



South African Nursing Council
(Under the provisions of the Nursing Act, 2005)

Cecilia Makiwane Building,
602 Pretorius Street, Arcadia,
Pretoria, 0083

Tel: 012 420-1000
Fax: 012 343-5400

e-mail: registrar@sanc.co.za
website: www.sanc.co.za

Private Bag X132, Pretoria, 0001
Republic of South Africa

**THE PHILOSOPHY AND POLICY OF
THE SOUTH AFRICAN NURSING COUNCIL
WITH REGARD TO PROFESSIONAL NURSING EDUCATION**

1. INTRODUCTION - PHILOSOPHY OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN NURSING COUNCIL

1.1 Objects of the South African Nursing Council

The objects of the South African Nursing Council are determined in section 3 of the Nursing Act, 1978 (No. 50 of 1978).

"3. The objects of the Council shall be -

- (a) to assist in the promotion of the health standards of the inhabitants of the Republic;
- (b) subject to the provisions of the Chiropractors Act, 1971 (No. 76 of 1971)*, the Homeopaths, Naturopaths, Osteopaths and Herbalists Act, 1974 (No. 52 of 1974)*, the Pharmacy Act, 1974 (No. 53 of 1974), and the Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Act, 1974 (No. 56 of 1974), to control, and to exercise authority in respect of, all matters affecting the education and training of, and the manner of the exercise of the practices pursued by registered nurses, midwives, enrolled nurses and nursing assistants;
- (c) to promote liaison of the education and training, and the manner of the exercise of practices, referred to in paragraph (b), both in the Republic and elsewhere, and to promote the standards of such education and training and the manner of the exercise of such practices in the Republic;
- (d) to advise the Minister on any matter falling the scope of this Act;
- (e) to communicate to the Minister information on matters of public importance acquired by the Council in the course of the performance of its functions under this Act."

* Substituted by the Associated Health Service Professions Act, 1982 (No. 63 of 1982).

1.2 Definition of nursing (n.)

Nursing is a caring profession which enables and supports the patient ill or well, at all stages of life, to achieve and maintain health or where this is not possible, cares for the patient so that he lives in dignity until death. Accompaniment¹ is fundamental to all nursing.

Nursing is practised by persons who are registered or enrolled in terms of section 16 of the Nursing Act, 1978 (No. 50 of 1978) and whose practice is prescribed by

- * regulations published in terms of section 45(1)

(regulations relating to the scope of practice of persons who are registered or enrolled under the Nursing Act, 1978 and regulations relating to the conditions under which persons who are registered or enrolled under the Nursing Act, 1978 (No. 50 of 1978) may carry on their profession), and

- * rules published in terms of section 35

(rules setting out the acts or omissions in respect of which the Council may take disciplinary steps).

1.3 Definition of nursing science

"A clinical health and human science that constitutes the body of knowledge for the practice of persons registered or enrolled under the Nursing Act as nurses, midwives or nursing auxiliaries.

Within the parameters of nursing philosophy and ethics, it is concerned with the development of knowledge for

- diagnosing of health status
- treatment and
- personalized health care

of persons exposed to, suffering or recovering from physical/-spiritual/mental ill-health. It encompasses the study of preventive, promotive, curative and rehabilitative health for the nursing of individuals, families, groups and communities and covers man's life-span from before birth.

Nursing science as an academic discipline consists of the sub-disciplines

- history, philosophy and ethos
- fundamental nursing science
- general nursing science
- psychiatric nursing science
- community nursing science
- midwifery
- nursing education, and
- nursing administration/management."

1.4 The responsibility for nursing education

The registered nurse is responsible for the development, content, co-ordination, presentation and control of nursing education programmes. This point of view does not exclude the necessity for appropriate involvement of members of other disciplines in the training of nurses.

1.5 The purpose of nursing education

Nursing education is specifically directed at the development of the nursing student² as an adult on a personal and professional level and should lead to cognitive, affective and psychomotor development of the student, as well as the achievement of prescribed programme objectives.

The development of the ability for analytical critically-evaluative and creative thinking and the continuing stimulation of the capacity to interpret scientific data for nursing actions to draw conclusions and to exercise independent judgement, are of the utmost importance.

2. THE SOUTH AFRICAN NURSING COUNCIL POLICY ON NURSING EDUCATION

2.1 The concept of a continuous comprehensive health service, as supported by the Health Act, (No. 63 of 1977)

A comprehensive health service includes preventive, promotive, curative and rehabilitative services which provide for all man's³ / patient's⁴ health needs, from before birth until death and is delivered at primary⁵, secondary⁶ and tertiary⁷ health care levels.

Continuity implies that the various subdivisions of a health service are not seen as separate entities but as parts of the same comprehensive service linked through co-ordination.

2.2 A scientific approach to nursing

Nursing requires an approach which is objective, systematic and goal-directed. The scientific approach to nursing is also referred to as the nursing process.

2.3 Awareness of socio-cultural factors

An awareness of socio-cultural factors in the community which influence nursing is fundamental.

2.4 The stipulation of minimum standards for nursing education

The stipulation of minimum standards for nursing education is the most important requirement to ensure safe, effective nursing for the community.

