

## Essential Functions of Nursing

The practice of Nursing requires the following functional abilities:

### **Gross Motor/Physical Endurance:**

Sufficient physical endurance, strength and mobility to perform required client care activities in a safe and effective manner for the entire length of the clinical experience.

Examples of relevant activities:

- Working 8 or 12-hour shifts, days, evenings or nights, weekends, holidays.
- Standing, walking, bending, squatting, lifting or moving clients or objects weighing 25 to 50 pounds or more.

### **Fine Motor:**

Sufficient to perform manual psychomotor skills integral to patient care.

Examples of relevant activities:

- Manipulate small equipment and containers (i.e. syringes, vials, ampules, and medication packages) to administer medications.

### **Visual Ability:**

Sufficient to independently assess patients and their environments.

Examples of relevant activities:

- Detect changes in skin color or condition.
- Collect data from recording equipment and measurement devices used in patient care.
- Detect a fire in a patient area and initiate emergency action.
- Draw up the correct quantity of medication into a syringe.

### **Hearing Ability:**

Sufficient to physical monitoring and assessment of client health care needs.

Examples of relevant activities:

- Hearing faint body sounds (i.e. blood pressure sounds, assess placement of tubes).
- Hear auditory alarms (i.e. monitors, fire alarms, call bells).
- Hear normal speaking level sounds (i.e. person-to-person reports).

### **Olfactory Ability:**

Sufficient to detect significant environment and client odors.

Example of relevant activity:

- Detect odors from client and environment.

**Tactile Ability:**

Sufficient to independently assess patients and to implement the nursing care plans that are developed from such assessment.

Examples of relevant activities:

- Detect changes in skin temperature.
- Detect unsafe temperature levels in heat-producing devices used in patient care.
- Detect anatomical abnormalities (i.e. subcutaneous crepitus, edema, or infiltrated intravenous fluid).
- Detect vibrations.

**Communication Ability:**

Sufficient ability to speak, comprehend, and write (print and cursive) in English at a level that meets the need for accurate, clear, and effective communication.

Examples of relevant activities:

- Give clear oral reports.
- Direct activities of others by providing clear written and oral instructions to others.
- Influence people's actions.
- Be able to communicate effectively on the telephone.
- Legibly convey information through writing.

**Reading Ability:**

Sufficient to comprehend the written word.

Examples of relevant activities:

- Read graphs (i.e. vital signs sheets).
- Read and understand English print and cursive documents.

**Math Ability:**

Sufficient to do accurate computations.

Examples of relevant activities:

- Read measurement marks.
- Count rates.
- Read digital displays.
- Tell and measure time (i.e. count duration of contractions, etc.).
- Accurately calculate medication dosages.
- Accurately calculate intake and output.

**Critical Thinking Ability:**

Sufficient to collect, analyze, integrate, and generalize information and knowledge to make clinical judgements and management decisions that promote positive patient outcomes.

Examples of relevant activities:

- Evaluate outcomes.
- Transfer knowledge from one situation to another.
- Process information.
- Prioritize tasks.
- Use long and short term memory.
- Problem solve.

**Emotional Stability:**

Sufficient to assume responsibility/accountability for actions.

Examples of relevant activities:

- Establish therapeutic relationships and communicate in a supportive manner.
- Deal with the unexpected (i.e. client becoming critical, crisis).
- Handle strong emotions.
- Adapt to changing environment/stress.
- Focus attention on task.
- Monitor own emotions and be able to keep emotional control.

**Interpersonal Skills:**

Sufficient to interact with individuals, families and groups respecting social, cultural and spiritual diversity.

Examples of relevant activities:

- Negotiate interpersonal conflict.
- Establish positive rapport with clients, co-workers, and faculty.
- Interact with others effectively.

Adapted from *"A Validation Study: Functional Abilities Essential for Nursing Practice"* by Carolyn J. Yocom, National Council of State Boards of Nursing Inc., 1996.

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Tallahassee Community College is committed to creating an accessible environment where individuals are viewed on the basis of their ability, not their disability. TCC will diligently pursue making all programs, services and facilities accessible to, and usable by, all qualified students with disabilities. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973,

accommodations for students with disabilities will be considered at the student's request. The student will be required to register with the Disability Support Services office and provide documentation of disability. Once the student is qualified by the DSS Coordinator as having a disability, requested accommodations will be considered. The college will assure educational access by providing reasonable and appropriate accommodations, while maintaining the academic standards and integrity of the institution. Accommodations that compromise patient care, or that fundamentally alter the nature of the program or activity, are not considered to be reasonable. A student denied accommodation may request an individualized determination to assure that the denial is not a result of disability discrimination. Procedures for appeal are outlined in the TCC Student Handbook.

For additional information, please contact Disability Support Services.