

Nursing Process
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Elements of Nursing Process

- ◆ Assessment
- ◆ Diagnosis
- ◆ Outcome Identification & Planning
- ◆ Implementation
- ◆ Evaluation

Nursing Process Diagram

Process Characteristics

- ◆ Dynamic
- ◆ Requires creativity
- ◆ Spans lifetime
- ◆ Basic organizing system
- ◆ Steps overlap & build upon each other
- ◆ Results different for each client

Nursing Process Steps

Step 1: Assessment

- ◆ Involves data:
 - Collection
 - Verification
 - Organization
 - Interpretation
 - Documentation

Data Sources

- ◆ PATIENT (primary)
 - Interviews
 - Nonverbal communication
 - Physical inspection
- ◆ Family, medical records, friends (secondary)
- ◆ Continues with each nurse-patient interaction – not just at admission

Types of Information Collected

- ◆ Subjective data
 - Client point of view
 - Expresses feelings, perceptions, concerns
 - I.e. interview
- ◆ Objective data
 - Observable & measurable facts
 - I.e. physical exam

Practice:
ID Data Source

- ◆ I have had pain in my legs for three days now
- ◆ Temperature 98.6
- ◆ Lungs sounds clear to auscultation
- ◆ I get short of breath when I walk across the room

Step 3: Outcome
Identification & Planning

- ◆ Plan of action to resolve problems
- ◆ Steps:
 - Prioritize nursing diagnoses
 - Actual, potential, etc.
 - Establish client centered long term and short term goals & outcomes
 - Apply clinical pathways (if applicable)
 - ID specific nursing interventions
 - Multiple interventions can be done for one problem

Step 4: Implementation

- ◆ Execute nursing plan of care
- ◆ May involve delegation of certain tasks
- ◆ Pre/post action – assess patient response
- ◆ Report and document
 - legal requirement
 - Be specific

Step 5: Evaluation

- ◆ Have the client's goals been met?
- ◆ Did the status of the problem change with the intervention?
- ◆ If the intervention was ineffective, what else can be done to assist this patient?
- ◆ DOCUMENT ALL RESULTS – positive & negative

- ◆ NOTE: evaluation is an ongoing process

Example of Evaluation

- ◆ Patient with fractured femur is complaining of intense pain.
- ◆ Given 75 mg Demerol IM – ordered q 4 hours.
- ◆ Patient continues with pain throughout day d/t medication being late (nurse is busy) – does not want to get out of bed
- ◆ Consider PCA to maintain therapeutic pain relief..and to enable ambulation

Additional Elements
of the Nursing Process
Nursing Process Involves

- ◆ Critical Thinking

- ◆ Advocacy
- ◆ Delegation
- ◆ Cultural Sensitivity
- ◆ Evidence Based Practice

Critical Thinking

- ◆ Essential nursing competency
- ◆ Able to think beyond the obvious and make connections
- ◆ Refuse to accept conclusions without evaluating the facts or evidence

Who is a critical thinker?

- ◆ Independent thinker
- ◆ Open to other's beliefs
- ◆ Empathic
- ◆ Sense of justice & humility
- ◆ Logical & disciplined decision maker
- ◆ Creative

Critical Thinking Skills

- ◆ Divergent thinking
 - Is the assessment data relevant?
- ◆ Reasoning
 - Ability to discriminate the facts
- ◆ Clarifying
 - Ability to define terms, noting similarities and differences

Critical Thinking Questions & the Nursing Process

- ◆ Assessment:
 - Is data complete?; what other data do I need?
- ◆ Diagnosis
 - What else could be happening?; are there any gaps in the data?
- ◆ Outcome ID & Planning
 - What do I and the client want to accomplish?; what interventions will work and who is best qualified to perform these interventions?
- ◆ Implementation
 - Can the patient tolerate this intervention?; if the patient has problems, what additional equipment do I need near by to intercede?; if I alter the intervention, will it still be effective
- ◆ Evaluation
 - Were interventions effective?; how could things be done differently?; what new data do I need to make the correct decision?

Advocacy & the Nursing Process

- ◆ Promote client's right to autonomy by
 - Assessing client's wants/wishes

- Communicating client's concerns
- Accept client's position
- Teaching family/client

Delegation & the Nursing Process

- ◆ Assign appropriate and effective work activities to other health team members
- ◆ Nurse retains accountability
- ◆ To delegate:
 - Know hospital policy
 - Match care involved to competence level of team member
 - Maintain communication
 - Evaluate action & patient response

Example of Delegation

- ◆ In making the assignment for evening shift, which of the tasks can a nurse delegate to the nursing assistant?
 - Obtain vital signs for a client admitted from a nursing home
 - Change the dressing for a client with a stage 3 sacral decubitus dressing
 - Provide pre-op teaching for a client scheduled for cardiac bypass surgery

Cultural Competence & the Nursing Process

- ◆ A complex combination of knowledge, attitudes, and skills
 - Knowledge
 - Aware of different cultural practices
 - Attitude
 - Flexible & open
 - Skills
 - Facilitate communication

Evidence Based Practice & the Nursing Process

- ◆ Apply research based information in the care of a patient
 - Assessment & Intervention
 - Use a right sided EKG to evaluate heart damage post blunt chest trauma from a steering wheel
 - Use a CO2 monitor with a Pulse Ox post extubation to monitor for CO2 retention and need for reintubation
 - Monitor for signs of depression post CHF exacerbation

This material was developed by Gina Maiocco, PhD, RN, CCRN, CCNS, while she was faculty in the Wright State University-Miami Valley College of Nursing and Health.

This material is based upon work supported by the Ohio Learning Network. Any opinions, findings and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Ohio Learning Network.

