

The Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice

Essential I: Liberal Education for Baccalaureate Generalist Nursing Practice

- A solid base in liberal education provides the cornerstone for the practice and education of nurses.

Outcomes:

1. Integrate theories and concepts from liberal education into nursing practice.
2. Synthesize theories and concepts from liberal education to build an understanding of the human experience.
3. Use skills of inquiry, analysis, and information literacy to address practical issues.
4. Use written, verbal, non-verbal, and emerging technology methods to communicate effectively.
5. Apply knowledge of social and cultural factors to the care of diverse populations.
6. Engage in ethical reasoning and actions to provide leadership in promoting advocacy, collaboration and social justice as a socially responsible citizen.
7. Integrate the knowledge and methods of a variety of disciplines to inform decision making.
8. Demonstrate tolerance for the ambiguity and unpredictability of the world and its effects on the healthcare system.
9. Value the ideal of lifelong learning to support excellence in nursing practice.

Essential II: Basic Organizational and Systems Leadership for Quality Care and Patient Safety

- Knowledge and skills in leadership, quality improvement, and patient safety are necessary to provide high quality health care.

Outcomes:

1. Apply leadership concepts, skills, and decision making in the provision of high quality nursing care, healthcare team coordination, and the oversight and accountability for care delivery in a variety of settings.
2. Demonstrate leadership and communication skills to effectively implement patient safety and quality improvement initiatives within the context of the interprofessional team.
3. Demonstrate an awareness of complex organizational systems.
4. Demonstrate a basic understanding of organizational structure, mission, vision, philosophy, and values.
5. Participate in quality and patient safety initiatives, recognizing that these are complex system issues, which involve individuals, families, groups, communities, populations, and other members of the healthcare team.
6. Apply concepts of quality and safety using structure, process, and outcome measures to identify clinical questions and describe the process of changing current practice.
7. Promote factors that create a culture of safety and caring.
8. Promote achievement of safe and quality outcomes of care for diverse populations.
9. Apply quality improvement processes to effectively implement patient safety initiatives and monitor performance measures, including nurse-sensitive indicators in the microsystem of care.
10. Use improvement methods, based on data from the outcomes of care processes, to design and test changes to continuously improve the quality and safety of health care.
11. Employ principles of quality improvement, healthcare policy, and cost effectiveness to assist in the development and initiation of effective plans for the microsystem and/or system-wide practice improvements that will improve the quality of healthcare delivery.
12. Participate in the development and implementation of imaginative and creative strategies to enable systems to change.

Essential III: Scholarship for Evidence-Based Practice

- Professional nursing practice is grounded in the translation of current evidence into one's practice.

Outcomes:

1. Explain the interrelationships among theory, practice, and research.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the basic elements of the research process and models for applying evidence to clinical practice.
3. Advocate for the protection of human subjects in the conduct of research.
4. Evaluate the credibility of sources of information, including but not limited to databases and Internet resources.
5. Participate in the process of retrieval, appraisal, and synthesis of evidence in collaboration with other members of the healthcare team to improve patient outcomes.
6. Integrate evidence, clinical judgment, interprofessional perspectives, and patient preferences in planning, implementing, and evaluating outcomes of care.

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(Essential III Continued)

7. Collaborate in the collection, documentation, and dissemination of evidence.
8. Acquire an understanding of the process for how nursing and related healthcare quality and safety measures are developed, validated, and endorsed.
9. Describe mechanisms to resolve identified practice discrepancies between identified standards and practice that may adversely impact patient outcomes.

Essential IV: Information Management and Application of Patient Care Technology

- Knowledge and skills in information management and patient care technology are critical in the delivery of quality patient care.

Outcomes:

1. Demonstrate skills in using patient care technologies, information systems, and communication devices that support safe nursing practice.
2. Use telecommunication technologies to assist in effective communication in a variety of healthcare systems.
3. Apply safeguards and decision making support tools embedded in patient care technologies and information systems to support a safe practice environment for both patients and healthcare workers.
4. Understand the use of CIS systems to document interventions related to achieving nurse sensitive outcomes.
5. Use standardized terminology in a care environment that reflects nursing's unique contribution to patient outcomes.
6. Evaluate data from all relevant sources, including technology, to inform the delivery of care.
7. Recognize the role of information technology in improving patient care outcomes and creating a safe care environment.
8. Uphold ethical standards related to data security, regulatory requirements, confidentiality, and clients' right to privacy.
9. Apply patient-care technologies as appropriate to address the needs of a diverse patient population.
10. Advocate for the use of new patient care technologies for safe, quality care.
11. Recognize that the redesign of workflow and care processes should precede implementation of care technology to facilitate nursing practice.
12. Participate in evaluation of information systems in practice settings through policy and procedure development.

