Regulatory Supervision of Psychiatric Nursing Student Activities
Practice Standard

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Practice Standards set out baseline requirements for specific aspects of Registered Psychiatric Nurses’ practice. They interact with other requirements such as the Code of Ethics, the Professional Standards for Psychiatric Nursing, CRPNBC Bylaws, and relevant legislation.

Education programs and employers are responsible for providing the organizational supports and resources necessary for RPNs to provide regulatory supervision of psychiatric nursing student activities safely and according to CRPNBC standards.

RPNs have a professional responsibility to provide regulatory supervision of psychiatric nursing student activities that may affect clients. Psychiatric nursing students do not have the authority to perform these activities independently, but may do them if they are authorized by an RPN.

Regulatory supervision is the process RPNs follow to authorize these activities. The purpose of the process is to ensure public protection when students are doing activities as part of:

a. an entry-level or re-entry level psychiatric nursing education program recognized by CRPNBC, and/or
b. work as an employed student psychiatric nurse.

RPNs providing regulatory supervision follow the process outlined in this practice standard, and use their professional judgment to make decisions about activities a psychiatric nursing student may do with clients. Regulatory supervision is conceptually different from other types of supervision, such as employment or education supervision that might be carried out by a unit manager or an educator.

THE REGULATORY SUPERVISION PROCESS

The process of regulatory supervision consists of four components, each of which needs to be in place to meet this standard.

1) Know the psychiatric nursing students competence

The RPN must be reasonably satisfied that the psychiatric nursing student has the competence to do an activity. Students achieve competence through their education program, e.g., theory, lab work and successful demonstration. RPNs learn about a student's competence from a variety of sources, such as the student, employer, education program, observation, etc.

2) Authorize the activities the psychiatric nursing student may perform.

When deciding to authorize activities, the RPN considers (at a minimum):

• the RPN’s own competence to perform the activities and provide regulatory supervision of the activities
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- the psychiatric nursing student's competence (e.g., knowledge, skills and judgment),
- the client (e.g., health condition, needs, opinion about a student’s involvement),
- the activities to be performed (e.g., complexity), and
- the practice setting (e.g., changing circumstances, education and agency policy, learning environment).

3) Set the conditions for the psychiatric nursing student to perform the activities

The RPN sets conditions for the psychiatric nursing student to perform the activities, considering such things as:

a. whether the RPN will be physically present with the psychiatric nursing student,
b. the frequency of contact with the psychiatric nursing student,
c. involvement of others in overseeing the activities, and
d. how the RPN will know what activities have been done and their effects.

4) Manage the risk to the client

The RPN anticipates and manages potential and actual risks that originate from the psychiatric nursing student activities. This includes reviewing and revising regulatory supervision decisions.

PRINCIPLES

1. RPNs provide regulatory supervision for all psychiatric nursing student activities that may affect clients, are within RPNs' scope of practice and fall within the RPN's individual competence.

2. RPNs agree to provide regulatory supervision when each of the principles in this practice standard can be met.

3. Before authorizing activities, RPNs must be reasonably satisfied that the psychiatric nursing student has achieved sufficient competence through their psychiatric nursing education program to perform the activity safely.

4. RPNs do not authorize activities that would require employed student psychiatric nurses to acquire new clinical skills to be learned outside their education program.

5. RPNs consider the client's opinion about the psychiatric nursing student's involvement in his or her care before authorizing activities.

6. RPNs clearly communicate to the psychiatric nursing student which activities they have authorized, the conditions they have set, and the duration of the authorization.

7. RPNs meet this practice standard regardless of role (e.g., faculty member, staff nurse, manager, etc.) or practice setting.
8. RPNs have an obligation to comply with the regulatory supervision process regardless of employer, educational or other considerations.

9. RPNs collaborate to establish roles and accountabilities for the components of the regulatory supervision process when more than one nurse is involved (e.g., faculty member and placement agency staff).

10. RPNs are accountable and responsible for decisions associated with the regulatory supervision process.

11. RPNs use professional judgment to guide their decisions throughout the regulatory supervision process.

12. RPNs initiate, monitor and terminate the regulatory supervision process as appropriate.

APPLYING THE PRINCIPLES

Involving others in the process

You may involve others when setting conditions for a psychiatric nursing student's activities. As an RPN, you might authorize an activity on the condition that a specific non-CRPNBC registrant (e.g., LPN, RN) staff person is present in the practice setting. However, you are still responsible for the regulatory supervision process.

If you provide regulatory supervision with other RPNs, you must collaborate on each part of the process. Each RPN is accountable and responsible for their decisions and the process.

Deciding which RPN is best to provide regulatory supervision

CRPNBC does not specify the role or job title of the RPN providing regulatory supervision. Who fills the role will be based on the circumstances and the setting. The best RPN may be a front line RPN, a manager, a faculty member, etc.

Public protection comes first

There are times when RPNs may be responsible for regulatory supervision as well as employment or educational supervision. You may experience this if you are a nurse manager or a nursing instructor/faculty member. The purposes of these types of supervision can overlap and you can often meet the responsibilities of both. Occasionally these purposes may be at odds. When this happens, regulatory supervision must come first to ensure public protection. For example, there might be an opportunity for an employed student psychiatric nurse to try a new skill. If they don't have the competencies from their psychiatric nursing education program, the activity cannot be authorized.
GLOSSARY

Collaboration: A joint communication and decision-making process with the expressed goal of working together toward identified outcomes while respecting the unique qualities and abilities of each member of the group or team.

Competence: The integration and application of knowledge, skills, attitudes and judgment required to perform safely, ethically and appropriately within an individual’s practice or in a designated role or setting.

Regulatory Supervision: The process by which a RPN may authorize an activity to be performed by another person who does not otherwise have authority to perform the activity.

Scope of Practice: The activities that RPNs are educated and authorized to perform, set out in the Nurses (Registered Psychiatric) Regulation under the Health Professions Act and complemented by standards, limits and conditions set by CRPNBC.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Other CRPNBC Practice Standards and requirements are available from the Nursing Standards section of the CRPNBC website: http://www.crpnbc.ca/nursing-standards

For more information on this or any other practice issue, contact CRPNBC’s Practice Consultant by email at crpnbc@crpnbc.ca or call 604.931.5200 or 1.800.565.2505.

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