



COLLEGE OF
LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSES
OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR
LPNS - A PRACTICAL APPROACH TO QUALITY CARE

Q: Due to COVID-19 I am being told I must float to an area I am not familiar with and have not practiced in before. What should I consider?

A: Public health, or other, emergencies may require that staff be redeployed. When you are asked to float or practice in an area you are not familiar with it may create anxiety and uncertainty. There may be skills or activities in the area that are not part of your regular practice. However, there are likely many skills or activities that you are competent to perform.

It is important to remember that you must always work within your scope of practice, providing only the care that you are educated, authorised, and competent to perform. The Code of Ethics (principle 5.2 CCPNR Code of Ethics) reminds us that *LPNs must recognize their capabilities and limitations, and perform only the nursing functions that fall within their own individual scope of practice for which they possess the required knowledge, skills, and judgement*. It is imperative that you know what care you are expected to perform, and that you clearly and accurately articulate, to the appropriate person, the skills or activities that you are not educated or competent to perform. That way, the right decisions can be made in assigning care, and in seeking additional information or education you may require.

When asked to float to an unfamiliar area, consider the following:

- Clarify what is expected of you (e.g. assignment, assisting others, documentation).
- Communicate what is within your scope of practice.
- Ask for an orientation to the new physical area (e.g. documentation station, fire exists, bathrooms, clean / equipment holding).
- Identify who it is that you connect with if you have questions.
- Seek guidance when necessary.
- Seek out resources to support your practice (e.g. employer policies, Standards of Practice, Code of Ethics).