Essential V: Healthcare Policy, Finance, and Regulatory Environments

- Healthcare policies, including financial and regulatory, directly and indirectly influence the nature and functioning of the healthcare system and thereby are important considerations in professional nursing practice.

Outcomes:

1. Demonstrate basic knowledge of healthcare policy, finance, and regulatory environments, including local, state, national, and global healthcare trends.
2. Describe how health care is organized and financed, including the implications of business principles, such as patient and system cost factors.
3. Compare the benefits and limitations of the major forms of reimbursement on the delivery of health care services.
4. Examine legislative and regulatory processes relevant to the provision of health care.
5. Describe state and national statutes, rules, and regulations that authorize and define professional nursing practice.
6. Explore the impact of socio-cultural, economic, legal, and political factors influencing healthcare delivery and practice.
7. Examine the roles and responsibilities of the regulatory agencies and their effect on patient care quality, workplace safety, and the scope of nursing and other health professionals' practice.
8. Discuss the implications of healthcare policy on issues of access, equity, affordability, and social justice in healthcare delivery.
9. Use an ethical framework to evaluate the impact of social policies on health care, especially for vulnerable populations.

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(Essential V Continued)

10. Articulate, through a nursing perspective, issues concerning healthcare delivery to decision makers within healthcare organizations and other policy arenas.
11. Participate as a nursing professional in political processes and grassroots legislative efforts to influence healthcare policy.
12. Advocate for consumers and the nursing profession.

Essential VI: Interprofessional Communication and Collaboration for Improving Patient Health Outcomes

- Communication and collaboration among healthcare professionals are critical to delivering high quality and safe patient care.

Outcomes:

1. Compare/contrast the roles and perspectives of the nursing profession with other care professionals on the healthcare team (i.e., scope of discipline, education and licensure requirements).
2. Use inter- and intraprofessional communication and collaborative skills to deliver evidence-based, patient-centered care.
3. Incorporate effective communication techniques, including negotiation and conflict resolution to produce positive professional working relationships.
4. Contribute the unique nursing perspective to interprofessional teams to optimize patient outcomes.
5. Demonstrate appropriate teambuilding and collaborative strategies when working with interprofessional teams.
6. Advocate for high quality and safe patient care as a member of the interprofessional team.

Essential VII: Clinical Prevention and Population Health

- Health promotion and disease prevention at the individual and population level are necessary to improve population health and are important components of baccalaureate generalist nursing practice.

Outcomes:

1. Assess protective and predictive factors, including genetics, which influence the health of individuals, families, groups, communities, and populations.
2. Conduct a health history, including environmental exposure and a family history that recognizes genetic risks, to identify current and future health problems.
3. Assess health/illness beliefs, values, attitudes, and practices of individuals, families, groups, communities, and populations.
4. Use behavioral change techniques to promote health and manage illness.
5. Use evidence-based practices to guide health teaching, health counseling, screening, outreach, disease and outbreak investigation, referral, and follow-up throughout the lifespan.
6. Use information and communication technologies in preventive care.
7. Collaborate with other healthcare professionals and patients to provide spiritually and culturally appropriate health promotion and disease and injury prevention interventions.
8. Assess the health, healthcare, and emergency preparedness needs of a defined population.
9. Use clinical judgment and decision-making skills in appropriate, timely nursing care during disaster, mass casualty, and other emergency situations.
10. Collaborate with others to develop an intervention plan that takes into account determinants of health, available resources, and the range of activities that contribute to health and the prevention of illness, injury, disability, and premature death.
11. Participate in clinical prevention and population-focused interventions with attention to effectiveness, efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and equity.
12. Advocate for social justice, including a commitment to the health of vulnerable populations and the elimination of health disparities.
13. Use evaluation results to influence the delivery of care, deployment of resources, and to provide input into the development of policies to promote health and prevent disease.

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Essential VIII: Professionalism and Professional Values

- Professionalism and inherent values of altruism, autonomy, human dignity, integrity, and social justice are fundamental to the discipline of nursing.

