

Coordination of Care

What does coordination of care mean and what is the RN role?

- RNs coordinate care when they identify the health needs of patients and organize the required care (1).
- As coordinators of care, RNs are team leaders in their practice environments. They perform assessments and create care plans, provide care, make decisions about assignment and delegation to other care providers, and communicate with other care providers as they oversee and evaluate the ongoing care of clients (2, 3 and 4).
- The nursing process is comprised of assessment of the client, development of the nursing care plan, care plan implementation and evaluation of the nursing care provided. This is part of the coordination of care and therefore the responsibility of RNs. The RN is responsible and accountable for all of these components (5).
- Each client requires a RN coordinating the provision of their care needs (6).
- Assignment is part of the coordination of care and is a decision that identifies the most appropriate care provider for the provision of a client's care (7).
- Assignment of care requires the RN to consider the three factors: the client, the nurse and the environment (8).
- Assignment of care occurs not only at the beginning of the shift, but throughout the shift as client care needs change (9).

Q&A

- **The RNs in my organization are reporting there are not enough RNs to meet the needs of our patients. What does this mean, since we have a nurse/patient ratio of 4:1?**

The RNs would be bringing this concern forward based on the complexity of the care required for the patients they are responsible for. As coordinators of care, the RN must consider the needs of each patient and determine which care provider is best matched to provide the required care. It is possible the staff mix may not be at an optimal level.

SRNA Resources

[Code of Ethics for registered nurses, 2008](#)

[Standards and Competencies for the Practice of Registered Nurses, 2013](#)

[Interpretation of the RN Scope of Practice, 2015](#)

[The Registered Nurses Act, 1988](#)

[Draft 9: Decision-Making Framework- Quality Nursing Practice](#)

[Assignment and Coordination of Nursing Care Fast Facts, 2015](#)

External Resources

[CNA Staff Mix Decision-making Framework for Quality Nursing Care, 2012](#)

RN is used to represent all SRNA members including RN(NP)s and RN(AAP)s.

Resource Key		
Number	Resource	Reference
1	Interpretation of the RN Scope of Practice, 2015	p. 7
2	Interpretation of the RN Scope of Practice, 2015	p. 2
3	Standards and Foundation Competencies for the Practice of Registered Nurses (2013)	Competencies 75 a, b
4	Code of Ethics (2008)	B1, p. 10
5	Interpretation of the RN Scope of Practice, 2015	p. 7
6	Interpretation of the RN Scope of Practice, 2015	p. 2
7	Interpretation of the RN Scope of Practice, 2015	p. 8
8	Draft: Collaborative Decision-making Framework: Quality Nursing Practice (2017)	p. 4
9	Draft: Collaborative Decision-making Framework: Quality Nursing Practice (2017)	p. 9

RN is used to represent all SRNA members including RN(NP)s and RN(AAP)s.