

WAC 246-841-400

Standards of practice and competencies of nursing assistants.

The following standards are supported by statements of the competencies that a nursing assistant must hold to meet the standard to be certified to practice in the state of Washington. The competencies are statements of skills and knowledge, and are written as descriptions of behaviors which can be observed and measured. All competencies are performed, as per RCW [18.88A.030](#), under the direction and supervision of a licensed (registered) nurse or licensed practical nurse. The level or depth of accomplishment of any given competency is as appropriate to the "assisting" role of basic nursing care under supervision of the licensed nurse.

(1) Basic technical skills. The nursing assistant demonstrates basic technical skills which facilitates an optimal level of functioning for the client, recognizing individual, cultural, and religious diversity. Competencies:

- (a) Demonstrates proficiency in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
- (b) Takes and records vital signs.
- (c) Measures and records height and weight.
- (d) Measures and records fluid and food intake and output of client.
- (e) Recognizes and reports abnormal signs and symptoms of common diseases and conditions.
- (f) Demonstrates sensitivity to client's emotional, social, and mental health needs.
- (g) Makes observations of client's environment to ensure safety and comfort of client.
- (h) Participates in care planning and nursing reporting process.

(2) Personal care skills. The nursing assistant demonstrates basic personal care skills. Competencies:

- (a) Assists client with bathing, mouth care, and skin care.
- (b) Assists client with grooming and dressing.
- (c) Provides toileting assistance to client.
- (d) Assists client with eating and hydration.
- (e) Utilizes proper feeding techniques.

(3) Mental health and social service needs. The nursing assistant demonstrates the ability to identify the psychosocial characteristics of all clients including persons with mental retardation, mental illness, dementia, Alzheimer's disease, and related disorders. Competencies:

- (a) Modifies his/her own behavior in response to the client's behavior.
- (b) Identifies adaptations necessary to accommodate the aging process.
- (c) Provides training in, and the opportunity for, self care according to clients' capabilities.
- (d) Demonstrates skills supporting client's personal choices.
- (e) Identifies ways to use the client's family as a source of emotional support for the patient.

(4) Basic restorative services. The nursing assistant incorporates principles and skills of

restorative nursing in providing nursing care. Competencies:

(a) Demonstrates knowledge and skill in using assistive devices in ambulation, eating, and dressing.

(b) Demonstrates knowledge and skill in the maintenance of range of motion.

(c) Demonstrates proper techniques for turning/positioning client in bed and chair.

(d) Demonstrates proper techniques for transferring client.

(e) Demonstrates knowledge about methods for meeting the elimination needs of clients.

(f) Demonstrates knowledge and skill for the care and use of prosthetic devices.

(5) Clients' rights and promotion of clients' independence. The nursing assistant demonstrates behavior which maintains and respects clients' rights and promotes clients' independence, regardless of race, religion, life-style, sexual preference, disease process, or ability to pay. Competencies:

(a) Recognizes that the client has the right to participate in decisions about his/her care.

(b) Recognizes and respects the clients' need for privacy and maintenance of confidentiality.

(c) Promotes and respects the client's right to make personal choices to accommodate their needs.

(d) Reports client's concerns.

(e) Provides assistance in getting to and participating in activities.

(f) Provides care of client's personal possessions.

(g) Provides care which maintains the client free from abuse, mistreatment or neglect; and reports any instances to appropriate facility staff.

(h) Maintains the client's environment and care through appropriate nursing assistant behavior so as to minimize the need for physical and chemical restraints.

(6) Communication and interpersonal skills. The nursing assistant uses communication skills effectively in order to function as a member of the nursing team. Competencies:

(a) Reads, writes, speaks, and understands English at the level necessary for performing duties of the nursing assistant.

(b) Listens and responds to verbal and nonverbal communication in an appropriate manner.

(c) Recognizes how one's own behavior influences client's behavior and know resources for obtaining assistance in understanding client's behavior.

(d) Makes adjustments for client's physical or mental limitations.

(e) Uses terminology accepted in the health care facility to record and report observations and pertinent information.

(f) Records and reports observations, actions, and information accurately and timely.

(g) Demonstrates ability to explain policies and procedures before and during care of the client.

(7) Infection control. The nursing assistant uses procedures and techniques to prevent the spread of microorganisms. Competencies:

(a) Uses principles of medical asepsis and demonstrates infection control techniques and universal precautions.

(b) Explains how disease causing microorganisms are spread; lists ways that HIV and Hepatitis B can spread from one person to another.

(c) Demonstrates knowledge of cleaning agents and methods which destroy microorganisms on surfaces.

(8) Safety/emergency procedures. The nursing assistant demonstrates the ability to identify and implement safety/emergency procedures. Competencies:

(a) Provides adequate ventilation, warmth, light, and quiet measures.

(b) Uses measures that promote comfort, rest, and sleep.

(c) Promotes clean, orderly, and safe environment and equipment for the client.

(d) Identifies and utilizes measures for accident prevention.

(e) Identifies and demonstrates principles of body mechanics.

(f) Demonstrates proper use of protective devices in care of clients.

(g) Demonstrates knowledge of fire and disaster procedures.

(h) Identifies and demonstrates principles of health and sanitation in the service of food.

(i) Demonstrates the proper use and storage of cleaning agents and other potentially hazardous materials.

(9) Rules and regulations knowledge. The nursing assistant demonstrates knowledge of and is responsive to the laws and regulations which affect his/her practice including but not limited to: Client abuse and neglect, client complaint procedures, workers right to know, and the Uniform Disciplinary Act.

[Statutory Authority: RCW [18.88A.060](#). 91-23-077 (Order 214B), § 246-841-400, filed 11/19/91, effective 12/20/91; 91-07-049 (Order 116B), recodified as § 246-841-400, filed 3/18/91, effective 4/18/91. Statutory Authority: RCW [18.88.080](#). 90-20-018 (Order 091), § 308-173-210, filed 9/21/90, effective 10/22/90.]
