DELEGATION PRINCIPLES

The following "Five Rights of Delegation" delineate accountability for nurses at all levels from nursing service administrators to registered nurses.

NURSING SERVICE ADMINISTRATOR

RIGHT TASK

- Identify appropriate delegation activities in unlicensed assistive person (UAP) job description/role delineation.
- Describe expectations of and limits to organizational policies, procedures and standards.

RIGHT CIRCUMSTANCES

- Assess the health of the client community, analyze the data and identify collective nursing care needs, priorities and necessary resources.
- Provide appropriate staffing and skill mix, identify clear lines of authority and reporting, and provide sufficient equipment and supplies to meet the nursing care needs.
- Provide appropriate preparation in management techniques to deliver and delegate care.

RIGHT PERSON

- Establish organizational standards consistent with applicable law and rules that identify educational and training requirements and competency measurements of nurses and UAP.
- Incorporate competency standards into institutional policies; assess nurse and UAP performance; perform evaluations based upon standards; and take steps to remedy failure to meet standards, including reporting nurses who fail to meet standards to Board of Nursing.

RIGHT DIRECTION/COMMUNICATION

- Communicate acceptable activities, UAP competencies and qualifications, and the supervision plan through a description of a nursing service delivery model, standards of care, role descriptions, and policies or procedures.

RIGHT SUPERVISION/EVALUATION

- Ensure human resources, including time and supervision, to ensure care is adequate, meets clients' needs.
- Identify by position, title and role delineation the licensed nurses responsible for providing supervision needs.
- Evaluate outcomes of client community and use information to develop quality assurance and to contribute to risk-management plans.

The Five Rights of Delegation, identified in the National Guidelines for Nursing Delegation (Journal of Nursing Regulation, 2016) from the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, can be used as a mental checklist to assist nurses from multiple roles to clarify the critical elements of the decision-making process.

STAFF NURSE (RN/APRN)

RIGHT TASK

- Identify appropriate delegation activities are for specific client(s).
- Identify appropriate activities for specific unlicensed assistive person (UAP).

RIGHT CIRCUMSTANCES

- Assess health status of individual client(s), analyze the data and identify client-specific goals and nursing care needs.
- Match the complexity of the activity with the UAP and competency with the level of supervision available.
- Provide for appropriate monitoring and guidance for the combination of client, activity and personnel.

RIGHT PERSON

- Instruct and/or assess, verify and identify the UAP's competency on an individual and client-specific basis.
- Implement own professional development activities based on assessed needs; assess UAP performance; evaluate UAP based upon standards; and take steps to remedy failure to meet standards.

RIGHT DIRECTION/COMMUNICATION

- Communicate delegation decisions on a client-specific and UAP-specific basis. The detail and method (oral and/or written) vary with the specific circumstances.
- Situation-specific communication includes:
  - Specific data to be collected and method and timelines for reporting.
  - Specific activities to be performed and client-specific instruction and limitation.
  - The expected results or potential complications and timelines for communicating such information.

RIGHT SUPERVISION/EVALUATION

- Supervise performance of specific nursing activities or assign supervision to other licensed nurses.
- Provide directions and clear expectations of how the activity is to be performed:
  - Monitor performance.
  - Obtain and provide feedback.
  - Intervene if necessary.
  - Ensure proper documentation.
- Evaluate the entire delegation process including the client and the performance of the activity.

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