

Unit 1: Delegation
Z-Chapter 14
ONLINE CONTENT (1 H)

Unit Objectives:

- Discuss personal accountability when delegating. (5,7)*
- Explain and apply the five rights of delegation in nursing practice. (3,5,6,7)*

*Course Objectives

Review Chapter 14 in your textbook and read the “National Guidelines for Nursing Delegation” document. Place your answers to the questions below in the Z-Chapter 14 dropbox by 0800 on 1/12/2026.

1. State **each** example provided of when the National Guidelines for Nursing Delegation may be applied?

The National Guidelines for Nursing Delegation may be applied in situations where a **licensed nurse delegates specific nursing tasks to an unlicensed assistive personnel (UAP)** in order to support safe, efficient patient care. Examples include:

- When a nurse delegates **routine, predictable tasks** that do not require nursing judgment (e.g., vital signs on a stable patient, hygiene care, ambulation).
- When a nurse is responsible for **coordinating care across multiple patients** and must delegate supportive tasks to manage workload safely.
- When a nurse works in a setting where **UAPs are part of the care team**, such as long-term care, acute care, home health, or community settings.
- When the nurse must ensure that delegation aligns with **state nurse practice acts, organizational policies, and the UAP’s training and competency**.
- When delegation is needed to promote **timely, efficient care** while the nurse maintains accountability for overall patient outcomes.

2. When do the National Guidelines for Nursing Delegation **not** apply?

The guidelines do **not** apply in situations where:

- The task requires **nursing judgment, critical thinking, or clinical decision-making**.
- The activity involves **assessment, planning, evaluation, or teaching**, which cannot be delegated to UAPs.

- The individual performing the task is **not under the supervision of a licensed nurse** (e.g., tasks performed independently by another licensed professional).
- The task falls outside the **scope of practice** for the UAP or violates state regulations.
- The situation is **unstable, unpredictable, or high-risk**, requiring direct nursing involvement.
- The nurse is attempting to delegate **accountability** — which cannot be delegated under any circumstances.

3. In your own words, respond to the following:

a. Define delegation.

Delegation is the process in which a licensed nurse (RN) delegates the responsibility for performing a specific task to a competent individual (usually a UAP), while still taking accountability for the overall outcome and the patient's safety.

b. Explain how delegation differs from assignment.

Delegation involves giving a task to someone outside the nursing scope, such as a UAP, and requires the nurse to ensure competency and provide supervision.

Assignment involves distributing nursing care responsibilities to other licensed nurses who already have the authority and scope to perform the tasks independently.

In short: delegation transfers/assigns a task; assignment transfers responsibility for care within a licensed scope.

c. Does either delegation or assignment require supervision? If so, by whom?

- Delegation requires supervision by the licensed nurse who delegated the task. The nurse must monitor performance, provide guidance, and evaluate outcomes.
- Assignment does not require supervision in the same way, because licensed nurses are responsible for their own practice. However, the charge nurse or team leader may oversee workflow and coordination.

4. Discuss the responsibilities of the delegator (licensed nurse) and the delegatee as they relate to delegation. (**HINT**: both the delegator and delegatee have several responsibilities).

Responsibilities of the Delegator (Licensed Nurse)

- Assess the patient's needs and determine whether the task is appropriate to delegate.
- Verify the competency, training, and scope of the delegatee.
- Communicate clear instructions, expectations, and limitations.
- Provide appropriate supervision and support during the task.

- Evaluate the outcome and ensure the task was completed safely.
- Maintain accountability for the overall care and patient outcome.

Responsibilities of the Delegatee (UAP or other assistive personnel)

- Accept only tasks that fall within their training and competency.
 - Ask questions or request clarification when unsure.
 - Perform the task safely and correctly according to instructions.
 - Communicate any concerns, abnormal findings, or changes in patient condition immediately.
 - Document and report completion of the task as required.
 - Refuse tasks that exceed their scope or training.
5. List **and** define (in your own words) the five rights of delegation.

1. Right Task The task must be appropriate for delegation — routine, predictable, and not requiring nursing judgment.

2. Right Circumstances The patient’s condition must be stable, and the environment must support safe delegation.

3. Right Person The delegatee must have the proper training, competency, and authorization to perform the task.

4. Right Direction/Communication The nurse must provide clear, specific instructions, including what to do, how to do it, and what to report.

5. Right Supervision/Evaluation The nurse must monitor performance, provide feedback, and evaluate the patient’s response and the task’s outcome.

In order to receive full credit (1 H class time) for this assignment, it must be completed in its entirety by the due date/time assigned. Any assignments not completed in its entirety by the due date and time will result in missed class time and must be completed by the end of the semester to pass the course.