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Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario
L'Association des infirmières et infirmiers
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Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario

5 Essential Considerations during COVID-19 for Foot Care Nurses in Various Settings Preparing to Return to Practice

Guidance Document

RNAO has compiled this summary of existing resources relevant to the impact of COVID-19 on foot care nursing practice. It is advised that you adhere to all current regulatory standards, government directives and IPAC policies within your jurisdiction. As individual clinical circumstances and practice settings will vary, the application of clinical judgment in addressing these essential considerations is required.



5 Essential Considerations during COVID-19 for Foot Care Nurses in Various Settings Preparing to Return to Practice

- Congregate Settings (Retirement, Group homes, Shelters)
- Long Term Care Homes
- Clinics: Home based and Community Foot Care Clinics
- Community based Home Care Visits (agency or independent practice)

**These considerations may require amendments as the situation changes and new public health directions are provided. This document focuses on practice considerations in Ontario; however national resources have been included, as applicable and available.
The links to documents are current as of June 23, 2020*

1. Determination of Essential vs. Non Essential Services		
Guidance Document	Highlights	Link
Ministry of Health: COVID-19 Operational Restart Health Sector Restart:	<p>COVID-19 Operational Requirements: Health Sector Restart Version 1.0 – May 26, 2020</p> <p>This document provides operational details and requirements as referenced in Directive #2 dated May 26, 2020.</p> <p>This link allows you to check the Ministry of Health (MOH) COVID-19 website regularly for updates to this document, case definition, testing guidance, the latest 'COVID19 Reference Document for Symptoms', 'COVID-19 Patient Screening Guidance Document', other guidance documents, and other COVID-19 related information.</p> <p>Please check the Directives, Memorandums and Other Resources page regularly for the most up to date Directives issued by the Chief Medical Officer of Health.</p>	https://cdto.ca/wp-content/uploads/Operational-Requirements-for-Health-Sector-Restart-May-26-2020.pdf
Ministry of Health: Consider Risk of Harm to Patients/Residents/ Clients	<p>Minimizing Harm to Patients</p> <p>Decisions should strive to limit harm to patients wherever possible. Activities that have higher implications for morbidity/mortality if delayed too long should be prioritized over those with fewer implications for</p>	http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/operational_requirements_health

	<p>morbidity/mortality if delayed too long. This requires considering the differential benefits and burdens to patients and patient populations as well as available alternatives to relieve pain and suffering. Found on Page 15.</p>	sector.pdf
<p>Canadian Association of Foot Care Nurses As a national association, CAFCN represents foot care nurses across the nation, including Ontario and reach out to provincial and local health authorities when making work-related decisions during COVID-19</p>	<p>As established by provincial and federal authorities, foot care is deemed non-essential apart from emergency cases and are defined as requiring help from a physician, NP, or podiatrist as it outside the scope of a nurse</p>	https://cafcn.ca/resources/covid-19/
<p>National Competencies for Advanced Foot Care in Canada (2017)</p>	<p>Considerations for the provision of ethical care found on pg 19 which states: <i>Advanced Foot Care Nurses are aware of the particular ethical challenges in their practice. They are committed to protecting the public and providing services in an environment of safe, competent, evidence informed clinical and business practices.</i></p>	https://cafcn.ca/wp-content/uploads/CAFCN-National-Competencies-for-Advanced-Nursing-Foot-Care.pdf
<p>COVID-19 and the Foot Care Nurse Certification Board</p>	<p>Our primary concern is patient safety and these suggestions are for CFCN's working in all settings.</p>	https://www.certifiedfootcarenurse.com/find-a-certified-foot-care-nurse-.html
<p>Ontario Podortho Nursing Association (OPNA) This document is specific Podortho Nurse or a member of OPNA</p>	<p>COVID Guidelines (Essential VS Non-Essential Care for Podortho Nurses) In light of the COVID-19 outbreak, OPNA Directors have established a guideline to differentiate Essential versus Non-essential Podortho Nursing Services</p>	https://www.opnaassociation.ca/
<p>Ontario Podortho Nursing Association (OPNA) This document is specific</p>	<p>Nursing Foot Care LTC facilities Decision Making Tree for screening, PPEs and guide for provision of foot</p>	https://www.opnaassociation.ca/wp-

