

Assignment & Coordination of Nursing Care Fast Facts

1. What do I need to know about assignment & coordination of nursing care?

The authority for assignment and coordination of nursing care comes from *The Registered Nurses Act, 1988*, Section 2k. The government of Saskatchewan has entrusted RNs to be the coordinators of nursing care for the health and well-being of the public. This responsibility is further interpreted through SRNA Bylaws and practice documents. It is the RN's responsibility to assess the needs of clients and assign care to the most appropriate health care provider. The RN at the point of care retains the overall accountability for the appropriate assignment and oversight of client care. This responsibility cannot be delegated.

2. What is the key component of assignment & coordination of nursing care?

The key component to successful assignment and coordination of nursing care is RN assessment. Three areas must be assessed.

1. **Client needs.** The complexity, predictability and risk for negative outcomes must be assessed by the RN (see diagram on opposite page).
2. **Team member education and experience level.** The RN must be aware of the experience, education level, decision-making and critical-thinking skills of team members.
3. **Practice environment.** The RN must assess if practice support is available and the level of consultation available for nursing staff. The less available the practice supports and consultation resources are, the greater the need for more RN involvement.

3. What do I do if there is not sufficient staff skill mix to provide safe care?

It is the RN's responsibility to ensure a safe assignment of client nursing care. If there is not sufficient staff mix to provide safe care for the client, the RN must report the situation to a supervisor and proceed up the chain of command until the situation improves. Documenting the occurrence through agency mechanisms assists decision-makers to address system issues. This is an important aspect for continuous quality improvement. If your professional practice concern persists, contact a SRNA Practice Advisor for consultation and advice.

Complexity

- Multiple system issues
- Polypharmacy
- Unknown/undiagnosed conditions

Predictability

- Stability of condition
- Could the situation change

Risk

- Unintended outcomes of treatment
- Practice support availability
- Consultation availability
- Experience, decision-making & critical-thinking of care provider
- Ability to rescue

CPR – Lifeline to the right care provider

Assessment for Assignment Decision-making tool for assigning client care

Considering client needs and provider resources will assist RNs in making appropriate client assignments.

Client Considerations



More **“Yes”** answers when evaluating the client = greater need for RN involvement

Provider Considerations



More **“No”** answers when evaluating provider resources = greater need for RN involvement