

Nursing Care Plan (NCP)

The ability to develop a NCP requires in-depth knowledge of the patient, the reason for admission, the main health complaints/concerns, the goals to be aimed for, the selection of appropriate nursing interventions, and strategies to evaluate the effectiveness of the interventions. Even if NCPs are no longer used as frequently as in the past, for educational/learning purposes they are still a very useful tool. For this reason, Massey University requires students to complete NCPs during a variety of clinical placements. NCPs will be adapted to the level the student is at and even the name and format might change slightly i.e. Patient Health Plan. While students are expected to complete the bulk of the writing outside of clinical practice, there is a need to interview patients as well as have access to the patients' file in order to obtain the required data. NCP are checked by CTAs but your support and feedback will at all times be truly appreciated.

Guidelines for the assessment of clinical nursing care plans

Patient assessment

Except during the very first clinical experience (168.121), when students have not been taught interview- and health assessment skills (paper 168.123), all NCP submitted for competence assessment, require a comprehensive patient assessment on which the diagnosis, goal setting, interventions, and evaluation will be based. Preferably, students utilise the health/nursing/patient assessment documentation that it routinely used in the clinical agency. An extra page can be used to document additional assessment data obtained through interview, through systematic objective assessment using inspection, palpation, percussion and auscultation, or for information obtained from secondary sources such as family, significant others, health team members, and health records. A combination of functional health patterns and body system review can provide the assessment framework for collecting and organising data which in turn forms the foundation for a personalised nursing care plan.

CTA assessment considerations:

- Has the student used the documentation appropriately?
- Does the quality of data collected suggest good interview skills?
- Does the data suggest a comprehensive assessment using subjective and objective data as well as secondary sources?
- Is the assessment data consistent, accurate and concise, using a set framework to organise the findings?
- If relevant, have safety concerns been identified and prioritised?

Nursing diagnosis

The analysis of client data clusters will lead to the identification of:

- actual nursing diagnoses: patient response to current health condition(s)
- risk diagnoses (sometime also called 'potential problem': risk factors that contribute to increased vulnerability)
- wellness diagnoses: opportunities for enhancement of a healthy state

Furthermore, nursing diagnoses need to be prioritised, and coping patterns/patient strengths to prevent or resolve the health challenge need to be identified.

CTA assessment considerations:

- Has the right data been clustered, resulting in a well-defined nursing diagnosis?
- Does the nursing diagnosis encapsulate the health concern/risk identified?
- Are the nursing diagnoses listed in priority order?
- Do you as CTA 'recognise' the patient in this NCP?
- Do the identified nursing diagnoses go beyond the medical diagnosis?
- Do the identified nursing diagnoses go beyond the patient's physical health (is it holistic)?

Nursing outcomes

The formulation of outcomes includes measurable, realistic, goals that provide the basis for implementing nursing interventions to prevent, reduce, or eliminate the identified nursing diagnosis/problem. The focus is on health promotion, health maintenance, and health restoration.

Nursing outcomes:

- Provides a basis for *individualised* care
- Promotes patient *participation*
- Allows for involvement of support people
- Outcomes are realistic and measurable

CTA assessment considerations:

- Do the nursing outcomes contain measurable goals that are realistic/achievable within the time frame given?
- Do the outcomes relate to the nursing diagnoses?
- Is the focus on health promotion, health maintenance, and health restoration ?
- Do the nursing outcomes focus on the individual and does it promote patient participation?
- Are the outcomes realistic and measurable?

Nursing interventions

Nursing interventions are all the activities carried out by the nurse to achieve the nursing outcomes. Interventions relate directly to the identified nursing problem and outcome.

CTA assessment considerations:

- Do the nursing interventions relate to the goals aimed for?
- Do you consider the interventions listed to be appropriate and likely to be effective?
- Is the full range of nursing interventions prescribed?
- Do the nursing interventions reflect a level professional knowledge expected of the student concerned?

Nursing evaluation

Nursing evaluation is systematic and ongoing, and measures how well the patient has achieved the goals/outcomes specified in the care plan. The evaluation identifies factors that have positively or negatively influenced goal achievement and may lead to changes in nursing interventions.

CTA assessment considerations:

- Is there written evidence of (ongoing) evaluation?
- Is evaluation of nursing interventions based on patient's responses?
- Does the evaluation reflect a thorough systematic review of each intervention?
- Does the evaluation determine whether the nursing outcomes have been achieved?