Scope and Standards of Practice
for Nursing Professional Development


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The Scope and Standards of Nursing Professional Development Practice

Introduction

Nursing professional development is a vital phase of lifelong learning in which nurses engage to develop and maintain competence, enhance professional nursing practice, and support achievement of career goals (ANA, 2000). The practice of Nursing Professional Development (NPD) is a specialty that facilitates the lifelong learning and development activities of nurses aimed at influencing the actualization of professional growth and role competence and proficiency. Based on the sciences of nursing practice, learning and change, NPD Specialists use knowledge and skills in education theory and application, career development, leadership and program management to support lifelong nursing professional development.

Building on a strong past (ANA 1974, 1984, 1990, 1994, 2000) this revision of the Scope and Standards reflects multi-dimensional factors influencing the current and future practice of NPD, such as globalization, the dynamic practice environment, evidence-based practice, and technology. A number of changes are evident in this revision: a) there is an intentional focus on the specialty and practice of Nursing Professional Development with less emphasis on an individual nurse’s professional development; b) a new NPD framework was developed to more accurately portray current and future NPD practice; c) a merging of roles and elements of practice to reflect changes in professional expectations; d) the operationalization of increased use of technology is throughout; and e) integration of evidence-based practice and practice-based evidence.

These Scope and Standards reflect the realization that NPD practice varies depending on the knowledge and experience of the individual specialist and the scope of the practice setting. Accordingly, the specialty is addressed from a very broad perspective, with the understanding that specialists will operationalize their NPD role based on their specific position within a particular setting while practicing within the defined scope and standards. It is the goal that this new edition will create a dynamic trajectory for the future of Nursing Professional Development.

Nursing Professional Development Practice Evolution

In the past editions of the Scope and Standards, nursing professional development practice was conceptualized as interactive domains of Staff Development, Continuing Education and Academia. Over the past ten years, we have witnessed a major evolution in NPD practice. Within the continuing education and academic domains, technology has changed the learning environment as well as changed potential target audiences. Once
locally or regionally defined, the target audience is now global. New teaching/learning methods have developed requiring changes in NPD specialist knowledge and expertise to develop programs using the new methods. The global market created additional regulations and expectations to maintain educational program integrity and quality. The dissemination and use of evidence-based practices has created a major change in academic and continuing education content. Yet, the purpose of NPD remains to augment the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of nurses, in their pursuit of professional career goals. Ultimately, this will enrich nursing’s contributions to quality health care in order to protect the public.

The most profound transformation of NPD practice has been within the staff development domain. This change may be due in part to a rapidly changing practice environment. The need for NPD specialists to use their expertise in assessment, planning, development, implementation and evaluation to create change and promote quality has been recognized in the practice environment. Yet, the change may be more reflective of the increasing levels of education and expertise of nurses practicing in staff development as set forward in past editions of the Scope and Standards. Due to growing knowledge and skills, NPD specialists are involved in program/project management, competency assessment, measurement, evaluation/return on investment, implementation of evidence based practice (EBP), and development and coordination of excellence initiatives, all designed to enhance performance and professional development. As a result of the evolution of NPD practice, a new model, the Nursing Professional Development Systems Model has been created to capture current practice and accommodate future changes.

**Nursing Professional Development System Model**

Nursing Professional Development (NPD) is a specialized nursing practice that facilitates the professional development of nurses as they participate in lifelong learning activities to enhance their professional development, competence and role performance with ultimate outcomes of protection of the public and the provision of safe, quality care. The process of NPD is best illustrated with a systems model consisting of interrelated inputs, throughputs, outputs and feedback. See Figure: Nursing Professional Development System.
Environment

The NPD specialist and the learner operates in two environments which have fluid and evolving boundaries. The NPD practice environment may overlap with the learner’s environment.

The NPD practice environment is the structural, social, and cultural setting in which nursing occurs. This environment is multidimensional and is subject to local, state, regional, national and international regulations, initiatives, and trends. It creates the context that influences practice behaviors and outcomes. The professional development system is dependent on the material and human resources that exist within the practice environment. The NPD specialist enhances the practice environment, promotes transformational leadership, and supports nursing’s collaborative relationships with other disciplines and academic partnerships.

The learning environment is any context in which learning occurs. This environment may overlap with the practice environment. It is not limited to a physical classroom but includes alternate settings including virtual ones.
System Inputs
The learner and Nursing Professional Development Specialist are seen as inputs that interface to contribute to the Nursing Professional Development Processes and overall success of the system.

Nursing Professional Development Specialist
The NPD specialist is a registered nurse with expertise in nursing education who influences professional role competence and professional growth of nurses in a variety of settings. The NPD specialist supports lifelong learners in an environment that facilitates continuous learning for nurses and other health care personnel. The NPD specialist fosters an appropriate climate for learning and facilitates the adult learning process.

Learner
The learner is an individual or group with an educational need who participates in professional development activities.

System Throughputs
A number of developmental and educational processes that revolve around EBP and PBE combine to contribute to the professional growth of practicing nurses and other learners. NPD specialists facilitate these processes based on the inputs. As inputs vary, so will the throughputs.

Evidence-Based Practice and Practice-Based Evidence
Evidence based practice (EBP) and practice-based evidence (PBE) form the core of the NPD model. EBP is the integration of the best research evidence, educational and clinical expertise, and learner values to facilitate decision-making (Sackett, Straus, Richardson, Rosenberg, & Haynes, 2000). NPD specialists use this science-to-service model of critical thinking to apply scientific knowledge such as research, scientific principles, and theory related to both educational methods and practice.

