to practice in accordance with the *Standards of Practice for Registered Nurses, Standards of Practice for Nurse Practitioners* and the *Code of Ethics for Registered Nurses* at all times when working as a nurse volunteer. You must also be aware of the following related to your role as a volunteer nurse:

- relevant provincial legislation and regulations that relate to your volunteer role, including: *Volunteer Protection Act* and *Volunteer Emergency Aid Act*;
- your individual and legislated scope of practice[2] and nursing standards;
- policies and procedures established by the organization;
- your role description and expectations; and
- your liability protection.

Urgent or Emergency Illness or Injuries

Ensure the organization has policies or protocols in place to manage urgent or emergency situations. Know what emergency services are available to you and how to activate them. As with any situation, as a volunteer nurse you are expected to provide emergency or urgent care according to your individual and legislated scope of practice[2], nursing standards, organizational policies, and care context.

Documentation

You are expected to document according to the NANB's *Standards for Documentation*. In addition, you need to be aware of the organization's policies related to documentation.

Camp Nursing

Generally, volunteering in a camp setting means that you work autonomously outside of a health care facility and often without other health care providers. The responsibilities of camp nurses vary from camp to camp, but the role primarily consists of helping campers meet their health needs, preventing injury and

[1]The term "nurse" refers to graduate nurses, registered nurses, and nurse practitioners.
[2] Graduate nurses must adhere to the *Practice Guideline: Graduate Nurse Scope of Practice.*

providing care in emergency. You are expected to have the required competencies to work in this context of practice.

If you are volunteering as a camp nurse, there are some additional aspects to consider:

- understanding the use of directives established for the health needs of specific campers;
- collaborating with other volunteer interprofessional team members (if available);
- accessing a nurse practitioner or physician if required; and
- referring to camp policies in regard to the collection, storage, distribution, and administration of medications, including over-the-counter medications and controlled substances.

Liability Coverage

Liability protection or liability insurance will vary depending on the organization with which you plan to volunteer. This should be outlined in the organization's policies. Review the organization's policies before volunteering as a nurse.

The NANB registrants have liability coverage as part of their registration through the Canadian Nurses Protective Society (CNPS). To ensure your liability coverage is adequate in your volunteer role, it is recommended that you contact CNPS.

Resources

Standards of Practice for Registered Nurses

Standards of Practice for Nurse Practitioners

Standards for Documentation

Standards for Medication Management

Standards for the Nurse-Client Relationship

Code of Ethics for Registered Nurses

Fact Sheet: Consent

Fact Sheet: Infection Prevention and Control

Fact Sheet: Directive

For further information on volunteering as a nurse, please contact a Nurse Consultant at the NANB by email at practiceconsultation@nanb.nb.ca.

"This content is adapted from the Nova Scotia College of Nursing *Volunteerism Practice Guideline* (2019) available at https://www.nscn.ca/".