Delegation Assignment In Lieu Of Clinical Hospital

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Patient-centered care is developed around the patient’s outcome and regulates how the nurse interprets data and performs interventions. The nursing process is a standardized process to help the nurse and her team to visualize a method to solve problems or improve care. Part of the problem-solving process includes the implementation of tasks to move towards the set outcomes and goals. The nurse is responsible for the outcomes but she has the power to delegate and assign to other team members as long as the task is completed in a competent manner (Lewis, Dirksen, Heitkemper, Bucher, & Camera, 2011). Leadership skills are essential in working with all members of the team because it takes a leader to recognize the goals and give the proper responsibilities to every member to ensure that the patient’s goal is safely met.

In an interdisciplinary team, the nurse takes the leadership position in ensuring that communication with all members in different floors, departments, or specialty is clear; this way, the information processing between all members have less chances of discrepancies that may interrupt the patient’s treatment plan. Other than individualized patient care, communication is also essential when working with different teams as part of a larger department. For example, in a surgical floor, different types of staff are assigned to rooms which they will follow for the day. When a nurse calls in sick, the original team experiences shortage and it is up to the nurse manager to fill in that spot in order to maintain the team’s integrity and not disrupt other members’ workload. Maintaining correct communications include giving exact directions or job assignments for the day to avoid discrepancy or confusion. As a nurse manager, it is important to delegate properly and specifically where teams go each day. The nurse takes into account who called in sick, who has more experience with different tasks, and just about any small details that affect each teams.

The nurse manager also overlooks ancillary members, who are part of the team along with other healthcare professionals. They include “patient care technicians (PCT), healthcare assistants or nurses' aides,” (amsn.org, 2014). When giving tasks to staff who are unlicensed, there are no specific set of standards and rules that they abide to, unlike nurses. As a nurse manager, the desired outcomes should be set clear when implementing tasks so that the nursing process is more organized. For example, the unlicensed assistive personnel (UAP) arrives as a new staff in the small team that is taking care of the floor that the nurse manager oversees. The nurse manager delegates tasks to be performed by the UAP for a patient who is recovering from an arm burn injury. Although the wound care cannot be performed by the UAP because it requires nursing assessment, judgment, and documentation, the UAP can help with the task after the wound heals with expected outcomes. The nurse and healthcare team makes the judgment that the wound has healed enough to be fully closed and has a much lesser risk for infection as compared to an open wound. Then, the assignment for the UAP can include helping the patient wipe down the area, bed baths, and applying lotion to prevent dryness.

When delegating, the nurse is responsible for the outcomes of the interventions she assigns to another team member. Because the task is only delegated to another staff to make up for staff shortages since one RN cannot perform everything in a shift, the RN still must be accountable for giving out tasks that can be completed without RN judgment. Evaluation of the task is also needed on the RN’s part; as defined by NCSBN, supervision concludes with follow-up by the nurse. As part of the Five Rights to Delegation, the Right Supervision entails the nurse to “oversee the ongoing progress and results obtained, reviewing staff performance,” (LaCharity, Kumagai, Bartz, 2014, pg 6). For example, the nurse assigns an LPN to obtain hourly vital signs and report to the nurse after every hour for a patient 2 days poststroke. The RN may delegate this task to the LNP but would still have to perform assessments around the clock, such as auscultation of breathe sounds. If the LNP forgets to report to the nurse about a sudden change in blood pressure and the patient experiences a TIA shortly afterwards, the nurse is ultimately responsible because it is still her duty to check up on the vitals, especially for patients at high risk for recurring symptoms.

Delegation is also needed when teaching employees because the process helps the nurse manager figure out which staff is more experienced in areas or who would need more teachings in order to perform the task better. For example, the nurse manager receives a call from an RN on her floor that the UAP assigned to work the with RN is having a hard time complying to the RN’s delegated work; the UAP often fails to give a complete vital sign check. The nurse manager can try to approach both members and have a small huddle where both parties resolve their problem; the debriefing process helps the team move along smoother and also helps the nurse manager get a better understanding of which tasks are more suitable for different members in the team. Offering everyone feedback allows people to learn from their mistakes and improve on their work.

**Citations**

AMSN.org. (2019, June 24). Question: Delegation of task... do you have any information about whether you can delegate urinary catheter and/or peripheral IV removal to trained nonlicensed personnel? Retrieved from <https://www.amsn.org/practice-resources/care-term-reference/care-issues/question-delegation-of-task-do-you-have-any>

LaCharity, L. A., Kumagai, C. K., & Bartz, B. (2014). *Prioritization, delegation, & assignment: practical exercises for medical-surgical nursing* (3rd ed.). St. Louis, MO: Mosby Elsevier.

Lewis, S. L., Dirksen, S. R., Heitkemper, M. M. L., Bucher, L., & Camera, I. M. (2011). *Medical-surgical nursing: assessment and management of clinical problems* (8th ed.). St. Louis, MO: Elsevier/Mosby.