Complementary to EBP, practice-based evidence (PBE) is a study methodology related more directly to practice effectiveness and improvement. The goal of PBE is to determine practices and interventions that work under normal day to day practice in terms of whom, when, and at what cost. (Horn & Gassaway, 2007). PBE studies allow a more in-depth understanding of individual variation and group differences (Evans, Connell, Barkham, Marshall, & Mellor-Clark, 2003). The NPD specialist uses this practice-to-science model to determine the most effective practice within a given context or group.
Orientation

Orientation is the educational process of introducing individuals who are new to the organization or department to the philosophy, goals, policies, procedures, role expectations, and other factors needed to function in a specific work setting. Orientation also takes place when changes in roles, responsibilities, and practice settings occur (American Nurses Association, 2000). The NPD specialist may develop, coordinate, administrate, facilitate, conduct, and evaluate orientation programs for nursing and other health care personnel.

Competency Program

A competency is “an expected level of performance that integrates knowledge, skills, abilities, and judgment” (American Nurses Association, 2008; pg. 3). A competency program is a group of activities designed to support an ongoing dynamic process of assessment and evaluation of performance. Competence is measured by “using tools that capture objective and subjective data about the individual’s knowledge base and actual performance and are appropriate for the specific situation and the desired outcome…” (American Nurses Association, 2008, pg. 6). The NPD specialist has expertise in competency assessment and may develop, coordinate, administrate, facilitate, conduct, and evaluate competency programs.

In-service Education

In-service educational activities are those learning experiences designed in the work setting to assist individuals to acquire, maintain, and/or increase their ability to perform job functions within a given agency or institution (American Nurses Association, 2000). In-service activities include such things as policy and procedure changes and implementation of new products. The NPD specialist may develop, coordinate, administrate, facilitate, conduct, and evaluate in-service education for nursing and other health care personnel.

Continuing Education

Continuing education refers to those systematic professional learning experiences designed to augment the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of nurses, and therefore enrich the nurses’ contributions to quality health care and their pursuit of professional career goals (American Nurses Association, 2000). The three different types of continuing education activities are provider directed, learner directed, and learner paced (American Nurses Credentialing Center, 2009). Nurses apply knowledge gained from these activities to their practice regardless of employer. The NPD specialist may create, manage, implement, coordinate and evaluate continuing education.
Career Development/Role Transition
Career development involves identification and development of strategies that meet the career goals, tasks, and challenges in different stages throughout a nurse’s career (Chang, Chou & Cheng, 2006). The NPD specialist may also assist others in their career development, role transition, and succession planning. NPD specialists may counsel others, coordinate, facilitate, conduct and evaluate activities that promote career development and role transition.

Research and Scholarship
Participation in research and/or scholarly activities is highly dependent on the practice environment and role preparation of the NPD specialist. Nursing research is the use of systematic inquiry to develop or refine knowledge (Polit & Beck, 2008).

Scholarship is “application of the scientific process, which involves curiosity about what works and what does not, rigorous examination through both quantitative and qualitative approaches, peer review of the results, and their public dissemination” (Emerson & Records, 2008).

NPD specialists may conduct, encourage, disseminate, and/or participate in research and scholarship including oral and poster presentations and publications (Bruce, 2009).

Academic Partnerships
Academic partnerships are mutually beneficial relationships between nursing schools and health care facilities. The partnerships represent a commitment between colleges/schools of nursing and the health care facilities to support an environment of nursing development and continuous learning. Within the partnerships, NPD specialists may serve as academic liaisons, teach, coordinate, and/or advise nurses and other learners concerning academic education and scholarly activity.

System Outputs/Outcomes
The overall outcome of NPD is acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes that support safety and contribute to the protection of the public and provision of quality care. This is achieved by the following outputs of the system:

Change
Change is a movement to a desired state that subsequently becomes the basis for further transition (Sullivan & Decker, 2009). Change is reflected by adoption of new behaviors and/or processes.


Learning

Learning is the acquisition of knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes upon which to base practice. Learning is influenced by various factors such as individual characteristics, perceived needs, and teaching methodology.

Professional Role Competence and Growth

Professional role competence is performance that meets defined criteria based on the specialty area, context, and model of practice in which an individual nurse is engaged (American Nurses Association, 2008). Professional growth is defined as advancement through Benner’s (1984) stages of clinical competence or progression in an organizational hierarchy. One measure of professional role competence and growth is specialty certification. Specialty certification “validates nurses' skills, knowledge, and abilities… within their professional sphere of activity and contributes to better patient outcomes” (American Nurses Credentialing Center, n.d.). NPD specialists pursue certification as practice educators while promoting certification of professional nurses in their respective nursing specialty.

System Feedback

The feedback loop represents continuous lifelong learning and growth that influences the constantly evolving practice of nursing and NPD.

Influence

Influence is the process of affecting change, behaviors and decisions of others. Nursing Professional Development Specialists influence change by employing skills and knowledge to design and implement programs that produce desired outcomes. The NPDS influences decisions of others by using credible data, technology, relevant information and documented outcomes within the learning and practice environment to shape both the system inputs and throughputs.

Scope of Practice For Nursing Professional Development

The scope of practice of the Nursing Professional Development specialist continues to evolve in support of changing roles in healthcare. This scope statement defines the who, what, where, when, why and how of educational and learner needs that drive NPD practice. Today the role of the NPD specialist is to address the learning needs of diverse groups through creativity, commitment, passion, and a high level of competence. As governing bodies, regulations, health policy and consumer awareness continue to evolve, so do the expectations, requirements, demands and responsibilities of
the NPD specialist, thus requiring the scope of practice to broaden. The following content defines the various dimensions of the scope of practice within various healthcare arenas.

