

Policy Number: G5010
Faculty Approved: 4/2018
Effective Date: 4/2018
Reviewed Date: 6/2020
Revision Date: 6/2020
Dean Approved: 4/2018

Policy Title: Professional Conduct

Policy

The following guidelines will apply to the educational preparation, experience, knowledge, and ability of the professional nursing student enrolled at Cizik School of Nursing at UTHealth. Failure to adhere to this policy will result in counseling and may result in failure of the course and/or dismissal from the program.

- A. Professional nursing graduate students are expected to treat all persons with respect and to conduct themselves in a professional manner, and be prepared to perform accordingly in the clinical setting/area.
- B. Standards of Nursing Graduate Student Practice: These standards for professional nursing graduate student practice shall establish a minimum acceptable level of professional nursing graduate student practice. The professional nursing student shall:
 1. provide, without discrimination, services regardless of the age, disability, economic status, gender, sexual orientation national origin, race, religion, or health problem of the client served;
 2. use a systematic approach to provide individualized, goal-directed health care by:
 - a. performing assessments regarding the health status of the client;
 - b. making nursing or medical diagnoses which serve as the basis for the strategy of care;
 - c. developing a plan of care based on assessment and diagnoses;
 - d. implementing health care;
 - e. evaluating the client's responses to intervention;
 - f. revising plan of care based on evaluation;
 3. institute the appropriate intervention, which might be required to stabilize a client's condition and/or prevent complications;

4. clarify any order or treatment regimen that the professional nursing graduate student has reason to believe is inaccurate, non-efficacious or contraindicated by consulting with the appropriate licensed practitioner;
 5. know the rationale for the effects of medications and treatments and correctly recommend or administer the same;
 6. accurately identify, report, and document the client's symptoms, responses, and progress in a timely manner;
 7. implement measures to promote a safe environment for clients and others;
 8. implement measures to prevent exposure to infectious pathogens and communicable conditions;
 9. respect the client's right to privacy by protecting confidential information unless obligated or allowed by law to disclose the information;
 10. promote and participate in client education and counseling based on health needs;
 11. collaborate with the client, members of the health care team, and when appropriate, the client's significant other(s) in the interest of the client's health care;
 12. consult with the appropriate licensed practitioner to make referrals to appropriate community agencies and health care resources to provide continuity of care;
 13. accept only the assignments that are commensurate with one's own educational preparation, experience and knowledge and ability;
 14. obtain instruction and supervision as necessary when implementing procedures and practice;
 15. be responsible for one's own continuing competence in nursing practice and individual professional growth;
- C. Professional Clinical Conduct: The professional conduct rules are intended to protect clients and the public from incompetent, unethical, or illegal conduct. The purpose of these rules is to identify unprofessional or dishonorable behaviors of the professional nursing graduate student, which the faculty of the school believes are likely to deceive, defraud, or injure clients or the public. These behaviors include but are not limited to:
1. failing to assess and evaluate a client's status or failing to institute intervention which might be required to stabilize a client's condition or prevent complications;
 2. failing to recommend or administer medications or treatments or both in a responsible manner;

3. failing to accurately or completely identify, report, and/or document a client's status including signs, symptoms or responses and nursing care delivered;
4. failing to make entries, destroying entries, and/or making false entries in records pertaining to care of clients;
5. causing or permitting physical emotional or verbal abuse or injury to the client or the public or failing to report the same to the appropriate licensed practitioner;
6. disclosing confidential information or knowledge concerning the client except where required or allowed by law;
7. accepting an assignment when one's physical or emotional condition prevents the safe and effective delivery of care or accepting an assignment that does not take into consideration patient safety or for which one lacks the educational preparation, experience, knowledge or ability;
8. failing to obtain instruction or supervision when implementing procedures or practices for which one lacks the educational preparation, ability, knowledge and/or experience;
9. leaving a clinical setting/area without notifying one's appropriate preceptor (and faculty);
10. failing to follow the policy and procedure for the wastage of medication in the facility where the student is functioning at the time of the incident;
11. misappropriating medications, supplies, equipment, or personal items of the client, employer, or any other persons or entity or failing to take precautions to prevent such misappropriation;
12. offering, giving, soliciting or receiving or agreeing to receive, directly or indirectly, any fee or other consideration to or from a third party for the referral of a client in connection with the performance of professional nursing graduate student duties;
13. providing information that was false, deceptive, or misleading in connection with one's practice as a professional nursing graduate student;
14. Social Media: professional student nurses are expected to adhere to the Texas Board of Nursing *Position Statement 15.29, Professional Boundaries including Use of Social Media for Nursing* (January, 2020). To ensure the mission to protect and promote the welfare of the people of Texas, the Texas Board of Nursing supports both the guidelines and principles of social media use by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) and American Nurses Association (ANA). In accordance with the NCSBN guidelines and Board Rules, it is the Board's position that:
 - *Nurses have an ethical and legal obligation to maintain patient privacy and confidentiality at all times and when using social media do not identify patients*

by name or post or publish information that may lead to the identification of a patient. Limiting access to postings through privacy settings is not sufficient to ensure privacy. Nurses must promptly report any identified breach of confidentiality or privacy [Board Rule 217.11(1) (E) and (K)].

- *Nurses maintain professional boundaries in the use of electronic media. The nurse has the obligation to establish, communicate and enforce professional boundaries with patients in the online environment. Nurses do not refer to patients in a disparaging manner, even if the patient is not identified or transmit information that may be reasonably anticipated to violate patient rights to confidentiality or privacy, or otherwise degrade or embarrass the patient [Board Rule 217.11(1) (J)].*
- *Nurses must provide nursing services without discrimination and do not make threatening, harassing, profane, obscene, sexually explicit, racially derogatory, homophobic or other offensive comments [Board Rules 217.11(1) (L) and 217.12 (6)(C), (D), and (F)].*
- *Nurses must be aware of and comply with all laws and rules, including employer policies regarding the use of electronic devices including employer-owned computers, cameras and use of personal devices in the work place. In addition, nurses must ensure appropriate and therapeutic use of all patient-related electronic media, including patient-related images, photos, or videos in accordance with applicable laws, rules, and institutional policies and procedures [Board Rule 217.11(1)(A)].*

<http://www.bon.texas.gov/practice/position.html>

Adapted from The Statutes Regulating the Practice of Professional Nursing, Texas Board of Nursing (Rule 217.11. Standards of Professional Nursing Practice, Rule 217.12 Unprofessional Conduct).