Podortho Nurse or a member of OPNA for Foot Care Nursing in LTC homes	care in LTC homes	content/uploads/2020/06/Long-Term-Care.pdf
2. Completion of the Process of Pre-Screening		
Guidance Document	Highlights	Link
<p>Ministry of Health COVID-19 Patient Screening Guidance Document</p> <p>Included in the Ministry of Health COVID-19 Operational Restart Directive</p>	<p>COVID-19 Patient Screening Guidance This checklist provides basic information only and contains recommendations for COVID-19 screening and should be used with applicable health sector or service specific guidance and training documents. It is not intended to take the place of medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment.</p> <p>Ensuring all health and safety providers are following the same screening protocol will help ensure consistency when dealing with suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19.</p> <p>Point of Care Risk Assessment A Point of Care Risk Assessment (PCRA) assesses the task, the patient, and the environment. A PCRA should be completed by the HCP before every patient interaction to determine whether there is a risk to the provider or other individuals of being exposed to an infection, including COVID-19. A PCRA is the first step in routine practices, which are to be used with all patients, for all care and all interactions.</p> <p>Also ask if family members are diagnosed with COVID-19, or if a client or family members are quarantined as a result of COVID-19 at the location where the foot care treatment will occur. *If yes, use your judgement when making the decision whether or not to proceed with providing care.</p>	<p>http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019_patient_screening_guidance.pdf</p>

	<p>Active Screening Patients and essential visitors should be screened over the phone (or online) for symptoms of COVID-19 before their appointments. The latest COVID-19 Patient Screening Guidance Document on the MOH COVID-19 website should be used. If a patient or essential visitor screen positive over the phone, the appointment should be deferred if possible and the individual referred for testing.</p>	
Ministry of Health COVID-19 Reference Document for Symptoms of COVID - 19	This document outlines the symptoms which have been most commonly associated with COVID-19. This information is current as of May 25, 2020 and may be updated as the situation on COVID-19 continues to evolve. If there is a discrepancy between this list and other guidance, the list at this link should be considered as the most up to date.	http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019_reference_doc_symptoms.pdf
Canadian Association of Foot Care Nurses As a national association, CAFCN represents foot care nurses across the nation, including Ontario and reach out to provincial and local health authorities when making work-related decisions during COVID-19	“It has always been our understanding that foot care is withheld in the presence of COVID-19. A person symptomatic with COVID-19, or having had contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 is to remain in self-isolation/quarantine, and warrants no visitors, health care of otherwise.”	https://cafcn.ca/resources/covid-19/
COVID-19 and Foot Care Nurse Certification Board	Prescreening of clients for COVID-19 related symptoms prior to their foot care appointment and treatment is required. In the prescreening, also ask if family members are diagnosed with COVID-19, or if a client or family members are quarantined as a result of COVID-19 at the location where the foot care treatment will occur. Do not proceed with providing care.	https://www.cerifiedfootcarenurse.com/find-a-certified-foot-care-nurse-.html

3. *Selection and Acquisition of Appropriate PPE *

4.