**Environments and Scope of Responsibility**

**Practice and Learning Environment**

The ultimate goal of NPD is to support the provision of quality healthcare within local or global practice environments. This includes protecting the public by planning and implementing strategies that promote optimal learning and the effective translation of skills and knowledge to the learner’s practice environment and thus enhancing their competence. The NPD specialist operates concurrently in two environments - the **practice environment** which supplies resources and creates the context that influences practice behaviors and outcomes and the **learning environment** which is any context in which learning occurs. These two environments have fluid and evolving boundaries. It is important to note that the two environments may intertwine at times to ensure successful learner and organizational outcomes. Examples of these environments may include, but are not limited to:

- **Practice environments**-found within the following settings:
  - Hospitals
  - Long Term Care Facilities
  - Academic institutions
  - Public Health
  - Outpatient/Ambulatory Clinics
  - Community-clinic settings – (such as, but not limited to)
    - Home Health
    - Virtual Health
  - Any setting where NPD specialist support quality outcomes
- **Learning environments**-found within the following situations:
  - Virtual environments
  - Independent self directed learning environments
  - Simulation labs
  - One’s practice environment
  - Classroom
  - Academic setting
  - Conference, Seminar, and workshop settings
**Scope of Responsibility**

The scope of responsibility and accountability for the NPD specialist continuously evolves to meet the demands of the practice setting. The following responsibilities may also vary based on environment and type of NPD specialist position description.

- **Career development**
  - Career coaching
  - Clinical Advancement Models
  - Academic education coaching
  - Role transition
  - Succession planning

- **Education**
  - Continuing education
  - Competency assessment and validation
  - Coordination of Student Affiliations
  - Educational needs assessment
  - In-service activities
  - Orientation
  - Curriculum development

- **Leadership**
  - Collaboration at local, regional, state, national and international level to improve nursing professional development practice
  - Consultant function
  - Change agent/facilitator
  - Encouragement of shared governance
  - Influences others for positive change
  - Leadership at various levels of the organization – group, department, system
  - Facilitation of peer review/evaluations
  - Preceptor, mentor, clinical coach, role model
  - Facilitate clinical/academic partnerships

- **Program management**
  - Change agent facilitator
  - Data analysis (gathering, interpreting, integrating)
  - Evidence Based Practice/Practice Base Evidence Oversight
  - Excellence initiatives (i.e., Magnet, Baldridge)
  - Preceptor, mentor, clinical coach
  - Program consultant
• Project planning, implementation, facilitation and evaluation
• Program innovation (i.e.: e-learning, simulation, etc)
• Record keeping, reporting and associated documentation
• Research initiatives

• Compliance initiatives
  • Government regulations
  • Facility accreditation
  • Licensure and nursing professional standards
  • Other regulatory standards

Educational Preparation and Qualifications of Nursing Professional Development Specialist

Education

The Nursing Professional Development specialist is a licensed registered nurse with a graduate degree. If the graduate degree is in a related discipline, then the baccalaureate degree must be in nursing.

Due to the escalating complexity of nursing and the health care environment, The Executive Leader for Nursing Professional Development should be a Registered Nurse ideally prepared at the doctoral level in nursing or education. This recommendation clearly reflects the elevation of expectations for leadership in the area of professional development. Minimally, the administrator of the department is strongly encouraged to have a master’s degree in nursing or related field. The educational and management expertise of the administrator is developed, maintained, and enhanced through self-evaluation and ongoing professional development activities.

Educators should demonstrate knowledge of appropriate methods of delivery and the ability to develop and facilitate relevant and effective education for adult learners. Other important skills of the NPD specialist that promote professional growth and self-actualization of the learner include mentoring and fostering empowerment. NPD specialists continue to evolve as professionals through their own self-assessment, ongoing development, and periodic self-evaluation.

Certification

Lifelong learning is important to develop and maintain competence and grow personally and professionally. National certification validates continuing professional development of the NPD specialist. Initial national certification is obtained through the successful completion of the certification examination in Nursing Professional
Development (ANCC). Other certifications such as Nursing Education (NLN’s Certified Nurse Educator [CNE]), Informatics, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Advanced Diabetes Management, etc can complement and enhance the role of the NPD specialist. Specialty certification is renewed at regular intervals.

**Core Competencies**

The competencies listed below are to be considered as integral and core components of the NPD specialist role and are useful for validating the specialists’ knowledge and evaluating their competency (Brunt, 2007).

- **Career Development**
  - Accepts personal responsibilities for own professional development
  - Promotes participation in professional organizations for self and others
  - Demonstrates effective oral and written communication
  - Uses effective interpersonal skills
  - Fosters critical thinking
  - Links nurses to professional development and other relevant resources

- **Education**
  - Assesses learner characteristics including learning styles and learning needs for program development
  - Creates an effective learning environment
  - Demonstrates proficiency in use of technology
  - Evaluates the outcomes of staff education
  - Functions in the roles of both teacher and facilitator
  - Implements a variety of teaching strategies tailored to the learners’ characteristics, learning needs, cultural perspectives, and outcome objectives.
  - Plans nursing professional development programs that are culturally relevant and incorporate concepts of multicultural and multigenerational education
  - Applies nursing and learning theoretical and conceptual foundations as a basis for developing nursing professional development programs

- **Leadership**
  - Adheres to regulatory body/agency standards
  - Advocates for the nursing professional development programs that support the needs of the learner and the organization
• Anticipates and forecasts trends
• Demonstrates a sensitivity to ethical, cultural, and spiritual inclusion
• Engages in ethical decision-making
• Effectively facilitates group processes
• Follows regulatory requirements for health reporting
• Functions as a change agent and leader
• Implements motivational strategies at individual, group, program, or organizational levels
• Maintains confidentiality of sensitive information
• Uses outcome measurements and outcome evaluation methods
• Promotes problem solving
• Interprets and uses research in practice
• Demonstrates knowledge of the research process
• Models the application of evidence based practice
• Uses organizational strategic plan and goals to determine educational priorities
• Develops financial plan that allocates for resources to support NPD

• Program and Project Management
  • Plans and implements innovative programs and projects using innovation and creativity
  • Consistently uses planning methodologies when implementing, facilitating and/or evaluating various programs and projects
  • Designs and implements evaluation plans for programs and projects
  • Develops and implements a budget for programs and/or projects

Elements of Practice for the Nursing Professional Development Specialist

In the original Scope and Standards of Nursing Professional Development (ANA, 2000) six roles were identified - educator, facilitator, change agent, consultant, leader, and researcher. While these roles remain elements of the practice of the professional development nurse, they are no longer separate roles but are intertwined as the complexity of the NPD practice increases.

