



The Nova Scotia College of Nursing (NSCN) is the regulatory body for licensed practical nurses (LPNs), registered nurses (RNs) and nurse practitioners (NPs) in Nova Scotia. Our mandate is to protect the public by promoting the provision of safe, competent, ethical and compassionate nursing services by our registrants. The term nurse in this document refers to LPNs, RNs and NPs unless otherwise stated.

Contents

Do I require additional education to administer the COVID-19 vaccination?.....	2
Does NSCN offer vaccine education or certification for nurses?	2
Where can I find information about the COVID-19 vaccines?	2
I work in long term care. Clients have designated care givers (DCG) who are usually family members or friends. Can I vaccinate a DCG when they are neither clients nor facility employees?	2
Can I volunteer as a nurse with an agency to administer the COVID-19 vaccine?	3
I will be managing a community-based vaccination clinic. A nurse applicant has indicated that they have a conditional license with the following restrictions: “may only practice as a vaccinator or in a COVID support role”. What does this mean?	3

January 2021, first published as COVID-19 Vaccination Q&A

Copyright © Nova Scotia College of Nursing, Bedford Nova Scotia. Commercial or for-profit redistribution of this document in part or in whole is prohibited except with the written consent of NSCN. This document may be reproduced in part or in whole for personal or educational use without permission, provided that:

- Due diligence is exercised in ensuring the accuracy of the materials reproduced;
- NSCN is identified as the source; and
- The reproduction is not represented as an official version of the materials reproduced, nor as having been made in affiliation with, or with the endorsement of, NSCN

Our practice support tools are developed using current reference material. The source of this material is available upon request.



Do I require additional education to administer the COVID-19 vaccination?

Yes. Nurses administering the COVID-19 vaccine require additional competencies. These competencies can be achieved through education from your employer.

Nurses must be competent to assess clients and address and manage adverse events following immunization. An authorizing mechanism such as an order, prescription, pre-printed order or care directive from an authorized prescriber/source is required to administer all vaccines.

Does NSCN offer vaccine education or certification for nurses?

No. NSCN's role is to protect the public through the regulation of nursing practice. NSCN does not (nor did its legacy organizations) provide education or certify nurses to engage in specific areas of practice. This falls within the role of the employer.

Where can I find information about the COVID-19 vaccines?

Refer to your employer for the most up to date information about the COVID vaccines.

There are no specific [Standards of Practice](#) for immunization. However, according to your Standards, you must possess the required knowledge, skill, and judgement to provide safe and competent care - which includes the administration of immunizations.

NSCN developed an [Immunization Guideline](#) for nurses to ensure they understand their practice and role in the administration of immunizations. This is a general guideline about immunization and does not have specific information about the COVID-19 vaccines. The immunization guideline and other vaccine information is intended to be used in conjunction with your Standards of Practice.

The [COVID-19 webpage](#) on the [NSCN website](#) has general information about COVID-19 and nursing practice.

I work in long term care. Clients have designated care givers (DCG) who are usually family members or friends. Can I vaccinate a DCG when they are neither clients nor facility employees?

While this may not be typical practice in usual times, it is clear that we are not in usual times. Nurses may engage in this practice *as long as*:

- it is part of the organizational vaccine strategy;
- there is an authorizing mechanism (i.e., policy, guidelines, procedure), and;
- there are processes in place to manage it.

Work with your employer to understand the process that will apply in your organization and do not vaccinate anyone who is not identified as a DCG by your facility.

Can I volunteer as a nurse with an agency to administer the COVID-19 vaccine?

NSCN developed a [Volunteerism Guideline](#) to assist nurses in understanding their accountabilities when providing services as a nurse in a volunteer role. This is a general guideline about volunteerism and does not have specific information about volunteering to administer the COVID-19 vaccine in a volunteer capacity.

Nurses considering volunteering to administer the COVID-19 vaccine must:

- Be registered and hold a current license (i.e. active or conditional) with NSCN.
- Practise in accordance with your individual competence, [Standards of Practice](#), [Code of Ethics](#) and [NSCN practice guidelines](#).
- Have the appropriate knowledge, skill, and judgement to safely administer the COVID-19 vaccine and perform the duties asked of you as a volunteer nurse.
- Be aware of what is expected of you as nurse volunteer along with any policies, procedures or protocols established by the organization.

All registrants with NSCN have [liability coverage](#) as part of their licensure. It is provided through the Canadian Nurses Protective Society to RNs and NPs and through Lloyd Sadd Insurance Brokers Ltd to LPNs. We recommend that you contact the appropriate organization for further discussion to ensure your liability coverage is adequate in your volunteer role.

I will be managing a community-based vaccination clinic. A nurse applicant has indicated that they have a conditional license with the following restrictions: “may only practice as a vaccinator or in a COVID support role”. What does this mean?

Eligible individuals returning to practice during COVID-19 may qualify for a conditional license (CL) with or without restrictions based on their currency of practice.

Nurses who have had an active practice **within the last five years** may qualify for a CL without restrictions. This means they are eligible to practice within their professional designation and in any context (including vaccination and COVID support roles) in which they have the competence.

Nurses who **have not practiced in the last five years but who have practiced within the last 10 years** may qualify for a CL with a COVID restriction (CL-CR). Nurses with a CL-CR are limited to practicing in vaccinator roles or other COVID support roles (i.e., contact tracing, client follow up, scheduling). The nurse with a CL-CR is expected to assess clients and recognize and intervene if there any adverse reactions (including CPR). They may provide basic care to clients in a clinic; however, they are not authorized to manage the care of clients beyond the vaccination, or to be ‘floated’ to settings to care for ill clients.

If you have any questions, please reach out to a Practice Consultant at practice@nscn.ca.