



Podortho Nursing Role-Providing Essential Foot & Lower Limb Care

During this difficult time, we pray our members, clients and families are safe and well and able to navigate through these challenging times with minimal impact to their health and well-being.

OPNA Board of Director's understands there is a great deal of concern and confusion when defining essential services. We wish to put our client's and members minds at ease and provide some clarity of essential services in relation to health care. Health care is essential.

Nurses (*RPN's, RN's, NP's, Podortho Nurses*) are encouraged to follow the direction of our provincial government and public health authorities. OPNA Director's have utilized many resources made available to health care practitioners through various channels. Essential health care is defined when a person(s) requires medical attention and presents with a specific health situation or event that the individual would otherwise not be able to tend to themselves and would need to seek the assistance of a regulated health care provider.

Therefore, Podortho Nursing health care services are considered essential. It is encouraged our members continue to provide care in the event of lock downs.

Nurses follow the direction of our College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO). Some Nurses deliver front line health care and provide direct patient care in many health care settings. A Podortho Nurse is often providing direct patient care in their role. This may be in many different health care settings such as; hospitals, LTC, clinics, and in the community in patient's homes. Nurses must adhere to the policies of the facilities they work in however, should always ensure patient care is their first consideration.

High-risk clients such as; diabetic, immunocompromised, and wound care patients should continue to attend their appointments and follow public health guidelines when entering public facilities such as health clinics. Foot and Lower Limb care is required in order to prevent complications that would compromise one's general mobility, health, and well-being. It is imperative Nurses assist with promoting these health care measures to ensure our communities remain mobile and healthy by continue to provide this essential health care service.

Measures to Prevent the Spread of Covid-19 in Practice



Social distancing in common areas and scheduling appointments spaced apart allowing for space in exit areas of their clinics



Infection Prevention & Control-Best practice standards including;

- ✓ high level disinfection of all surface areas, door handles, chairs, rest rooms and waiting areas
- ✓ Sterilization of all instruments
- ✓ Hand sanitization on entry
- ✓ use of personal protective equipment at all times



Screening-Client questionnaires prior to appointments



Physical Assessment-Temperature checks on entry



Subjective Assessment-Symptoms;

- Cough
- Fever
- Difficulty breathing

In the event your client's do not pass your screening OPNA recommends rescheduling your clients' appointments two weeks later and to refer them to seek further advice from their primary care provider (Doctor/Nurse Practitioner) or direct them to public health.

Vaccination Policies

Public Health and the College of Nurses of Ontario support vaccines and therefore Nurses are encouraged to support all public health initiatives.

Vaccine mandates are an individual business/health care clinic decision. These settings are excluded from the provincial governments list of mandatory places required to enforce vaccines and ask for proof or vaccination. A regulated health care provider can not deny health care treatments or discharge their clients care based on their vaccination status.

OPNA encourages all Podortho Nurse members to research all available scientific evidence and peer reviewed studies as critical thinkers and ongoing learners. This allows the Nurse to weigh all the evidence in order to provide the best and most accurate health care education to their clients.

The Nurse should consider the;

- ✓ Social
- ✓ Religious
- ✓ Mental

Aspects which may have a profound effect on your client. When discussing a client's vaccination status, the nurse should recognize the sensitivity of the topic and respect their client's health decision. The nurse should recognize there will be varying opinions in every community and respect each individual's personal health choices ensuring the nurse-client therapeutic relationship remains intact.

Considerations

The College of Nurses of Ontario & OPNA recommendations are as follows;

- *“When talking to patients about any treatment, nurses ensure they include patients as partners in their care decisions and set aside adequate time to listen to patients and address concerns and/or correct misconceptions”(CNO 2021).*
- *information communicated must be backed by scientific evidence and quality peer reviewed studies (OPNA 2021).*
- *“Vaccines are **one** of the ways to circumvent COVID-19. Like any other drug/vaccine/treatment, there are benefits and risks. Nurses should discuss the benefits and risks of vaccines versus the risks of diseases” (CNO 2021).*

Podortho Nurses/OPNA Director's recognize when providing care to your client multiple health care topics can come up in your delivery of care. Client's will often defer to the nurse for general health care information and advice. It is recommended nurses provide health teaching to assist your clients to best understand preventative health measures promoting the maintenance of healthy immune system. This may include; **exercise, fresh air, nutrition, hydration, holistic treatments, oral care, nasal care, rest, psychosocial health, supplements**

such as well researched; Vitamin D3 1,000–3,000 IU/day Vitamin C 500–1,000mg 2 x daily Quercetin 250mg/day Zinc 30–40mg/day (elemental zinc) Melatonin 6 mg before bedtime (causes drowsiness) <https://covid19criticalcare.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/FLCCC-Alliance-I-MASKplus-Protocol-ENGLISH.pdf> Your clients should also be directed to their pharmacist for further information regarding immunity boosting and supplements.

CNO’s Nurses Scope of Practice Statement: “The practice of nursing is the *promotion of health* and the assessment of, the provision of, care for, and the treatment of, health conditions by **supportive, preventive, therapeutic**, palliative and rehabilitative means in order to attain or maintain optimal function).”

CNO recommends Nurses can employ the following strategies when having difficult discussions with patients:

- continually seek to understand the patient’s health care needs and perspectives
- ask open-ended questions
- acknowledge the patient’s concerns about the health care system and his/her experiences as a patient;
- For more information, please see the [Conflict Prevention and Management](#) guideline

Resources

<https://www.cno.org/en/covid-19/covid-19-vaccination-information/>

[Toronto Public Health: Vaccine Hesitancy](#)

[Covid-19 vaccine FAQs](#)

<https://www.canadiancovidcarealliance.org/resources/>

If members have further questions, we recommend Nurses contact CNO practice consultants who may be able to provide additional guidance and direction.

Team OPNA