NPD specialists are engaged in a variety of ever-evolving health care arenas within our society. Today culture, technology, and collaboration in healthcare impact the elements of practice on an international level. The NPD specialist today must be aware and embrace the differences and commonalities within our professional practice,
healthcare and society. The practitioner must take a leading role in the change process by embracing, and guiding change.

The Nursing Professional Development specialty practice has significantly changed and expanded as knowledge of the learning process and technology has evolved. The learning process begins by assessing the needs of the learners, and ensuring adult learning principles are incorporated. The NPD specialist collaborates with stakeholders to identify desired outcomes. The learning objectives are derived from the desired outcomes. The delivery methods are evaluated and the most appropriate are selected. Methods may include, but are not limited to, live presentations, self-learning packets, structured academic courses and web-based courses. Qualified individuals such as the NPDS, nursing instructors, academic faculty members, etc are selected to plan and develop the learning experience. The NPD specialist plans, develops, and implements educational activities to foster the development of competence in the learner. Upon completion of a learning experience, an evaluation measures the attainment of objectives and compares desired to actual outcomes. This evaluation process helps guide the restructuring and planning for future learning.

The NPD specialist needs a strong knowledge base in teaching and learning theories, curriculum design, and methods for validation of learning, research processes and innovative technological options. Collaboration between the learner and the NPD specialist enables the learner to document achievements, develop an awareness of self perspective and enrich their own professional practice. NPD specialist uses innovative technologies and strategies to strengthen critical thinking and problem solving abilities of the learner. The elements of practice, outlined below are enlisted to assist the learner on the journey of professionalism.

**Examples of Intertwined Elements of Practice within the Learning and Practice Environment**

The NPD specialist may practice in a variety of types of organizational and entrepreneurial endeavors. The mission, vision and goals of an organization are a guide for the professional development specialist’s priorities and goals. Nursing Professional Development specialists practice with an awareness of who, what and how specific groups impact educational endeavors. The following are examples of intertwined elements of NPD practice.

- **Educator/Facilitator:**
  - Develop an assessment process to determine learning needs
  - Facilitate the adult learning process and actively involve the learner
• Assist in the selection of the most appropriate method of teaching to accommodate learning styles and the learning environment
• Enlist qualified instructors to plan, develop and or present material
• Evaluate outcomes
• Restructure program or educational plan as needed for future endeavors
• Continue to develop and maintain a level of competency appropriate to one’s practice environment or area of expertise
• Acquire identified resources needed for quality program design and delivery

• **Educator/Academic Liaison:**
  • Mentor peers or colleagues
  • Manage academic relations
  • Serve as preceptor
  • Collaborate with academia to advance curriculum to meet the needs of healthcare organizations and the profession
  • Provide supportive educational resources or opportunities

• **Change Agent/Team member:**
  • Compare and contrast healthcare issues and systematically analyze for needed change related to educational support
  • Incorporate changes into learning activities and support organizations as they implement change
  • Collaborates with intra and interprofessional groups
  • Facilitate team building
  • Problem solve where identified changes are needed

• **Researcher/Consultant:**
  • Participates in and incorporates research and/or evidenced based practice. Roles may include advisor, investigator, collaborator, translator, integrator or evaluator
  • Incorporates research and/or evidenced based learning into educational activities and practice
  • Serves as a resource to individuals, groups, and organizations to identify issues and possible internal and external resources

• **Leader/Communicator**
  • Provides support and direction to carry out organizational goals
• Promotes NPD as a practice specialty
• Uses effective communication skills
• Demonstrates leadership on a professional level, maintaining appropriate competencies and involvement in activities on a community, state, national or international level
• Influences change processes
• Integrates ethical principles in all aspects of practice

• **Collaborator/Advisor/Mentor**
  - Support lifelong learning in collaboration with academic institutions, healthcare organizations, professional nursing organizations and other NPDS.
  - Support lifelong learning by advising/mentoring nurses as they execute a professional development plan
  - Model professionalism and integrity

As the practice of nursing changes, the elements of practice for the NPD specialist also changes. An example of this is the increasing use of evidence based practice and research within nursing. The NPD specialists’ roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities are ever changing and the practitioner must embrace and take a leading role in the process.

**Advocacy and Ethics**

Advocacy and adherence to ethical principles are essential components of NPD practice. The American Nurses Association considers health care as a universal right, transcending all individual differences. Within every healthcare community, cultural competence has emerged as a goal due to the increasing cultural and religious diversity in our society. The NPD specialist demonstrates a value for diversity by providing programs and processes that support the array of ethical, cultural, educational and diverse needs of patients and clinical professionals. The NPD specialist guides individual learners towards a global view of healthcare using education and self reflection.

Today’s workforce is culturally diverse and multigenerational. NPD specialists advocate, support, and integrate appropriate methodology and resources for all types of learner’s individual needs. The NPD specialist embodies nursing ethics as outlined by the ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements (2001). The nurse in professional development integrates ethical principles in all aspects of practice. Advances in healthcare technology and science; increasingly diverse patient populations as well as social and legal issues, lead to ethical dilemmas for the healthcare provider.
The NPD specialist advocates for nursing ethics and often functions as a role model. As an advocate for the learner, the NPD specialist uses educational principles, standards, and methodologies to protect the autonomy, dignity, and rights of all individuals involved in the learning process. The NPD specialist promotes learning in a nonjudgmental and nondiscriminatory manner that is supportive of the diversity of the learner.

As part of the NPD specialist’s ethical responsibilities, they must incorporate and respect other professionals’ code of ethics which may impact the processes used by nursing. An example of this is the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America’s (PhRMA) Code on Interactions with Healthcare Professionals, released January, 2009. This organization represents research-based pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies. As a result of reviewing and incorporating this and other professional’s code of ethics, NPD specialist demonstrates an awareness of restrictions regarding support.

