

What Are My Responsibilities as a Supervising RN?

I am a RN Working with a Graduate Nurse (GN).
What can the GN do? What are my responsibilities as the supervising RN?

SRNA Council recently approved Guidelines for Graduate Nurse Practice, 2012. This document was created to provide direction to GNs, RNs and managers who work with GNs. This resource is available online; however a few key points are presented here.

GN Defined

GNs are members of the SRNA who have not yet met all of the registration requirements for registration as a RN (ie: passed the CRNE).

The GN may:

- have just graduated from an approved registered nursing education program in Saskatchewan or from another Canadian jurisdiction, or
- have recently come to Canada (Internationally Educated Nurse [IEN]). These GNs may have a varying degree of RN experience in their home country and in other countries (SRNA, 2009).

Background

GNs are valuable members of the health care team who require support in consolidating their skills in our provincial health care system. GNs can work in various practice environments including acute care, community health, long term care and other areas where appropriate supervision by a RN is available (SRNA, 2011).

Whether a GN has graduated from a Saskatchewan nursing education program, or has been educated internationally, they all have been educated or evaluated to meet the SRNA Standards and Foundation Competencies for Registered Nurses, 2007 (currently under review).

This document provides the basis for curriculum development for Saskatchewan schools of nursing, as well as the basis for evaluation of IEN equivalency. Regardless of how the member has come to be registered as a GN, they are responsible for practicing in accordance with SRNA



Standards and Competencies and the CNA Code of Ethics.

Supervision

GNs must be supervised by a RN, or where appropriate by a RPN (SRNA, 2011). This requirement applies from the first day the GN begins practicing right through to their last day as a GN. There are different levels of supervision, and it is the responsibility

of the RN working with the GN to evaluate the level of supervision required to ensure safe care for the clients. The supervising RN must be knowledgeable about the nursing care required for the GN's client assignment and must determine the level of supervision based on the GN's knowledge, skill and ability related to that particular client assignment.

Supervision should begin as direct, or side-by-side supervision until the RN has had time to evaluate the GN's level of competence and can determine if the supervision can be less direct (SRNA, 2012). The level of supervision the GN requires is dynamic and depending on client acuity could change from day to day

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or even hour to hour if the client's condition changes. It is important to remember that the supervising RN has overall responsibility for the coordination of care and for the assignment given to the GN. The GN is responsible for the care he/she provides and must ask for direction if/when needed.

What can a GN do?

GNs can do most activities that a RN can but there are a few limitations. GNs learn many skills in nursing education programs, however they may not have the opportunity to perform these skills in a real life practice setting. The GN must communicate with the RN their level of comfort and competence with performing skills. Skills that are considered to be special nursing procedures may be performed by the GN provided the GN has received the additional theory required by the agency/facility for these skills. The RN must always supervise the GN when the GN is performing a special nursing procedure. There are additional skills that are categorized

as transfer of medical function. GNs cannot perform transfer of medical function skills. It is not possible to provide a list of skills GNs can or cannot perform. The RN and GN should refer to organizational policies and procedures to determine the appropriateness for the GN to perform the skill.

Providing a quality practice environment for GNs

GNs require time and support to transition from a student to a well adjusted and confident RN. GNs benefit greatly from an environment that provides them with stable client assignments, co-workers who embrace new members of the team and an atmosphere of inquiry where GNs are encouraged to ask many questions. More information on the transition of GNs to RNs can be obtained through Nursing the Future - <http://www.nursingthefuture.ca>.

To view the complete document: Guidelines for Graduate Nurse Practice, 2012: http://www.srna.org/images/stories/pdfs/nurse_resources/guidlines_for_graduate_nurse_practice_2012_05_08.pdf

References

- Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association. (2009). Bylaws. Regina, SK: Author.
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