Outcomes:

1. Demonstrate the professional standards of moral, ethical, and legal conduct.
2. Assume accountability for personal and professional behaviors.
3. Promote the image of nursing by modeling the values and articulating the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of the nursing profession.
4. Demonstrate professionalism, including attention to appearance, demeanor, respect for self and others, and attention to professional boundaries with patients and families as well as among caregivers.
5. Demonstrate an appreciation of the history of and contemporary issues in nursing and their impact on current nursing practice.
6. Reflect on one's own beliefs and values as they relate to professional practice.
7. Identify personal, professional, and environmental risks that impact personal and professional choices and behaviors.
8. Communicate to the healthcare team one's personal bias on difficult healthcare decisions that impact one's ability to provide care.
9. Recognize the impact of attitudes, values, and expectations on the care of the very young, frail older adults, and other vulnerable populations.
10. Protect patient privacy and confidentiality of patient records and other privileged communications.
11. Access interprofessional and intraprofessional resources to resolve ethical and other practice dilemmas.
12. Act to prevent unsafe, illegal, or unethical care practices.
13. Articulate the value of pursuing practice excellence, lifelong learning, and professional engagement to foster professional growth and development.
14. Recognize the relationship between personal health, self renewal, and the ability to deliver sustained quality care.

Essential IX: Baccalaureate Generalist Nursing Practice

- The baccalaureate-graduate nurse is prepared to practice with patients, including individuals, families, groups, communities, and populations across the lifespan and across the continuum of healthcare environments.
- The baccalaureate graduate understands and respects the variations of care, the increased complexity, and the increased use of healthcare resources inherent in caring for patients.

Outcomes:

1. Conduct comprehensive and focused physical, behavioral, psychological, spiritual, socioeconomic, and environmental assessments of health and illness parameters in patients, using developmentally and culturally appropriate approaches.
2. Recognize the relationship of genetics and genomics to health, prevention, screening, diagnostics, prognostics, selection of treatment, and monitoring of treatment effectiveness, using a constructed pedigree from collected family history information as well as standardized symbols and terminology.
3. Implement holistic, patient-centered care that reflects an understanding of human growth and development, pathophysiology, pharmacology, medical management, and nursing management across the health-illness continuum, across the lifespan, and in all healthcare settings.
4. Communicate effectively with all members of the healthcare team, including the patient and the patient's support network.
5. Deliver compassionate, patient-centered, evidence-based care that respects patient and family preferences.
6. Implement patient and family care around resolution of end-of-life and palliative care issues, such as symptom management, support of rituals, and respect for patient and family preferences.
7. Provide appropriate patient teaching that reflects developmental stage, age, culture, spirituality, patient preferences, and health literacy considerations to foster patient engagement in their care.
8. Implement evidence-based nursing interventions as appropriate for managing the acute and chronic care of patients and promoting health across the lifespan.
9. Monitor client outcomes to evaluate the effectiveness of psychobiological interventions.

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(Essential IX Continued)

10. Facilitate patient-centered transitions of care, including discharge planning and ensuring the caregiver's knowledge of care requirements to promote safe care.
11. Provide nursing care based on evidence that contributes to safe and high quality patient outcomes within healthcare microsystems.
12. Create a safe care environment that results in high quality patient outcomes.
13. Revise the plan of care based on an ongoing evaluation of patient outcomes.
14. Demonstrate clinical judgment and accountability for patient outcomes when delegating to and supervising other members of the healthcare team.
15. Manage care to maximize health, independence, and quality of life for a group of individuals that approximates a beginning practitioner's workload.
16. Demonstrate the application of psychomotor skills for the efficient, safe, and compassionate delivery of patient care.
17. Develop a beginning understanding of complementary and alternative modalities and their role in health care.
18. Develop an awareness of patients as well as healthcare professionals' spiritual beliefs and values and how those beliefs and values impact health care.
19. Manage the interaction of multiple functional problems affecting patients across the lifespan, including common geriatric syndromes.
20. Understand one's role and participation in emergency preparedness and disaster response with an awareness of environmental factors and the risks they pose.
21. Engage in caring and healing techniques that promote a therapeutic nurse-patient relationship.
22. Demonstrate tolerance for the ambiguity and unpredictability of the world and its effect on the healthcare system as related to nursing practice.