When I first informed my nursing colleagues that I was offered the position of Nursing Practice Consultant with ARNNL I was met with a lot of blank stares. A common response was; What does that mean? What will you be doing? So for my very first column I decided to share with all of you some of the things I have been involved with since I assumed this role in September.

The primary purpose of the role is to promote good nursing practice. This involves both proactive and reactive work on professional practice issues. These can be described as situations in the workplace that impact on the Registered Nurse’s ability to function to his/her full scope of practice and/or to provide safe, competent, and ethical nursing care. In other words you dictate what I do! It is your questions and concerns about your nursing practice that direct my activities or careplans.

To fulfill this mandate I listen, gather information, develop and implement a plan of action, and evaluate outcomes. In other words I follow the nursing process. However, in this role you are the client and the knowledge base that I draw upon consists of professional nursing practice documents, colleague expertise, and published literature. I access these resources through a good computer, a telephone, and a lot of meetings. To implement my nursing careplans, I also utilize a range of interventions. I may provide telephone advice or engage in face-to-face discussions with individuals or groups. I develop guiding documents such as position statements and converse with governing bodies for other health professionals like the Newfoundland Medical Board or Council for Licensed Practical Nurses. And finally, I lobby on your behalf government and board officials.

So, although I no longer:

- learn how to work with new technology, I now help nurses ensure that the application of technology will comply with ethical standards;
- work shifts, I now lobby to ensure that the quality of care is not compromised due to different staffing patterns per shift;
- perform advanced nursing skills, I now advise nurses on the process of acquiring an expanded scope of practice;
- counsel clients through grief and loss, I now advocate for the proper resources to ensure that nurses have the time to converse with their clients.

Since I have been in this role I have laid down my stethoscope.

However, I have worked with nurse administrators who were grappling with issues related to health care cuts, educators introducing advanced nursing skills, physicians lobbying to expand nurses’ scope of practice, and most importantly, with nurses seeking advice about their practice.

It is your questions and concerns about your nursing practice that direct my activities or careplans.

I have had the pleasure of talking with nurses from all over the province. This involved listening to their aspirations as well as their concerns. I have tried to find answers and provide direction as we all struggle to provide quality nursing care in these trying times.

In other words, although I am no longer a direct care provider, as the Nursing Practice Consultant I am still very much involved in nursing care. I am here advocating and working to create the infrastructure necessary for you to function to your full scope and provide safe, competent, and ethical care.

So if you want to learn more about this role, consult with me on an issue, participate in one of the working committees, or just say hello, I can be reached at ARNNL through phone 753-6193 or email lypower@nf.aibn.com. I look forward to hearing from you.

Are You A Camp Nurse?

The Nursing Practice Committee is seeking the assistance of camp nurses to help update our 1995 guidelines on this role. If you are interested, please contact Lynn Power, Nursing Consultant - Practice.

Also, check out our web page www.arnn.nf.ca (What's New) to discover what other documents are up for review and how you can contribute.

The Criteria for Submitting Requests to the Nursing Practice Committee to expand the scope of nursing practice are now provided on our website www.arnn.nf.ca (Guidelines - Practice).