***Seek information from your health authority, IPAC Canada or Regulatory Bodies as these directives supersede any professional association * Please note some of these recommendations are not specific to Foot Care Nurses, however are relevant to all health care providers**

Guidance Document	Highlights	Link
Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) Canada	Practice Recommendations for Infection Prevention and Control Related to Foot Care in Healthcare Settings	https://ipac-canada.org/photos/custom/Members/pdf/Foot%20Care_Practice_Recommendations_29Nov2019_final_English_with_disclaimer.pdf
Public Health Ontario: IPAC Recommendations for Use of Personal Protective Equipment for Care of Individuals with Suspect or Confirmed COVID-19 These recommendations are not specific to Foot Care Nurses and are intended for all health care providers They may not align with the specific recommendations for Foot Care nurses.	Wear full PPE or Enhanced PPE during treatment Ensure resident, client or patient wears a mask during foot care treatment.	https://www.publhealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/updated-ipac-measures-covid-19.pdf?la=en
Ministry of Health Directive #1 for Health Care Providers and Health Care Entities	At a minimum, contact and droplet precautions must be used by workers for all interactions with suspected, presumed or confirmed COVID-19 patients. Contact and droplet precautions includes gloves, face shields or goggles, isolation gowns, and	http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/directives/health_care_providers_HPPA.pdf

	<p>surgical/procedure masks. IPAC checklists specify that gowns should be class 1 medical isolation gowns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N95 mask required for possible airborne precautions during provision of foot care treatment or when aerosol generating medical procedures (AGMPs) are planned or anticipated to be performed on patients with suspected or confirmed COVID19, based on a point of care risk assessment and clinical and professional judgement. 	
<p>Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Use During the COVID-19 Pandemic Recommendations from Ontario Health on the Use and Conservation of PPE Updated May 10, 2020</p>	<p>1.1 Inpatient Facilities (Acute Care, Hospital, and Complex Continuing Care) pages 5-6</p> <p>1.2 Primary Care, Walk-In Clinics, Outpatient Facilities, and Ambulatory Settings pages 6-7</p> <p>1.3 COVID-19 Assessment Centres page 7</p> <p>1.4 1.4 Long-Term Care Facilities and Retirement Homes page 7</p> <p>1.5 Home and Community Care page 8</p> <p>2. Considerations for the Use of Surgical/Procedure Masks page 10</p> <p>3. Strategies for Conserving Personal Protective Equipment page 12</p>	<p>https://www.ontariohealth.ca/sites/ontariohealth/files/2020-05/Ontario%20Health%20Personal%20Protective%20Equipment%20Use%20During%20the%20COVID-19%20Pandemic_rev10May20%20PDF_v2.pdf</p>
<p>Public Health Ontario: Universal Mask Use in Health Care Settings</p>	<p>Principles of Universal Masking</p> <p>When universal mask use by staff is indicated as a means of source control, this involves the use of a mask by all staff and visitors, at all times.</p>	<p>https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/ipac/report-covid-19-</p>

	<p>Universal Masking Scenarios page 2</p>	<p>universal-mask-use-health-care-settings.pdf?la=en</p>
<p>Canada Public Health: Infection Prevention and Control for Home Care Settings</p>	<p>This document provides guidance specific to the COVID-19 pandemic for home care providers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff must follow current infection prevention and control guidelines for use of personal protective equipment (PPE) while in the home • All staff must be trained in putting on a mask outside of each client's home and wearing a mask at all times for the duration of their visit in the home and discarding it afterward, and in properly assessing the need for additional PPE, putting it on, wearing and removing it to minimize contamination of themselves and the immediate environment • Use of eye protection by staff (e.g., a face shield) for duration of their visit in the client's home should be strongly considered • All staff must use Droplet and Contact Precautions, in addition to Routine Practices, for all client contact and care, when the client (or someone in their home) is suspected or confirmed to be infected with COVID-19 	<p>https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals/infection-prevention-control-covid-19-interim-guidance-home-care-settings.html</p>
<p>Public Health Ontario: Risk Algorithm to Guide PPE Use</p>	<p>This tool is an excerpt from the Best Practices for Infection Prevention and Control for Clinical Office Practice (Appendix C) and was reformatted for ease of use.</p>	<p>https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/c/2013/clinical-office-risk-</p>

