POLICY: STUDENT NURSE POSITION DESCRIPTION

PURPOSE:
It is the policy of the Nursing Program at the University of Pittsburgh at Titusville to use a “Student Nurse Position Description” to clarify the essential abilities and function of the student nurse enrolled in this program. The policy will be used as the basis for the components of the Physical Exam requirements for applicants to the program and it will be used as the basis for the evaluation of students returning to the program after absences due to accidents or illnesses.

STUDENT NURSE POSITION DESCRIPTION

Purpose of the position: to prepare a graduate nurse capable of providing entry level professional nursing care to promote, attain, maintain and restore the health of clients in a variety of health care settings.

Essential functions of the position: (In the clinical area) Hours per week spent in function 8-32 hours, percentage of time 20%-80%.

1. Provides patient care, consistent with medical plan of care, for one to three patients. Patient care encompasses the following:
   a. Physical assessment, including but not limited to, listening to heart, lung, and bowel sounds with a stethoscope, checking incisions, and observing other factors, depending on individual patient.
   b. Receiving and giving verbal reports on each patient at start/end of each clinical experience.
   c. Preparing patients for transport to other hospital departments for testing; preparing patients for discharge.
   d. Preparing, distributing and administering medications prescribed by appropriate providers.
   e. Charting, either handwritten or via data entered into computer.
   f. Bathing patients and changing beds.
   g. Dressing and feeding patients.
   h. Accepting and orienting new patients to assigned unit.
i. Providing individual patient education, in accordance with accepted nursing practice and medical plan of care.

j. Discharge planning: Assessment of home and caretaker at home, consulting home care resources, obtaining equipment, consulting dietary, teaching patient about discharge medications, obtaining physician approval and arranging for any laboratory tests.

k. Utilizes therapeutic communication techniques in order to facilitate the patient’s optimum level of wellness.

2. Administers CPR according to American Heart Association Standards (Basic Life Support for the Health Care Provider) to patients in cardiac arrest, on an emergency basis. Must be available for this function, which takes precedence over all others. Unrestricted movement of both upper and lower extremities, neck, shoulders, back and hips required to perform this function.

3. Interacts with physician regarding patient’s conditions.

4. Provides emotional support and patient education to patients and families.

5. Performs specialized functions, including responding to audible and visual cardiac alarms, wound packing, and interpreting cardiac rhythm strips.

6. Provides patient care co-operatively with other hospital departments, including Cardiac Rehabilitation, Physical Therapy, Dietary and Social Service.

7. Demonstrates knowledge and skills necessary to provide care appropriate to the age of patients served on assigned units; knows and applies principles of growth and development over the life span when providing nursing care.

8. Assesses and interprets age-related patient data and identifies age-specific nursing care requirements for assigned patients.

Essential functions of the position: (In the classroom) Hours per week spent in function 9-32 hours, percentage of time 20%-80%.

- Records and preserves pertinent lecture material for future reference.

- Participates in small and large group discussions.

- Answers questions when called upon, present’s brief oral reports.

- Reviews handout and audio-visual materials.

- Completes written examinations within time limitations imposed by faculty.
Prepares handwritten and typewritten reports and utilizes proper spelling and grammar.

Operates computer terminals and appropriate software in learning process.

**Working Conditions**

The student nurse is assigned to clinical units at affiliating agencies within a forty-five mile radius of the University.

**Educational Preparation**

Pre-requisites for admission to the University as a student nurse include: High School Diploma or GED and a satisfactory score on the pre-admission nursing examination or SAT. As a student nurse, all courses must be successfully completed in succession as identified by the curriculum plan.

**PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES REQUIRED TO COMPLETE ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF THE POSITION**

**STANDING/WALKING:**

Standing and walking is required for majority of time spent in the clinical area (4-6 hours). Standing in one position is required while performing certain aspects of patient care. Walking occurs on vinyl, tile, linoleum or carpeted floors.

**SITTING:**

Sits while charting or entering data into computer. May also sit while receiving/giving verbal report at start/end of shift. May also sit during breaks and lunch period. Total sitting is less than two hours for each eight-hour shift, depending on clinical assignment. May also sit in the classroom from 2-4 hours.