Confidentiality is foremost as the NPD specialist promotes learning opportunities, collects data, and completes competency assessments. Rights, responsibilities and accountability regarding confidential information are included in the education of the learner. Educational opportunities provided by the NPD specialist are presented without bias or conflict of interest in order to maintain the ethics of the nursing professional.

**Current and Future Issues, Innovations, and Trends**

**Overview**

Care has been taken to ensure this Scope and Standards for NPD reflect the trends and potential opportunities projected for the future. Based on current and future trends, it is safe to say that health care is in a dynamic state, and is predicted to remain so well into the future. This state of constant evolution will place the NPD specialist in the pivotal role of helping their organization and the staff they serve to adapt to the demands of this change. In this process, it will be important that the NPD specialist remain flexible and maintain a future focus, proactively leading change rather than reacting to emerging trends. As we continue to advance into the future, support from international, national, state and local nursing organizations, health policy makers, as well as state and federal officials are resources to further strengthen the influence of the NPD specialist. Projected trends include:

**Workforce Issues**

- Generational issues will influence how people work together in the health care setting
• Evolving science of adult learning and developmental needs including the “emerging adult” (Tanner, Arnett, & Leis, 2009)
• Knowledge management strategies will be needed as “boomers” retire
• Diversification of the workforce will continue
• Progressive education expectations for nurses at all levels
• Continued need for succession planning
• Growing shortages of healthcare professionals
• Increased integration of technology

**Clinical Practice Changes**
• Patient populations will present with more complex clinical needs associated with the impact of chronic illnesses, aging and greater cultural diversity
• New knowledge will need to be integrated into the practice setting
• Progressive education expectations for nurses at all levels
• Advances and use of use of technology in care settings will increase
• Developments in genetics/genomics
• Focus on quality outcomes, competency and patient safety in healthcare settings will continue
• Increase demands for clinical placements
• Greater need for innovative practice/education partnerships

**Professional Development Practice Changes**
• Potential for educational strategies to address learning needs of individuals across the nation or the world
• Incorporation of findings of research and evidence based learning strategies (for example, cognitive research on the physiology of learning)
• Greater emphasis on the use of technology to facilitate learning – simulation, distance, web based learning
• Growing need for succession planning for future nurse leaders
• Considerations for retooling the workforce to enhance competencies to care for diverse patient populations with more complex clinical needs
• Need to develop strategies that promote rapid learning
• Focus on transition of newly graduated nurses into practice
• Increased emphasis on demonstrating return on investment (ROI) of nursing professional development/education; necessitating the possession of greater business acumen by those in staff development.
Organizational Changes

- Increasingly complex healthcare systems due to mergers, acquisitions and expansions
- Challenges in presenting learning as an investment in human capital and cost avoidance versus an expenditure
- Continued challenges in health care funding and reimbursements
Standards of Practice for Nursing Professional Development

STANDARD 1. Assessment

The nursing professional development specialist collects data and information related to educational needs and other pertinent situations.

Measurement Criteria:
The nursing professional development specialist:
1. Oversees the systematic and purposeful collection of data, information, and knowledge.

2. Collects data from a variety of sources including, but not limited to, the nurse and the interdisciplinary health care team, professional organizations, consumers, healthcare experts, reports on health-related trends, key stakeholders, and legislative venues.

3. Prioritizes data collection activities based on the immediate or anticipated needs of the situation.

4. Uses current technologies to facilitate comprehensive assessment of individual and organizational needs.

5. Collects pertinent data using valid and reliable techniques and instruments including, but not limited to, focus groups, questionnaires, evaluations of past programs, and analysis of trends.

6. Uses developmentally-appropriate and evidence-based assessment techniques or instruments to define potential issues, problems, and needs.

7. Uses analytical models and assessment tools that facilitate problem solving.

8. Synthesizes available data, information, and knowledge relevant to the situation to identify patterns and variances.

9. Documents relevant data in a retrievable format.

10. Sustains an ongoing process for data collection

STANDARD 2. Identification of Issues and Trends

The nursing professional development specialist analyzes issues, trends, and supporting data to determine the needs of individuals, organizations, and communities.

Measurement Criteria:
The nursing professional development specialist:
1. Derives target audience needs and abilities from the assessment data.
2. Validates identified needs with the nurse, consumer, content experts, and other educators or disciplines when possible and appropriate.

3. Prioritizes individual and agency needs and addresses them in a timely manner.

4. Uses data to identify future trends and issues

5. Documents identified needs in a manner that facilitates generation of purpose statements, educational objectives, program content, and evaluation criteria.

STANDARD 3. Outcomes Identification:

The nursing professional development specialist identifies desired outcomes:

*Measurement Criteria:*

The nursing professional development specialist:

1. Involves learner and key stakeholders in formulating desired outcomes.

2. Develops outcomes that reflect professional role competence, learning and change.

3. Develops context specific outcomes based on organizational, stakeholders and learner values, goals, current evidence and regulations.

4. Revises outcomes based on changes in stakeholders expectations, trends or evidence.

5. Uses outcomes to demonstrate programs are meeting their intended purpose and quality.

6. Documents outcomes, including those that demonstrate learning and program impact.

STANDARD 4. Planning

The nursing professional development specialist establishes a plan that prescribes strategies, alternatives, and resources to achieve expected outcomes.

*Measurement Criteria:*

The nursing professional development specialist:

1. Individualizes content to the target audience (e.g., basic education, experience, and preferred method of learning), the resources available, and the domains of learning.
2. Develops content in collaboration with representatives of the target audience and content expert.

3. Prepares content reflective of the stated objectives and evidence-based practice.

4. Considers adult learning concepts and instructional design principles when planning an activity.

5. Collaborates with other disciplines to enhance the comprehensiveness of the plan.

6. Considers the economic impact of the learning activities and organizational changes.

7. Markets the plan using promotional materials that are accurate, comprehensive, and appeal to the target audience.

8. Documents the planning process.

**STANDARD 5. IMPLEMENTATION**

The nursing professional development specialist implements the identified plan.