		algorithm-ppe.pdf?la=en
Acquisition of Supplies	<p>Ontario Together: Workplace PPE Supplier Directory</p> <p>Review a list of companies that sell personal protective equipment (PPE) and other supplies to keep you, your employees and clients safe from COVID-19.</p> <p>*consider use of PPE that is approved for use in Ontario is required for HCPs</p>	https://covid-19.ontario.ca/workplace-ppe-supplier-directory#no-back
4. Disposal of PPE and Instruments and Disinfection of FC Equipment		
Guidance Document	Highlights	Link
Canadian Standards Association Z314-18: Medical Device Reprocessing	This document speaks directly to reprocessing of medical instruments and devices, including foot care instruments, considered Critical as per Spaulding's criteria and therefore required to be sterile to point-of-use.	https://www.scc.ca/en/standards/db/standards/29301
IPAC Canada Position Statement on Reprocessing of Critical Foot Care Devices	<p>Foot care devices have been associated with health care associated infections and outbreaks</p> <p>Each client requires a sterile set of foot care devices and equipment.</p>	https://ipac-canada.org/photos/custom/Members/pdf/Position%20Statement%20%20ReprocessingCriticalFootCare_RevisedJuly2019.pdf
Public Health Agency of Canada COVID-19 for Health Care Professionals – Interim Guidance for Home Care Settings	<p>Guidance and recommendations:</p> <p>Handling of client care equipment/laundry.</p> <p>Environmental cleaning and disinfection.</p> <p>Client and household member education.</p>	https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals/infection-

		prevention-control-covid-19-interim-guidance-home-care-settings.html#s7
Public Health Ontario Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Cleaning and Disinfection for Public Settings	This document provides guidance on cleaning and disinfection of public settings, including schools, transit, colleges/universities and other workplaces in Ontario. For more information, please contact your local public health unit.	https://adfs.publihealthontario.ca/adfs/ls?wa=wsignin1.0&wtrealm=https%3a%2f%2fms.publichealthontario.ca&wct=2020-05-29T14:51:53.4703859Z&wctx=
Public Health Ontario COVID-19 – What We Know So Far About... Reuse of Personal Protective Equipment	“What We Know So Far” documents are intended to provide an overview of some of the published and unpublished reports related to emerging issues with respect to COVID-19. The reports are found through ongoing scanning of the published literature and scientific grey literature (e.g., ProMed, CIDRAP, Johns Hopkins Situation Reports), as well as media reports. It is recognized that there may be additional information not captured in this document. As this is a rapidly evolving outbreak, the information will only be current as of the date the document was written.	https://www.publihealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/covid-wwksf/what-we-know-reuse-of-personal-protective-equipment.pdf?la=en
5. Accountabilities and Practice Considerations		
Guidance Document	Highlights	Link
Canadian Nurses Protective Society (CNPS) COVID-19: Foot Care Nursing During the Pandemic	What considerations should I be keeping in mind when making this determination? Should I be asking clients to sign a waiver form stating that I cannot be	https://www.cnp.ca/index.php?page=574



	<p>held responsible if they contract COVID-19 following a visit?</p> <p>Footcare nurses who are considering providing care during the COVID-19 pandemic should first consider whether there have been any emergency declarations or orders which may impact their ability to continue practicing.</p> <p>Footcare nurses should exercise caution when relying upon waiver forms releasing them from liability in the event that a patient contracts COVID-19 following a visit. It is important to remember that such waiver forms do not relieve nurses of their professional obligations to provide care within the applicable professional standards and to follow appropriate infection control practices. As regulated health professionals, nurses have a duty of care towards their patients which will continue to apply notwithstanding any waiver or agreement signed by the patient.</p>	
<p>Canadian Nurses Protective Society (CNPS) COVID-19: Six Considerations for Independent practice During a Pandemic</p>	<p>COVID-19: Six considerations for independent practice during a pandemic</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Update yourself frequently2. Understand what constitutes essential services and emergency services3. Understand the screening, infection control & other precautions that have been implemented by authorities4. Communicate with your patients5. Do you have business insurance	<p>https://www.cnpss.ca/index.php?page=573</p>