

Unit I: Prioritizing & Delegation

Nursing 202: Advanced Concepts of Nursing

Setting Priorities

- In order to be an effective nurse, one has to set priorities.
- Must determine the order that activities need to be carried out
- Priority setting is the process by which a preferential order is established for nursing care delivery.
 - Helps arrange nursing care in order of _____.
 - Once the nurse decides what needs to be done, then nursing _____ can be decided.

How Do We Determine Priorities?

- Some problems are more critical than others.
- Consider first:
 - Preservation of Life is always the highest priority!!
 - Nursing problems require ranking:

- High Priority
 - Life Threatening!

- Intermediate priority
 - Do not directly threaten a person's life although may result in unhealthy physical or emotional consequences.

- Low Priority
 - Problems arise when people must cope with developmental or life changes.
 - Not low priority in terms of significance to the individual, but simply in terms of prioritizing nursing care.

- Priorities change daily, and sometimes hourly or minute by minute
- It is a dynamic process: The RN must be **flexible!!**

- When setting priorities, also consider the individual perception of the situation.
 - Include patient/family in on priority setting
 - Patients and families are more willing to comply with therapy if involved

- Factors that influence priority setting:

- Priorities Change!
- Consider those with the greatest need first!

Delegation of Authority

- This is a tool to distribute workload
- Delegation is the process of assigning work from one organizational level to another or superior to subordinate.
- Delegation can help others to develop or enhance their skills, promotes teamwork, and improves productivity
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Major Concepts & Definitions

- Delegation

 - Responsibility

 - Authority

 - Accountability

 - Planning

 - Time Management
- o Principle of Delegation:

 - o Accountable:

 - o Delegation is a skill

 - o Benefits To the Nurse:

 - o Benefits To the Delegate:
 - Gain new skills and abilities
 - Increase self-esteem

 - o Benefits To the Organization:
 - Teamwork!

 - o Challenge of Delegation:

 - o As the district nurse you may **NOT** delegate planning or supervising of Nursing!

- o This is a recommendation from the National Council of State Boards of Nursing
- o Tasks and procedures may be delegated
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- o The RN is always accountable for the total nursing process but portions of data retrieved for assessment and evaluation can be delegated. Ex:
- o Common obstacles to Delegation:
 - Non-Supportive Environment
 - Poor Communication & Interpersonal Skills
 - Insecure Delegator
 - An Unwilling Delegate
- o There are several conditions which facilitate delegation
 - o Understand the concept of delegation and have a positive attitude
 - o Overcome the feelings of loss of prestige through delegation
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- o When a district nurse effectively delegates:

Job Descriptions

- A tool which can be used to delegate effectively.

Accountability

- o Liability involving a task
 - o the subordinate is accountable to his superior
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 - That person is accountable for the assignments
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 - Accountability= liability

Responsibility

- Defines a person's obligation
 - What you can reasonably delegate to a staff nurse would obviously be inappropriate for a nursing assistant
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Authority

- Freedom to act within established guidelines
- Must be delegated along with responsibility
- When assigning a task, give your colleague sufficient authority to get the job done without coming to your frequently for approval
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- After giving authority to complete the task then you need to monitor progress.

Steps To Help In Better Delegation:

- Think before you delegate:
 - What can and cannot be delegated?
 - Never delegate a task because it is unpleasant or you don't know how to do it!
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 - Delegate according to the individual's capabilities
 - Be aware of the knowledge, ability, skill, and interest of the people to whom you can assign responsibilities, as well as their lack of training and experience at particular jobs
- Be specific when you delegate

- Monitor the results after delegating
 - Need system of reporting!
 - Formal and informal meetings

- o Give praise for work well done → This helps improve delegation!
 - o Rewarded for work well done
 - o Mistakes corrected ASAP

- o Failure to delegate effectively can have many negative results:
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 - o The supervisor/RN who is busy doing things that can be done by someone else leaves little time left over to plan and do those things she has the skill, knowledge, and authority to handle.
 - Little time to plan things r/t nursing process
 - o The supervisor who is reluctant to “let go” deprives her employees from individual development
 - Employees get frustrated and lose interest (high turnover)

- o **5 Rights of Delegation**
 - o Right
 - o Right
 - o Right
 - o Right
 - o Right

Reasons for Under-Delegating or Not Delegating:

- Quicker to do the job myself
- Dislike interruptions to answer questions:
 - You must delegate when you have sufficient time to spend with the new nurse or NA so that the experience is positive and the outcome is successful
- Takes too much time to monitor what is done.
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- No confidence in subordinates
- Feels “I can do this better myself”
 - Receives personal satisfaction and recognition from the work.
 - This person is probably a perfectionist and is afraid of losing power and prestige

Reasons For Not Accepting Delegation:

- o Remember!
- o The ability to delegate skillfully depends on one's **communication skills**!