



Teaching Professionalism to Nurses

Monica R. McLemore PhD, MPH, RN

Pre-licensure Nursing Education

- **The RN conundrum**
 - Nurses become nurses when we are licensed, not when we finish our education
 - Membership in professional organizations is optional
 - No “surgeon general” and no central repository for nursing (Driven by State Boards of Nursing)
- **Diploma**
 - Hospital based programs, mostly phased out
- **Associates Degree (ADN)**
 - Community College nursing programs (2-3 years depending on pre-requisites)
- **Bachelor’s Degree (BSN)**
 - 4 year traditional college degree programs

Mandatory Curriculum

- 4 content areas
 - Community Health Nursing
 - Maternity/Pediatrics Nursing
 - Medical/Surgical Nursing
 - Mental Health Nursing
- Boards of Registered Nursing (N=50)

Advanced Nursing Education

- **Accelerated Programs (RN to Bachelor's or Masters)**
 - MEPN, Bachelor's Degree in a field other than nursing
- **Master's Degree (MSN)**
 - Clinicians: NP, CNM, CNS, NA or Non-Clinicians: generic MSN, CNL
- **Doctorate in Nursing Practice (DNP)**
- **The *other* Doctorates in Nursing (DNS, ND)**
- **PhD**

Mandatory Curriculum

- Advanced preparation in research, theory and clinical judgment in nursing practice, health care economics and policy, leadership, and the scientific basis for selected concepts in advanced nursing practice.
- Clinical cores, one for clinical nurse specialist (CNS) students and another for primary health care students.
 - For CNS students, the core includes health assessment, program management, case management, and outcomes evaluation.
 - For primary health care students, the core includes health assessment, health maintenance and promotion, and clinical care management.
- Each specialty area also has a series of courses that provide substantive content for the specialty.

What is professionalism?

- **Medicine**
- **Definition of Professionalism:**
Commitment to carrying out professional responsibilities, adherence to ethical principles and sensitivity to a diverse patient population. – ACGME

What is professionalism?

- Nursing
- Professional Role Competence:

The public has a right to expect registered nurses to demonstrate professional competence throughout their careers. ANA believes the registered nurse is individually responsible and accountable for maintaining professional competence. The ANA further believes that it is the nursing profession's responsibility to shape and guide any process for assuring nurse competence. Regulatory agencies define minimal standards for regulation of practice to protect the public. The employer is responsible and accountable to provide an environment conducive to competent practice. Assurance of competence is the shared responsibility of the profession, individual nurses, professional organizations, credentialing and certification entities, regulatory agencies, employers, and other key stakeholders. - ANA

Huh?

**Given the differences in roles, how
do you teach professionalism to
nurses?**

Pre-licensure student professionalism

- Reasonably prudent nurse standard
 - The Minimum Competency of the “Professional Nurse”
 - Passing NCLEX
 - Obtaining a job
 - Getting through job orientation
 - Managing the patient load
- Professional appearance
 - The professional appearance of registered nurses: an integrative review of peer-refereed studies.

Hatfield LA, Pearce M, Del Guidice M, Cassidy C, Samoyan J, Polomano RC. J Nurs Adm. 2013 Feb;43(2):108-12.

Pre-licensure student professionalism (cont.)

- Standardized bedside nursing assessments
 - Impact of professionalism in nursing on in-hospital bedside monitoring practice.

Bunkenborg G, Samuelson K, Akeson J, Poulsen I. J Adv Nurs. 2012 Aug 27.

- Teaching of empathy with students

- The effect of a structured empathy course on the students of a medical and nursing school.

Ozcan CT, Oflaz F, Bakir B. Int Nurs Rev. 2012 Dec;59(4):532-8.

American Nurses Credentialing Center (AACN)

- Magnet Recognition

The Magnet Recognition Program® recognizes healthcare organizations for quality patient care, nursing excellence and innovations in professional nursing practice. Consumers rely on Magnet designation as the ultimate credential for high quality nursing.

American Association Colleges of Nursing

- Forming and Fostering a Professional Identity in Nursing

AACN BACCALAUREATE CONFERENCE, Nelda Godfrey, PhD, RN, ACNS-BC, FAAN, University of Kansas School of Nursing

<http://www.aacn.nche.edu/membership/members-only/presentations/2012/12bacc/Godfrey.pdf>

Preparing the Professions

- The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching
- Landmark study on Clergy, Engineering, The Law, Medicine, and Nursing
- Sustainable Professionalism:
 - Deep engagement with the profession's public purpose
 - Strong professional identity
 - Habits of interpretation through which complex situations are understood
 - Habitual patterns of behavioral response
- Dr. Patricia Benner, leader for nursing: Educating Nurses: A Call for Radical Transformation
 - From an emphasis on socialization and role-taking to an emphasis on formation

So Where Are We?

Professional Nurse or Nurse Professional?

- **Professional Nurse:**
 - Validation by examination or institutional verification
- **Nurse Professional:**
 - A person who professes to be a member of the discipline and has individual qualities or characteristics that inform and motivate him/her to make good moral choices
- **Goal: Our work as nurse educators is to intentionally help FORM a professional identity**

References

- American Association of Colleges of Nursing:
<http://www.aacn.nche.edu/>
- Board of Registered Nursing, California:
<http://www.rn.ca.gov/>
- Sigma Theta Tau International, Honor Society in Nursing: <http://www.nursingsociety.org/default.aspx>
- American Nurses Association:
<http://www.nursingworld.org/>