

# **Practical Nursing Clinical LAPs**

## **Basic Nursing**

### **Facilitator's Guide**

Developed by the Curriculum and Instructional Materials Center for the  
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## **Acknowledgements**

**Project Manager:** Tracy Boyington

**Writers:** Sandra Davis, BS Ed, RN  
LaDonna Selvidge, M. Ed., RN  
Janice Stanfield, M. Ed., BSN, RN  
Cassandra Young, BSN, RN

**Desktop publishing  
and document/cover design:** Margie Kirkendall  
Victoria Hawkins

**Production assistance  
and correspondence:** Ranae Abraham

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## **Use of this Publication**

The Practical Nursing Clinical LAPs cover a learning experience that has not previously been addressed in CIMC materials – practicing as a student LPN in the clinical setting.

This publication, *Basic Nursing*, helps students begin to perform care in the clinical setting. Clinical objectives are tied to both the NCLEX test plan and to the nursing process. Subsequent modules will cover intermediate and advanced nursing care.

The instructor's guide features a wrap-around format, with optional activities and assignment answers (when applicable) provided on the relevant student pages.



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# INTRODUCTION TO BASIC NURSING



As students begin their Basic Nursing clinicals, they will be learning how the nursing process is applied to the delivery of client care. They will have opportunities to use nursing principles and skills in actual clinical practice.

While in the practical nursing program, students will have a variety of clinical settings in which to perform nursing skills. The clinical instructor will always supervise students involved in basic nursing clinicals, with assistance from the clinical staff.

During each clinical rotation, students are expected to come prepared, act in a professional manner, provide appropriate client care in a timely manner, and seek out additional learning opportunities. Clinical experiences provide a learning environment unlike any other. As such, students should be made aware that through the clinical experience, they will be able to gain a greater understanding and knowledge of the practice of nursing.

Instructors should provide planned instruction as well as take advantage of informal learning opportunities as they arise. The clinical instructor will evaluate student performance for each clinical day. In order to receive a passing grade, students are required to maintain at least an 80% average for each clinical rotation. Students who do not meet this criterion face dismissal from the program.

Each student will be oriented to the clinical area prior to attending clinicals. Orientation will consist of specific clinical learning objectives and guidelines, as well as discussion of how assignments are made and evaluated. Any special instructions for that rotation will also be included.

## **Clinical Assignments**

During basic nursing clinicals, the instructor will usually make student assignments on the morning of clinicals. Students should then be allowed time to gather client information from the chart and other resources. Information students need could include demographic information (name, age, sex, etc.), admitting diagnosis, medications, treatments, diet, activity, etc. Remind students that the more effectively they gather data, the better they will be able to plan their client care for the day.

After students have gathered all of their information, they should find their client's rooms, introduce themselves, and begin their initial focused assessment of the clients. All assessments should be completed by the time breakfast is served.

## First Day of Clinicals

Your students' first day of clinicals should begin with a meeting at the selected pre-clinical site. Reinforce the notion that the purpose of the clinical experience is to prepare the student to practice as a beginning practical nurse. Students will understandably have "first time" jitters, but let them know you are there as a mentor, a facilitator, and as a resource for any questions and problems.

Make certain students have copies of the required paperwork for this clinical rotation. Also, go over homework assignments so students know exactly what paperwork they are required to turn in and when and where it should be turned in.

At the pre-clinical meeting, give students their assignments for the day and allow them some time to gather client information from the Kardex and the chart. Instruct them to introduce themselves to their nurses and explain what tasks they will be carrying out for their clients. Tell them they are responsible for performing a systematic focused assessment as well as ongoing assessment, performing AM care, bedmaking, ambulating, assisting with feeding, and any other procedure they are qualified to perform. Emphasize the importance of notifying both you and the nurse of any abnormal findings or problems they may come across during the day.

Students at this phase of clinical nursing may require a more intense level of supervision as they begin the refinement of their assessment and communication skills. Show both support and encouragement as they begin their journey on the path to becoming competent, caring nurses.

## Clinical Performance Requirements

Explain to students that while they will be supervised by other nurses at the clinical site, you will evaluate their clinical performance. In order to receive passing grades in the clinical area, they must meet the following requirements:

- Consistently perform nursing care in a safe and competent manner, while using good judgment and decision-making skills in all areas of client care.
- Make effective use of the nursing process in planning, intervening, and evaluating client care.
- Show consistent growth in both skills performance and nursing leadership as they progress through the basic nursing clinical rotation.
- Meet all clinical objectives in a consistent and competent manner.
- Show accountability and responsibility in addressing any areas of improvement that have been identified by the clinical instructor.
- Seek out additional learning opportunities as they become available.

- Meet all requirements for clinical attendance, submission of required paperwork, and satisfactory completion of all client care assignments.

