

# 4 RISKS Nurses Face Amid Coronavirus (COVID-19)

*As the coronavirus spreads and nurses are tasked with caring for an influx of patients, the Nurses Service Organization risk management team has identified four specific risks/tips nurses should keep in mind to protect themselves:*

## 1

### KEEP PATIENT INFORMATION PROTECTED

- Prioritize patients' right to confidentiality by abstaining from sharing photos, comments, or details that have the potential to identify patients on social media or in casual conversations.
- Breaching patient confidentiality can lead to legal action or complaints filed with the state board of nursing.

## 2

### PRIORITIZE SAFETY

- Patients and their family members may become anxious or confrontational when updated visitor restrictions are put in place due to infection prevention measures.
- Nurses need to be familiar with their facilities' de-escalation, workplace violence and safety protocols to safely and effectively manage situations. Report any situation or incident that make you feel uncomfortable.

## 3

### KNOW YOUR SCOPE OF PRACTICE

- During this public health crisis, nurses are at the forefront to treat, educate and prevent the spread of COVID-19. While this crisis is rapidly evolving, nurses may be given patient assignments outside of their accustomed practice areas and locations.
- When confronted with a situation which exceeds the scope, skills or knowledge required to care for patients, nurses should develop and implement proactive strategies to alleviate unsafe patient assignments.

## 4

### USE TELEMEDICINE CAUTIOUSLY

- Telemedicine allows nursing professionals to efficiently and conveniently care for patients, yet it can open nurses up to new liability exposures.
- Practice in accordance with the standard of care, the limits of one's license, and all regulations and ethical guidelines. Nurses providing telehealth must adhere to the same practice standards they follow when providing traditional in-person treatment and care.

*These are trying times for everyone in the healthcare industry.  
From our team to yours – thank you and stay safe.*

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