



What do I need to know about camp nursing?

The focus of nursing care in a camp setting can be quite different from that of other settings. Children or adults attend summer camps to experience outdoor pursuits and activities. Sometimes camps are designed specifically for campers with a health care condition which require nursing supervision; while at other times the camp requires the presence of a health professional for unexpected health issues. Supports for the camp nurse such as physical facilities, supplies, and support services can vary greatly and can be very different from those provided in healthcare settings.

In most cases the registered nurse (RN) in a camp setting is required to practise autonomously as they are practising outside a structured healthcare institution without other healthcare providers. The camp nurse, therefore, needs the knowledge, skill and judgement to practise in such a setting as well as the personal characteristics that allow them to adapt quickly to a different model of nursing care delivery. Regardless of practice setting, nursing care must always be informed by the standards of practice and Code of Ethics.

Ensuring the camp has current policies, procedures, protocols and directives will be essential in supporting the RN to meet that standard.

Before accepting a position as a camp nurse, it is important that you review the job description and discuss any concerns you may have with the employer. The responsibilities or job description of the camp nurse will vary dependent on the setting and the type of camp and could include:

- setting up and organizing the health care area/office/clinic prior to the opening of the camp;
- participating with camp management in reviewing/revising camp health care policies, procedures, protocols and directives;
- maintaining health records according to camp policy and NANB's *Standards for Documentation* (2015);
- obtaining consent for treatment when providing care;

- reviewing campers' and staff's health care information;
- collecting, storing, and administering medications;
- providing health care such as emergency care, first aid, health promotion and disease prevention activities; and
- being knowledgeable of local primary care resources (e.g.; hospital or clinic) and how to access them.

RNs need to consider what liability coverage they have should they decide to become a camp nurse. According to the Canadian Nurses Protective Society,

I've been asked to work as a "camp nurse" in a summer camp.

"Regardless of whether a camp nurse is paid or is a volunteer, CNPS protection is available to camp nurses provided they belong to their provincial/territorial professional nursing associations/colleges and that their associations/colleges are members of CNPS; or if they are an individual beneficiary of CNPS.

You may want to ascertain whether the camp carries any professional liability insurance for nurses." (retrieved from <https://www.cnps.ca/index.php?page=48#services-camp>)

Camp nursing can be a rewarding experience for RNs and may help to develop confidence and organizational skills that can be utilized in any practice setting. For more information on camp nursing, contact NANB's practice department at 1-800-442-4417 or by email at nanb@nanb.nb.ca.

Other Resources

Standards of Practice for Registered Nurses.
<http://www.nanb.nb.ca/media/resource/NANB-StandardsOfPractice-RegisteredNurses-2012-E.pdf>

Standards for Documentation.
<http://www.nanb.nb.ca/media/resource/NANB-StandardsFor-Documentation-E.pdf>

Practice Standard: Medication.
<http://www.nanb.nb.ca/media/resource/NANB-MedStandardRevised-November2016-E.pdf>

Standards for the therapeutic nurse-client Relationship.

<http://www.nanb.nb.ca/media/resource/NANB-StandardsNurseClientRelation-E-2015-10.pdf>

Code of Ethics for Registered Nurses

http://www.nanb.nb.ca/media/resource/Code_of_Ethics-2017-E.pdf

Standards for Infection prevention and control.

<http://www.nanb.nb.ca/media/resource/NANB-StandardsFor-InfectionPreventionControl-E.pdf>

References

Canadian Nurses Protective Society. (2017). *Frequently asked questions: Am I protected if I work as a nurse at a summer camp?* Retrieved from

<https://www.cnps.ca/index.php?page=48#services-foreign>