## **Progression Through the Clinical Experience**

As the students begin their clinical experience, discuss your expectations. You may choose to discuss this in pre-conference or post-conference. By setting high expectations and making those expectations clear, you can provide quality learning experiences for your students.

Students need to know that as they begin their clinical experience, they will start by providing basic client care and, at the same time, perfecting basic nursing skills such as data collection and therapeutic communication. The focus will be on identifying abnormal findings, initiating basic nursing interventions, and providing an overall safe environment for clients. Remind students that concepts they learned in the skills lab (side rails up, bed in low position, call light in reach, etc.) are not just idle words, but are legitimate safety interventions for all clients.

Let students know that client assignments will reflect their beginning status as student nurses to allow them to learn to use the nursing process as a framework for planning and implementing their client care. This will be a time for perfecting newly learned skills under your guidance. Students should know that they will be closely supervised during these beginning clinicals. Let them know you will function as both a coach and a mentor, and will lead them along at an appropriate pace for their beginning skill level. Remind students often that you, as their instructor, are there to help them succeed.

Tell your students that in spite of what they believe now, their time in nursing school will pass quickly. There will be many opportunities for learning, and they should always be on the lookout for experiences as they occur. Encourage them to take full advantage of clinical rotations, as they will provide many learning opportunities that cannot be found anywhere else.



# CHECKLIST FOR A SUCCESSFUL CLINICAL ROTATION



Clinical rotations can be a hectic time for both students and instructors. With some advance planning, clinical rotations can run smoothly and provide valuable learning experiences for everyone involved.

## Before Clinicals Begin

- Meet with students prior to clinical to confirm the following:
  - ❑ The number of students you will have in clinical.
  - ❑ Each student's individual skill level.
  - ❑ Verification of scheduled clinical dates.
  - ❑ Orientation to unit.
  - ❑ Beginning and ending times of clinicals.
  - ❑ Meeting place with instructor.
  - ❑ Any special instructions specific to the unit.
- Give students a list of specific clinical objectives.
- Identify skills that students are allowed to perform, either independently or with the instructor present.
- Identify student limitations, if any.
- Schedule a brief meeting with the charge nurse.
  - ❑ Introduce yourself and give a brief explanation of student performance skills and responsibilities.
  - ❑ Provide a copy of the student clinical objectives.
  - ❑ Discuss student limitations, if any (for example, are students allowed to chart on the client's chart, etc.)

- ❑ Encourage the charge nurse to keep you informed of any skills or procedures the students may have an opportunity to perform (such as Foley catheter placements, IV starts, dressing changes, etc.)

## **On the Morning of Clinicals**

- Review assignments with the charge nurse and ask for suggestions that might enhance student experiences.
- Discuss with your students how assignments will be made and how many clients each student will be caring for.
- Tell the students how they will receive pertinent information about their clients.
- Remind students of what type of care they will be providing.
- Give students your pager or cell phone number and remind them to contact you when they have questions, abnormal client findings, problems, procedures to perform, etc.
- Discuss end-of-shift reports. Make sure students know who they will report to and what should be included in the reports. Remind them that they must report off before they leave the unit.
- Inform students when and where to meet for post-conference.

## **During Clinicals**

- Make sure students know where you are, especially if you leave the unit.
- Answer questions and help students problem-solve as needed.

## **Post-conference**

- Have the students discuss how their day went – what went well, what needed improvement?
- Verify that students know what clinical paperwork they need to turn in and when it is due.
- Provide feedback, answer questions, and help students problem-solve as needed.

# STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES DURING CLINICAL ROTATIONS



Students are responsible for completing the following tasks during clinicals:

## Focused Assessment

- The initial focused assessment on all clients needs to be completed first thing in the morning. Complete all assignments before going on to other tasks (baths, linen changes, etc.)
- Identify any abnormal client data and report it to the nurse and to your instructor.
- Take VS as ordered (every 4 hours, routine, etc.) and chart them appropriately.

## AM Care

- AM care includes bathing, oral care, perineal care, and any other personal care as needed by the client.
- AM care should be performed on all clients and should be completed before lunchtime. AM care can be completed after lunch if the client is off the floor for diagnostic testing, special procedures, surgery, or if the client requests it be done later in the day. If a client refuses AM care, remind them that a bath can be both beneficial and refreshing for them. If the client continues to refuse, respect that decision and let your instructor know.
- If your client requires a complete bed bath and linen change, ask another student to assist you.
- Do a complete linen change after performing AM care. If the client is being discharged, a linen change is not necessary unless linens are soiled.

## Fingerstick Blood Sugars

- Perform FSBS as ordered (usually AC and HS) and chart results on the appropriate form.
- Inform both the nurse and your instructor of all FSBS results. Be certain you know the normal range for blood sugar readings so you can let your nurse know quickly when a FSBS is very high or very low.

