

Hiring Camp Nurses

The Camp Nurse position is often the hardest to fill at camp. Linda Erceg RN, MS, PHN, (the keynote speaker from the 2014 Health Care Conference) wrote an excellent article about "Interviewing Potential Camp Nurses: Questions that help Identify Successful Candidates" <http://www.acacamps.org/campmag/1009/interviewing-potential-camp-nurses>

Here are some other suggestions to help make your search and retention of a Camp Nurse more successful:

1. Determine what level of health care is required at your camp. The location of the camp and the population served will dictate what level of health care you require for your campers and staff.
2. Important points to remember:
 - A nursing student, whether he/she is in their first year or has graduated, is still a first aider until they obtain their registration number from the College of Nurses of Ontario.
 - A RN or RPN from another province or country cannot practice or volunteer in Ontario as a nurse unless they are registered with the College of Nurses of Ontario.
3. The College of Nurses of Ontario's website <https://flo.cno.org/Register/> allows you to check the registration status of a potential candidate and if there is any restrictions on their practice.
4. Provide the applicant with a job description and information about a typical day at camp. Most nurses have not worked at a camp and the more information you can provide them, prior to their arrival, the more comfortable they will be working at camp.
5. Nursing documentation is an important component of nursing practice. Ensure that you have the necessary documents for the nurse to use, for example medication and treatment records, nursing care notes, etc.
6. Clearly define what the nurse's responsibility will be at camp, for example who contacts families, how the camper's medication is administered and what happens in an emergency.
7. Consider sending your Camp Nurse to the OCA Healthcare Workshop on May 2, 2015.
8. Once hired, check in frequently with the Camp Nurse to make sure they are adjusting to the camp environment. Make sure they are included in the day to day activities of the camp.

Spending time and supporting the Camp Nurse as they adjust to a new environment will often result in a successful summer and the potential of a long term commitment to the camp.

OCA Healthcare Committee