*Measurement Criteria:*

The nursing professional development specialist:

1. Implements the plan in a safe and timely manner.

2. Uses evidence-based knowledge specific to the issue or trend to achieve the defined outcomes.

3. Coordinates clinical, financial, technical, educational and other resources and systems needed to implement the plan.

4. Collaborates with colleagues and other stakeholders.

5. Implements plan using principles and concepts of quality, project, or systems management.

6. Engages organizational systems and resources that support implementation.

7. Documents implementation and any modifications, including changes or omissions, of the identified plan.

**Standard 5-A: Coordination** (new standard)

The nursing professional development specialist coordinates educational initiatives and activities.
Measurement Criteria:
The nursing professional development specialist:
1. Coordinates implementation of the plan, including activities and resources necessary to achieve desired outcomes.

2. Coordinates human, financial, systems and community resources necessary to implement the plan.

3. Provides leadership in the coordination of multidisciplinary healthcare and community resources for integrated education and services.

4. Documents the coordination of the activities.

Standard 5 – B. Learning and Practice Environment (new standard)

The nursing professional development specialist employs strategies to promote positive learning and practice environments.

Measurement Criteria:
The nursing professional development specialist:
1. Promotes education of the learner to meet their professional development needs.

2. Selects appropriate psychomotor, cognitive, affective educational content, materials, techniques and strategies for a positive learning environment.

3. Uses educational strategies that are varied and designed to meet the needs of the learner.

4. Integrates learning resources into systems that also address topics such as, healthy lifestyles, risk-reducing behaviors, developmental needs, activities of daily living, and self-care

5. Evaluates resources within the area of practice for accuracy, readability, and comprehensibility to help learners, including patients, family, groups and populations, to access quality information.

6. Creates opportunities for feedback and evaluation of the effectiveness of the educational content and strategies and the learning environment.

Standard 5 – C. Consultation (new standard)

The nursing professional development specialist provides consultation to influence plans, enhance the abilities of others, and effect change.

Measurement Criteria:
The nursing professional development specialist:
1. Synthesizes data, information, while incorporating conceptual or theoretical frameworks when providing consultation.

2. Facilitates the effectiveness of a consultation by involving the learner, stakeholders, and other specialties in the decision-making process and negotiation of role responsibilities.

3. Communicates consultation recommendations that influence the identified plan, facilitate understanding by stakeholders, enhance the work of others, and effect change.

4. Establishes formal and informal consultative relationships that may lead to professional development or mentorship opportunities.

5. Advises in the design, development, implementation, and evaluation of materials and teaching strategies appropriate to the situation and the learner’s developmental level, learning needs, readiness, ability to learn, language preference, and culture.

6. Considers theories pertaining to learning, behavioral change, motivational, epidemiology, and other related frameworks in consulting and collaborating in designing educational materials and programs.

7. Develops recommendations and strategies to address problems and complex issues.

**STANDARD 6. Evaluation**

The nursing professional development specialist evaluates progress toward attainment of outcomes:

*Measurement Criteria:*

The nursing professional development specialist:

1. Selects valid, reliable and relevant methods and instruments to measure processes and outcomes.

2. Involves learners and stakeholders in the evaluation process.

3. Implements a systematic and useful evaluation plan aimed at measuring processes and outcomes which are relevant to program, learner and stakeholder.

4. Documents the results of evaluation.

5. Synthesizes evaluation data, trends and expectations to guide decision making about changes and improvement of all components of nursing professional development practice.
6. Revises programs based on evaluation data.

7. Disseminates the evaluation results of learning activities and educational programs.

**Standards of Professional Performance for Nursing Professional Development: Standards 7 – 16**

**Standard 7. Quality of Nursing Professional Development Practice**

The nursing professional development specialist systematically enhances the quality and effectiveness of nursing professional development practice.

*Measurement Criteria*

The nursing professional development specialist:

1. Applies the nursing process in a responsible, accountable, and ethical manner.

2. Uses creativity and innovation to improve the quality of the learning experience.


4. Assures the presence of effective mechanisms for the development, implementation, and evaluation of nursing professional development.

5. Incorporates new knowledge and skills to initiate change.

6. Obtains or maintains professional certification.

7. Participates in quality performance improvement activities.

8. Participates in the evaluation and regulation of individuals as appropriate through privileging, credentialing, or certification processes.

9. Documents the evaluation of professional nursing development activities

**Standard 8. Education**

The nursing professional development specialist maintains current knowledge and competency in nursing and professional development practice.

*Measurement Criteria*

The nursing professional development specialist:

1. Participates in educational activities related to appropriate knowledge bases and professional issues.
2. Acquires knowledge and skills appropriate to the specialty area, practice setting, role, and learner diversity.

3. Seeks experiences to develop, maintain, and improve competence in nursing professional development.

4. Uses self-reflection and inquiry to identify learning needs.

5. Uses current research findings and other evidence to expand knowledge, enhance role performance, and increase knowledge of professional issues.

**Standard 9. Professional Practice Evaluation** (had been Performance Appraisal Standard II)

The nursing professional development specialist evaluates his/her own practice in relation to professional practice standards and guidelines, and relevant statutes, rules and regulations.

**Measurement Criteria**
The nursing professional development specialist:

1. Participates in systematic peer review.

2. Seeks feedback regarding his/her own practice from learners, professional partners, peers, and supervisors or other administrators as appropriate.

3. Examines application of current standards, guidelines and relevant rules and regulations

4. Demonstrates respect for diversity by considering cultural, ethnic, generational and other differences in meeting learner needs.

5. Interacts with peers and colleagues to enhance own professional nursing practice and role performance.

6. Evaluates performance on a regular basis, identifying areas of strength as well as areas in which professional development would be beneficial.