## Neurological Checks

- Perform neuro checks as ordered and chart them on the appropriate form.
- Inform the nurse and your instructor of any abnormal findings or any changes that occur during your shift.

## Client Movement

- Ambulate your clients as ordered. If clients are unsteady on their feet, ask another student to assist you.
- Meal times are good times to get clients up into the chair. Remember to leave the call light where the client can reach it and to check on the client frequently.
- Turn clients every two hours and/or perform range of motion exercises as ordered.
- Position clients in good body alignment, supporting bony prominences with pillows.
- When turning clients, assess their skin for any signs of redness or breakdown. Inform the nurse and your instructor of any abnormal findings.

## Intake and Output

- Keep an accurate tally of your clients' intake and output during the day. Chart all I&O at the end of the shift and report abnormal findings to the nurse and your instructor.
- Remember to empty all Foley catheters and any wound drains. Record the results.

## Important Considerations

- Always treat your clients with respect and use therapeutic communication in all client interactions. Also keep in mind any cultural considerations of your client.
- Remember, it is your responsibility to provide your client with all care that is within your scope of practice.
- Notify the nurse and your instructor before leaving the floor for any reason, and let them know when you return.
- Seek out learning opportunities whenever possible. When your clients are scheduled for a special procedure, such as an endoscopy or arteriogram, check with your instructor about going along to observe the procedure.
- Take full advantage of clinical time to perform new skills and to refine skills previously performed.
- The nurse is ultimately responsible for your client, so it is vital that you keep him/her informed.

## CLINICAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS



Each of the clinical objectives will be evaluated according to the criteria on the following pages.

The total points possible for each skill vary depending on the current level of progression. Some skills are considered progressive skills – students are expected to become more proficient at performing these skills as they progress through the different levels. For example, consider the following grading scale:

- 4=Performs to maximum proficiency expected of a PN student
- 3=Minimum assistance or instruction required
- 2=Moderate assistance or instruction required
- 1=Frequent assistance or instruction required
- 0=Unacceptable; unable to perform the skill

Students working through the *Basic Nursing* LAPs are expected to perform most skills with moderate assistance or instruction. Therefore, most skills in *Basic Nursing* are worth up to 2 points. Students performing at their expected ability *for this point in their training* would receive the full 2 points. As they progress, students are expected to become more proficient, and to perform the same skills with minimum or no assistance. Therefore, those skills will be worth 4 points in later modules.

Clinical level descriptions are different for every clinical level to allow for progression. Therefore, students will receive a clinical performance evaluation criterion for each level as they progress through the practical nursing program. They must be encouraged to ask questions and/or clarify those clinical performance criterion descriptions if they do not understand the description. They are also responsible for knowing clinical policy for the Practical Nursing program and the facility's policies and procedures given during orientation to the facility.

Skills that are not considered progressive are those involving safety and basic care. These skills are worth the full 4 points in this module, since students are expected to already be proficient.

Calculate the clinical grade by the total points earned divided by the total points possible for the clinical weekly rotation. You should also provide a copy of your clinical student handbook, which outlines when assignments are due, and policies for late paperwork.

## Nursing Process: Data Collection

- 1. Utilizes client chart, Kardex, & care plans as appropriate to obtain information.**  
Student accesses the client chart, Kardex, MAR, nursing progress notes, etc., in order to obtain data pertinent to the care of the assigned client.
- 2. Completes accurate objective/subjective data collection - reports deviations to clinical instructor.**  
Student performs a focused assessment on their assigned client(s) collecting accurate data. Includes objective and subjective data collected in documentation.
- 3. Obtains vital signs/ensures vital signs taken/recorded.**  
Student performs blood pressure, pulse, respirations, and temperature accurately and records this data on the appropriate form(s). If the student does not take vital signs, then the student is responsible for ensuring that this data is recorded on the chart.

## Nursing Process: Assessment

- 1. Identifies appropriate problem statement(s).**  
Student uses data collected from client to formulate an appropriate nursing problem statement. Client problems are beginning to be prioritized based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

## Nursing Process: Planning

- 1. Incorporates objective, subjective, and diagnostic test data in planning of care.**  
Student begins to utilize diagnostic test data results (laboratory, X-ray, MRI, CT scan, special procedures, etc.) and the disease process in order to have a more thorough understanding of the disease pathophysiology; and incorporates this knowledge into the plan of care.
- 2. Demonstrates ability to recognize and incorporate the client's physical, mental, social, and spiritual needs while planning client care.**  
Student is beginning to have understanding of the physical, mental, cultural, and spiritual needs of the client and incorporates these client needs into the plan of care.
- 3. Prioritizes care according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs.**  
Client needs are prioritized based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Interventions are performed and documented; they should start to be performed/listed in order of priority, starting from the basic physiological needs naturally progressing to self-actualization.
- 4. Completes medication research:**  
Medication research sheets are completely filled out, listing every medication prescribed for the assigned client(s).