Use Nursing Process Model to Teach Delegation

The American Nurses Association defines delegation as the transfer of responsibility for the performance of a task from one individual to another while retaining accountability for the outcome. As with many definitions, this one sounds simple enough until the words are put into action. To meet the needs of patients in today’s complex health care environment, appropriate delegation is essential. This is where the nurse preceptor role comes into play once again.

Delegation, along with other concepts, is discussed in nursing schools. However, it is not until the concept is actually practiced and coached that one becomes confident and competent in its utilization. This process requires an individual to develop critical thinking skills. One method of teaching and evaluating the delegation process involves using the nursing process model.

- Assess — Before delegating the task, the nurse assesses the patient, the situation and the competency level of the delegatee performing the task.
- Plan — Identify the specific task that will be delegated. Communication plays a key role in regards to the nurse’s expectations and the outcome for the patient. The nurse should be available to answer any questions from the delegatee.
- Implement — Verify that the delegatee accepts and understands the task that is being delegated. Monitor that the task was completed, and intervene if necessary. Ensure that the appropriate documentation occurred.
- Evaluate — Evaluate the patient and the outcome, as well as the performance of the delegatee. In addition, obtain and provide feedback to and from the delegatee. The evaluation helps determine the success of future performance and delegation, as well as co-worker interactions.

When guiding new nurses, preceptors must share with them that the R.N. initials behind the nurses’ names shows that they are leaders responsible for guiding patient care. This is one reason why delegation is an imperative competency to coach, role model and evaluate.

Five Delegation Rights

1. **Right Task**
   Assign a nurse who is delegable for a specific patient.

2. **Right Circumstances**
   Consider the appropriate patient setting, available resources and other relevant factors.

3. **Right Person**
   Delegate the right task to the right person to be performed on the right patient.

4. **Right Directions and Communication**
   Provide a clear, concise description of the task, including its objective, limits and expectations.

5. **Right Supervision and Evaluation**
   Provide an appropriate amount of monitoring, evaluation, feedback and intervention as needed.

References