7. Takes action to achieve goals identified during the professional practice evaluation process.

**Standard 10. Collegiality**

The nursing professional development specialist establishes collegial partnerships contributing to the professional development of peers, students, colleagues and others.
Measurement Criteria
The nursing professional development specialist:
1. Shares knowledge and skills with peers and colleagues through activities such as presentations at meetings and professional conferences and participation in professional organizations.
2. Provides peers with feedback regarding their practice and role performance.
3. Contributes to an environment that fosters ongoing educational experiences for colleagues, other healthcare professionals and learners.
4. Contributes to a supportive, healthy, and safe work environment that fosters mutual respect.
5. Interacts with peers, students, colleagues and others to enhance professional nursing, professional development practice, and role performance of self and others.
6. Models expert practice to peers, inter-professional team members, healthcare consumers, and learners.

Standard 11. Collaboration
The nursing professional development specialist collaborates with inter-professional teams, leaders, stakeholders and others to facilitate nursing practice and positive outcomes for consumers.

Measurement Criteria
The nursing professional development specialist:
1. Communicates with health care providers and key stakeholders regarding educational programs and activities.
2. Develops partnerships and coalitions with others to enhance health care through inter-professional disciplinary activities such as education, consultations, program management and administration.
3. Partners with others to effect change and generate positive outcomes.
4. Engages colleagues in the planning and implementation of lifelong learning activities for individuals and groups of learners.
5. Documents plans and communications of collaborative endeavors.

Standard 12. Ethics
The nursing professional development specialist integrates ethics in all areas of practice.

**Measurement Criteria**

The nursing professional development specialist:

1. Incorporates the *Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements* (ANA, 2001), the *Scope and Standards of Practice for Nursing Professional Development*, and other relevant standards, guidelines, benchmarks, regulations and laws to guide practice.

2. Employs educational principles, standards, and methodologies in a manner that preserves and protects the autonomy, dignity, and rights of all individuals involved in the educational program and learning process.

3. Employs educational principles, standards, and methodologies to establish and maintain confidentiality.

4. Performs role in a nonjudgmental and nondiscriminatory manner that is sensitive to learner diversity.

5. Evaluates factors related to privacy, security, and confidentiality in the use and handling of data, information, and knowledge related to educational programs.

6. Establishes a process to identify and address ethical issues within the learning environment.

7. Develops educational programs free of commercial bias in accordance with the guidelines of the American Nurses Credentialing Center Commission on Accreditation and the guidelines from health-related disciplines.

8. Assures that educational program and activity planners and other who may influence educational content declare potential or actual conflict of interest and those declarations are available to potential learners in advance.

9. Maintains procedures for monitoring educational activities to screen for potential or actual unethical behavior, commercial bias, compromise of intellectual property rites, or conflict of interest.

10. Mentors peers and others when situations arise that create ethical conflicts.

11. Reports behaviors that are illegal, incompetent, unethical, inconsistent with practice standards or reflective of impaired practice.

12. Documents that the requirements of the accrediting bodies are consistently followed, reporting relevant issues and information to the respective body.

**Standard 13. Advocacy** (new standard)
The nursing professional development specialist advocates for the protections and rights of individuals, families, communities, populations, healthcare providers, nursing and

*Measurement Criteria*

The nursing professional development specialist:
1. Serves as an advocate representing learners.
2. Promotes opportunities for lifelong learning for self and others.
3. Supports the involvement of individuals in their own professional development and learning process.
4. Educates learners and other stakeholders with regard to rights, responsibilities, and accountability involved in the collection, access, use, and exchange of protected information.

**Standard 14. Research**

The nursing professional development specialist integrates research findings into practice.

*Measurement Criteria*

The nursing professional development specialist:
1. Uses the best available evidence to guide practice decisions.
2. Creates a supportive environment for nursing research, scholarly inquiry, the generation of knowledge and the translation of research into practice.
3. Supports research activities that align with the organizational strategic plan.
4. Participates in research activities at various levels appropriate to the professional development specialist’s education and role.
5. Contributes to development of lifelong learning and nursing professional development practice by supporting, conducting, or synthesizing research.
6. Disseminates research findings through activities such as presentations, publications, consultation, educational programs, courses, activities and use of other media.

**Standard 15. Resource Utilization**

The nursing professional development specialist considers factors related to safety, effectiveness and cost in regard to professional development activities and expected outcomes.

*Measurement Criteria*

The nursing professional development specialist:
1. Evaluates factors such as safety, effectiveness, availability, cost and benefits, efficiencies, opportunities for learners and impacts on practice.

2. Allocates human, financial and material resources based on identified needs and goals.

3. Assists stakeholders in identifying and securing appropriate and available learning opportunities.

4. Delegates tasks based on the knowledge, skills and abilities of the individual, the complexity of the task, and predictability of the outcome.

5. Develops innovative solutions and strategies to secure appropriate resources and technology for professional development initiatives.

6. Administers human resources, facilities, materials, equipment, and technologies for educational purposes.

7. Establishes strategies to promote recognition of the role of professional development within the organization.

8. Monitors resource allocation and utilization

9. Document resource utilization decisions and activities

**Standard 16. Leadership**

The nursing professional development specialist provides leadership in the professional practice setting and the profession.

*Measurement Criteria*

The nursing professional development specialist:

1. Works to create and maintain healthy work environments in educational and practice settings.

2. Partners in goal-setting to ensure educational programs are aligned with organizational goals and strategic plan.

3. Exhibits creativity and flexibility through times of change.

4. Demonstrates energy, excitement, and a passion for quality work.

5. Creates a practice culture in which innovation and risk-taking are promoted and expected.

6. Assumes leadership roles representing nursing professional development.
7. Influences decision-making bodies to maintain and improve quality nursing and professional development programs.

8. Promotes the professional development program mission, goals, action plans, and outcome measures.

9. Provides guidance, resources, and knowledge for professional growth of others.

10. Advances the profession through writing, publishing, presenting and participating with professional interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary audiences, and participating in nursing and professional development organizations.

11. Demonstrates responsibility for reporting to licensing, certification, accreditation, and other regulatory bodies for educational program compliance.