This function is entrusted to Council in terms of the Nursing Act, 1978 (No. 50 of 1978).

The Council promotes standards for:

- the nursing school
- the programme of education
- the individual student

The didactic and subject competence of the tutor, academic and clinical, are essential.

2.5 Promotion of standards of nursing education and practice

The Council promotes standards of nursing education and practice. Innovation by nursing education authorities and research in these fields are encouraged and supported.

2.6 Institution of new programmes and amendment of existing programmes

The Council institutes new programmes or amends existing programmes only on the grounds of factual evidence and the identification of the health requirements of the population of the Republic of South Africa.

2.7 The principle of development of special knowledge and skills

The continued development of special knowledge and skills and of clinical and non-clinical specialization is essential to promote standards of nursing education and of nursing practice. When such knowledge and skills form the content of post-basic educational programmes, they must be distinguishable from what is required in a basic programme.

2.8 The purpose of the learning process in nursing education

The learning process must be directed towards the continued personal and professional development of the nursing student as an adult. The application of the principles of learning must lead to cognitive, affective and psychomotor development through effective utilization of adult education principles.

Education directed towards the development of the capacity for analytical, critical and creative thinking and independent judgement and interpretation of scientific data is vital.

A variety of learning opportunities⁸ covering the full spectrum of the curriculum must be provided. Teaching for practice in clinical nursing laboratory⁹ situations and proper introduction and orientation of the student with regard to learning objectives is essential. A learning experience¹⁰ occurs in a learning environment¹¹ created by the person presenting the learning material and is utilized by the student to achieve objectives¹². These include, for example, clinical practica¹³, clinical teaching¹⁴, lectures, projects, etc. with accompaniment¹⁵.

Evaluation of the student to determine the level of cognitive, affective and psychomotor development is required to ensure a safe standard of practice.

In order to ensure that learning opportunities and evaluation at training nursing schools are in accordance with this policy guide, each school shall have a written curriculum for each programme.

2.9 Clinical practica in nursing education

The student shall function as a member of the health team with certain responsibilities from the commencement of the educational programmes. This functioning forms part of the clinical practica with accompaniment and shall be arranged in meaningful consecutive units avoiding unnecessary fragmentation. In this functioning the student is accountable for own acts and omissions in accordance with the stage and terminal objectives of the programme.

EXPLANATORY NOTES:

1. Accompaniment (a)

Accompaniment in patient care is grounded in a deliberately fostered relationship of trust and acceptance between the nurse and patient. It encompasses those activities in nursing which are directed towards enabling the patient to gain independence, accept responsibility and find meaning in a given situation.

2. Nursing student

The nursing student is either the student nurse in basic training or the nurse in post-basic training.

The student nurse who has recently left the secondary school is in a transitional phase of late adolescence and early adulthood - a fact to be considered in the didactic situation.

3. Man

A total being, indivisibly body-psyche-spirit in inseparable dynamic involvement with God/Supreme Being, self, fellowman, time and world.

Man as a total being is the concept which reflects the essence of man as a multi-dimensional, indivisible being: body-psyche-spirit.

Self is the awareness of being a person, an individual with a separate identity.

4. Patient

Man as a total being: body-psyche-spirit, sick or well, who needs help to supplement his specific ability to accept optimal responsibility for his own health in the various health service and treatment areas in all age groups. When reference is made to 'patient' in Council documents it also includes families, significant others, groups or communities where appropriate.

5. Primary health care

Essential health care based on practical, scientifically sound and socially acceptable methods and technology made accessible to all individuals and families in the community at every stage of their development through their full participation.

It is inherent in all nursing practice and is the cornerstone of the nation's health and its health care system.

It is indispensable in the development of any community.

6. Secondary health care

Health care of a more specialised type than can be offered at the primary health care level.*

7. Tertiary health care

Sophisticated health care requiring specialised service and a high degree of technology.*

* Adapted from Glossary of terms used in Health for all series No. 1-8 W.H.O publication 1984.

8. Learning opportunity

The possibility for learning created by the registered nurse or midwife in classroom and clinical teaching situations and could be used by the student to reach learning objectives.

9. Clinical nursing laboratory

Such teaching situations as are created for the student in actual patient, and simulated practical settings.

10. Learning experience

A learning opportunity used by the student.

11. Learning environment

The learning environment in nursing education is created in the classroom and in practice and simulation situations. It complies with didactic principles.

12. Objective

The description of the critical curriculum content which must be mastered within a specified period of time. Objectives provide the criteria for evaluation.

13. Clinical practica

Learning opportunities which the student utilizes in the health service under supervision of the registered nurse and midwife and other experts in the health service.

14. Clinical teaching

Teaching in the clinical nursing laboratory by means of which the student is taught and accompanied towards independent practice and use of own abilities.

15. Accompaniment (b)

Accompaniment in nursing education is directed assistance and support extended to a student by a registered nurse or registered midwife with the aim of developing a competent, independent practitioner. This is supplemented by relevant guidelines and teaching aids.

Accompaniment is indispensable in all teaching situations.

In the clinical practice area all registered nurses or midwives are indispensable in the accompaniment of the student.

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