ESSENTIAL COMPETENCIES OF GRADUATES OF TEXAS
BACCALAUREATE DEGREE NURSING EDUCATION PROGRAMS

I. Member of the Profession:
A. Function within the nurse’s legal scope of practice and in accordance with the policies and procedures of the employing health care institution or practice setting.
B. Assume responsibility and accountability for the quality of nursing care provided to patients, families, populations, and communities.
C. Promote the practice of professional nursing through leadership activities and advocacy.
D. Demonstrate responsibility for continued competence in nursing practice, and develop insight through reflection, self-analysis, self-care, and lifelong learning.

II. Provider of Patient-Centered Care:
A. Use clinical reasoning and knowledge based on the baccalaureate degree nursing program of study, evidence-based practice outcomes and research studies as the basis for decision making and comprehensive patient care.
B. Determine the physical and mental health status and health needs and preferences of culturally, ethnically, and socially diverse patients, families, populations, and communities based upon interpretation of comprehensive health assessment findings compared with evidence-based health data and a synthesis of knowledge derived from a baccalaureate degree nursing program of study.
C. Synthesize comprehensive assessment data to identify problems, formulate goals/outcomes and develop plans of care for patients, families, populations, and communities using information from evidence-based practice and published research in collaboration with the above groups and the interdisciplinary health care team.
D. Provide safe, compassionate, comprehensive nursing care to patients, families, populations and communities through a broad array of health care services.
E. Implement plan of care within legal, ethical, and regulatory parameters and in consideration of disease prevention, wellness, and promotion of healthy lifestyles for patients, families, populations, and communities.
F. Evaluate and report patient, family, population, and community outcomes and responses to therapeutic interventions in comparison to benchmarks from evidence-based practice and research findings, and plan follow-up nursing care.
G. Develop, implement, and evaluate teaching plans for patients, families, populations and communities to address health promotion, maintenance and restoration, and population risk reduction.
H. Coordinate human, information, and materiel management resources in providing care for patients, families, populations, and communities.

III. Patient Safety Advocate:
A. Demonstrate knowledge of the Texas Nursing Practice Act and Texas Board of Nursing Rules that emphasize safety as well as all federal, state, and local government and accreditation organization safety requirements and standards.
B. Implement measures to promote quality and a safe environment for patients, self, and others.
C. Formulate goals and outcomes using an evidence-based and theoretical analysis of available data to reduce patient and community risks.
D. Obtain instruction, supervision, or training as needed when implementing nursing procedures or practices.
E. Comply with mandatory reporting requirements of the Texas Nursing Practice Act.
F. Accept and make assignments and delegate tasks that take into consideration patient safety and organizational policy.

IV. Member of the Health Care Team:
A. Coordinate, collaborate, and communicate with patients, families, populations, communities, and the interdisciplinary health care team to plan, deliver, and evaluate care.
B. Serve as a health care advocate in monitoring and promoting quality and access to health care for patients, families, populations, and communities.
C. Use multiple referral resources for patients, families, populations, and communities, considering cost, confidentiality, effectiveness and efficiency of care, continuity and continuum of care, and health promotion, maintenance, and restoration.
D. Communicate and collaborate in a timely manner with members of the interdisciplinary health care team to promote and maintain the patient’s optimal health status.
E. Communicate and manage information using technology to support decision making to improve patient care and delivery systems.
F. Assign and/or delegate nursing care to other members of the health care team based on an analysis of patient or organizational need.
G. Supervise nursing care provided by others for whom the nurse is responsible by using best practices of management, leadership, and evaluation.

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Educational Options to Become a Nurse

High School Graduate
4 years of science and mathematics recommended

Vocational Program

Vocational Nurse
11-18 months

Vocational Nurse (LVN) Licensure Exam
www.bon.state.tx.us

Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN) to Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN)
1 year

College or University

Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN)
3 years

Registered (RN) Licensure Exam
www.bon.state.tx.us

RN to BSN Program
Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)
1-2 years

Master of Science in Nursing (MSN)
Nurse Practitioner (NP), Clinical Specialist (CNS), Certified Nurse Midwife (CNM), Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA), Nurse Administrator, Nurse Educator
2–2 1/2 years

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP)
3+ years