12. Mentors colleagues, other nurses, students, and others as appropriate.
Glossary

**Academic Partnerships**- Mutually beneficial relationships between nursing schools and health care facilities.

**Competency**- “An expected level of performance that integrates knowledge, skills, abilities, and judgment” (American Nurses Association, 2008; pg. 3)

**Competency Program**- a group of activities designed to support an ongoing dynamic process of assessment and evaluation of performance.

**Continuing Education**- those systematic professional learning experiences designed to augment the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of nurses, and therefore enrich the nurses’ contributions to quality health care and their pursuit of professional career goals (Scope & Standard of Practice for Nursing Professional Development, 2000).

**Core Competency**- A defined fundamental level of knowledge, ability, skill or expertise that is essential to a particular job.

**Emerging Adult**- A person, typically age 18-29, that is in the development process of gaining self sufficiency and learning to balance self need, work responsibilities and family. In terms of learning this is a time when learning is moving from social mandate to an individual responsibility. The emerging adult focuses on applying acquired knowledge and practical problem solving skill in real life situations.

**Evidence Based Practice (EBP)**- the integration of the best research evidence, educational and clinical expertise, and learner values to facilitate decision-making (Sackett, Straus, Richardson, Rosenberg, & Haynes, 2000)

**In-service educational activities**- those learning experiences designed in the work setting to assist individuals to acquire, maintain, and/or increase their ability to perform job functions within a given agency or institution (American Nurses Association, 2000)

**Inter-disciplinary**- the inclusion of two or more disciplines within the health related professions. The planners and the learners may be inter-disciplinary as appropriate for the development and implementation of learning opportunities; and/or, may be members of the audience.

**Inter-professional**- the inclusion two or more professions. It may include individuals, groups and/or knowledge from other professions that are relevant for specific learning opportunities. An example would be including experts from the field of education when planning health-related in-service, staff development or continuing education programs. Other professions may be included as relevant
for specific content areas. Individuals or groups may be included from these other professionals as members of the audience.

**Learner**- an individual or group with an educational need who participates in professional development activities.

**Learner Directed**-“A learning activity in which the learner takes the initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing his/her learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes. Learner-directed activities may be developed with or without the help of others, but they are engaged in by only one individual.” (American Nurses Credentialing Center, 2009)

**Learner Paced**- A continuing nursing education activity where the learner determines the pace of which s/he engages in the learning activity. (American Nurses Credentialing Center, 2009)

**Learning Environment**- Any context in which learning occurs.

**Lifelong Learning**-The continual acquisition of knowledge and skills throughout life in preparation for and as a response to the different roles, situations and environments encountered. Lifelong learning can occur in formal and informal education systems, both within and outside of the workplace.

**Mentor**-Respected professional who serves as a role model, advisor, counselor, and confidant. Encourages and facilitates life-long learning based upon a mutual attraction to learning (Bruce, 2009)

**NPD practice environment**- The structural, social, and cultural setting in which nursing occurs.

**Nursing Professional Development Specialist**-A registered nurse with expertise in nursing education who influences professional role competence and professional growth of nurses in a variety of settings. The NPD specialist supports lifelong learners in an environment that facilitates continuous learning for nurses and other health care personnel, The NPD specialist fosters an appropriate climate for learning and facilitates the adult learning process.

**Orientation**-The educational process of introducing individuals who are new to the organization or department to the philosophy, goals, policies, procedures, role expectations, and other factors needed to function in a specific work setting.

**Partner**- A mutually beneficial association between individuals for a common need, goal, activity or a sphere of common interest
Peer Review: A collegial, systematic, and periodic process by which registered nurses are held accountable for practice and which fosters the refinement of one’s knowledge, skills and decision-making at all levels and in all areas of practice. (American Nurses Association, 2004; pp 49).

Practice-Based Evidence (PBE)- A study methodology related more directly to practice effectiveness and improvement and promotes a greater understanding of individual and group differences (Evans et.al., 2003).

Professional Role Competence Professional role competence is performance that meets defined criteria based on the specialty area, context, and model of practice in which an individual nurse is engaged (American Nurses Association, 2008).

Provider directed-“The provider controls all aspects of the learning. The provider determines the learning objectives based on needs assessments, content of the learning activity, the method by which it is presented and evaluation methods. Provider-directed activities may be presented in a number of different vehicles – electronic, journal, lecture, etc. (American Nurses Credentialing Center, 2009)

Outcome-something that follows, is the result of, of the consequence of a project, program or event.

Outcome measurement-The process of observing, describing and quantifying predefined indicators of outcomes of performance.

Outputs- The change that occurs to the input as the result of the process. In the NPD Specialist Practice Model outputs reflects the learning, change and professional role competence and growth of the learner and NPD Specialist.

Return on Investment-The relative value of a program or project based on a cost and net benefit ratio.

Simulation-An attempt to mimic essential aspects of a clinical simulation with the goal of understanding and managing the situation better when it occurs in actual clinical practice. A technique that uses a situation or environment created to allow persons to experience a representation of a real event for the purpose of practice, learning, evaluation, testing, or to gain understanding of systems or human actions (Simulation Innovation Resource Center, 2009)

Succession Planning-The formal process in which or the condition under which arrangements are predetermined for the continued intentional development of an individual within an organization or department.

Stakeholder-An individual or group with a vested interest in the product or outcome of a project, program or organization.
**Target audience**—“Group for which an educational activity has been designed.”
(American Nurses Association, 2000; p. 26)

**Transformational nursing leadership**—One who leads in order to meet the demands of the future. Creates the vision and provides the resources to achieve that vision. Communicates need for change as well as each unit’s role in the change process. Requires “vision, influence, clinical knowledge, and a strong expertise relating to professional nursing practice.” (ANCC, Magnet, 2009)
References


American Nurses Credentialing Center (n.d.) Announcing a New Model for ANCC's Magnet Recognition Program©, Retrieved from http://www.nursecredentialing.org/Magnet/NewMagnetModel.aspx#TransformationLeadership