**LIFTING:**

Regularly lifts medical supplies, medications, patient supplies, patient charts, weighing up to ten pounds. Also lifts CPR equipment and other medical equipment weighing up to 44 pounds. Required to assist in lifting and transferring patients, of varying weights, and is expected to request assistance when lifting, ambulating and reposition patients. Must be able to support at least 75 pounds to reposition, transfer and ambulate patients safely.
CARRYING: Frequently carries medical supplies and other items weighing up to 44 pounds. Occasionally carries certain medical equipment, weighing up to fifty pounds.

PUSHING/PULLING: Pushing/pulling 71-100 pounds may be required when administering patient therapy and care, as well as when pushing equipment such as oxygen tanks and monitors, and when transporting patients in wheelchairs, and gurneys. Pushing may be required at 3.5 pounds of pressure when administering CPR. Full manual dexterity of both upper extremities required.

CLIMBING: No significant climbing required; may be required to climb a step stool.

REACHING: Reaching above head required when performing aspects of care such as hanging and adjusting IV bags.

SQUATTING/KNEELING: Required when operating medical equipment and performing aspects of patient care such as CPR.

TWISTING: Twisting at waist required when bathing patients and performing other procedures.

REPETITIVE MOTION

HANDS Required for typing and general computer use. Required for grasping and fine manipulation, for patient care, including preparation and administration of injections.

FEET No repetitive motion of feet is generally required other than for normal walking and standing. Operation of foot control is required when using sinks, hospital beds and other specialized equipment.

DRIVING REQUIRED: Student nurses are responsible for their own transportation to and from affiliating clinical agencies. This may require driving or securing alternate means of transportation.
SENSORY ABILITIES

**SPEAKING:** Must be able to clearly speak English to communicate, assess and educate patients. Must also be able to communicate verbally with physicians and other professions involved in patient care.

**HEARING:** Must have normal hearing (aid permitted) in order to perform physical assessments, including listening with a stethoscope for bowel sounds, heart and lung sounds. Must also be able to hear to detect subtle yet critical information regarding patient condition including alarms and to communicate with physicians and other professionals involved with patient care. Must be able to communicate via telephone – aids are permitted.

**VISUAL ACUITY:** Required within normal limits for monitoring equipment, reading medical data, preparing and administering medications and injections, performing physical assessments of patients including subtle changes in color.

**DEPTH PERCEPTION:** Required for fine task such as administering injections, sterile catheter insertions (urinary, IV), Nasogastric tube insertions.

**FINE MOTOR SKILLS:** Must be able to assess patients through palpation with fingers and hand; must be able to distinguish warm/cold and be able to feel vibrations.

**SMELL:** Must have normal sense of smell to detect odors indicating unsafe conditions or changing patient status.
TEMPERAMENT REQUIRED
TO COMPLETE ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF THE JOB

The student must exercise good judgment based on patients’ test results, instructor input and nursing assessment in order to provide appropriate nursing care.

The student nurse must maintain a professional demeanor and remain visibly calm under a variety of life-threatening and emergency situations. Emotional stability is required when performing under stress.

The student nurse must work closely with others; interact with patients in a caring, professional manner to provide emotional support and education.

The student nurse learns under variable and constantly changing situations and must be flexible in responding to emergencies and be able to prioritize tasks.

A student nurse may not pose a direct threat or significant risk to the health and safety of patients and/or others in the clinical area. A student nurse may not impede the healing process of a patient.

MACHINES, TOOLS, EQUIPMENT AND WORK AIDES

Students must have the ability to use various medical equipment, supplies, medications, charts, computer terminals and other aides, in performance of duties.

Students must have the ability to use various classroom instruments such as pens, pencils, chalk, markers, staplers, computers, etc.

CLASSIFICATION

This position falls within the Medium-Duty category, as defined by the U.S. Department of Labor.

ENVIRONMENTAL REQUIREMENTS:

The student nurse must be able to function in a variety of environmental conditions which include: biohazards, infectious diseases, electrical hazards associated with patient care equipment, working with hands in water and working with or near the deceased.