

Position of the OASAS Nurses Advisory Panel on Orientation of Nurses to Agency Facilities

Introduction

Nurses employed in addictions treatment agencies make key contributions to quality patient care outcomes. They need to be competent in providing care to addicted individuals in accord with the provisions of the NYS Nurse Practice Act (Article 130). The highest quality of addictions nursing care will be delivered in OASAS facilities when practices and policies regarding job performance conform to the Scope and Standards of Addictions Nursing Practice (ANA & IntNSA, 2004). Working within the framework of OASAS administrative practices, personnel policies and clinical guidelines for optimal treatment outcomes, nurses combine professional addictions nursing excellence with teamwork and collaboration with managers, staff and other health care professionals employed within the system.

Discussion

As providers of direct nursing care on a continuum from early intervention, secondary and tertiary prevention, nurses must be proficient in the competencies necessary to complete those interventions. Competent performance by the nurse is promoted when job description and job performance criteria are detailed. Expectations for role performance promote comprehensive care in the areas of assessment and diagnosis, care planning and the development of a therapeutic alliance, implementation of interpersonal and pharmacologic therapies, care management and health teaching. Orientation to the nursing role and competency expectations practiced in OASAS support these interventions.

Addiction nursing care is delivered within state agency operated facilities, funded provider facilities and non-funded provider facilities. Knowledge of the policies, procedures and management practices within each system supports organizational accountability. Within the system, the nurse is responsible for maintenance of a therapeutic milieu, provides leadership to nursing staff members and promotes interdisciplinary collaboration in support of patient care. Policies, procedures and guidelines at state and agency levels guide nursing interventions within the agency and inform leadership activities by the nurse.

Policy and quality assurance measures support the provision of evidence-based care that conforms to the ethical and legal frameworks of the agency. Maintenance of current knowledge in nursing practice and educational competencies prepare the nurse to evaluate patient care outcomes, review compliance with regulatory requirements and prepare and review documentation linked to quality assurance measures. Nursing activities must be grounded in an understanding of the relationships among agency

policies, evidence-based nursing interventions and national standards for addictions treatment services.

Position

The OASAS Nurses Advisory Panel is committed to the position that individuals treated within NYS Addiction Treatment Agencies deserve the highest quality nursing care. In order to achieve optimal patient outcomes, procedures must insure uniformity with national nursing standards of nursing knowledge and competencies. A full orientation of nurses to care delivery in OASAS agencies generally and to specific agency policies and practices supports the delivery of care that conforms to the Scope and Standards of Addictions Nursing Practice (ANA & IntNSA, 2004). In addition, knowledge of policies, procedures and regulations essential to smooth agency function, in support of patient and employee rights, and those necessary to assure quality health care delivery, should be updated regularly and available to all nursing personnel.

References:

American Nurses Association (ANA) & International Nurses Society on Addictions (INTNSA) (2004). *Scope and Standards of Addictions Nursing Practice*. Washington, DC: American Nurses Association.

The Code for Nurses. Available from <http://www.nursingworld.org/codeofethics>