

RISK MANAGEMENT QUARTERLY NEWS

SPRING 2010



LPN & RN: Life Long Learning & Career Advancement

Change is the only certainty in the field of nursing. This requires us to be at the top of our game at all times. So, when was the last CEU course you took? Have you obtained any certifications since nursing school? Perhaps it is time to start asking yourself why



not? In some cases, we settle into a position and do not see the need to grow professionally. However, we need to stretch our minds, update our skills, and advance our education – no matter where we are employed. Your education goes with you wherever you go and can open doors that you never knew were closed.

Most of the LPN's and RN's we work with are employed at skilled nursing facilities or assisted living facilities. In most cases they are the charge nurse or DON, as many of these types of facilities do not have large licensed staffs. That means your job is already overwhelming. You may be asking how will I find the time and why should I advance my career when I am already "doing it all"? My answer is that this is precisely why you need

to think about advancing your education. By obtaining a certification, you can increase your ability to provide a higher level of care to your residents; become a better manager; and provide education to the CNA's and RA's you supervise. It can allow you to advance in your current position, expand your career to other fields, or open doors to other arenas within your current facility, such as administration.

First and foremost, as a risk consultant, I would advise you to make sure there is no lapse in your CPR certification. Additionally, it is your responsibility to make sure your employer has a copy of this card for your file. This is such a basic certification that it is often overlooked, but is vital for your legal protection.

There are literally over 50 types of additional certifications a nurse can obtain. Some are directly related to the care of the geriatric client, such as RNBC, registered nurse board certified in gerontology or the CLTC, certified long term care for the LPN or RN. A quick internet search for nursing certifications can produce a long list of various types and how to obtain them. One such site is www.testprepreview.com/nursing_certifications.htm. In many cases your employer will provide reimbursement for the costs of these courses and the certification testing. If you are not sure what you are enti-

led to, ask your HR director. Many of the courses are self study or offered over the internet; therefore, the hours and time frame are very flexible.

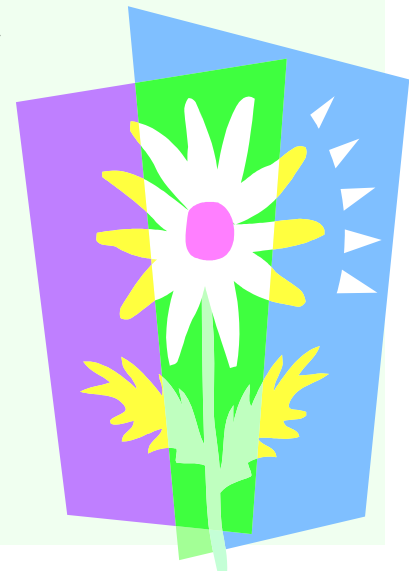
For those of you who are not quite ready to make the commitment to obtain a certification, you may want to consider in-depth studies and CEU courses that pertain to your resident population. For example, the geriatric nurse needs to be proficient and up to date in regards to: pressure ulcers, cardiovascular disease, respiratory issues, GI issues, diabetes, delirium, Alzheimer's disease, strokes, and infections. You may want to begin by picking a topic that you feel you are the least knowledgeable, and seek out a course. Many of the local colleges offer seminars, most of the nursing journals offer self-study CEU's, and there are even websites dedicated to continuing education for nurses. One such site is www.nurseceu.com where you can select hundreds of CEU topics/courses.

The goal is to be a lifelong learner and to strive to be the best in your field. No matter what position you hold, how old you are, the length of time you have been licensed, or where you reside, *you* hold the key to improving your mind, your future, and your fulfillment in your career as a nurse.

Linda McCallum, BSN, RN
Risk Consultant

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- ◆ LPN & RN: Life Long Learning & Career Advancement
- ◆ National Nurses Week Is Coming
- ◆ National Nurses Week History
- ◆ Florence Nightingale Pledge
- ◆ C.N.A. & Resident Assistants: Job Duties, Education and Certification



National Nurses Week Is Coming! - May 6th—12th

National Nurses Week is coming! Nurses Week is celebrated from May 6-12, and this year ANA salutes all nurses with the theme – "Nurses: Caring Today For A Healthier Tomorrow". This theme shows how the care you give today, every day, makes a better tomorrow possible for your patients, their communities and our country.

National Nurses Week History

National Nurses Week begins each year on May 6th and ends on May 12th, Florence Nightingale's birthday. These permanent dates enhance planning and position National Nurses Week as an established recognition event. As of 1998, May 8 was designated as National Student Nurses Day, to be celebrated annually.

The nursing profession has been supported and promoted by the American Nurses Association (ANA) since 1896. The ANA supports and encourages National Nurses Week recognition programs through the state and district nurses associations, other specialty nursing organizations, educational facilities, and independent health care companies and institutions.

A Brief History of National Nurses Week

1953 Dorothy Sutherland of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare sent a proposal to President Eisenhower to proclaim a "Nurse Day" in October of the following year. The proclamation was never made.

1954 National Nurse Week was observed from October 11 - 16. The year of the observance marked the 100th anniversary of Florence Nightingale's mission to Crimea. Representative Frances P. Bolton sponsored the bill for a nurse week. Apparently, a bill for a National Nurse Week was introduced in the 1955 Congress, but no action was taken. Congress discontinued its practice of joint resolutions for national weeks of various kinds.

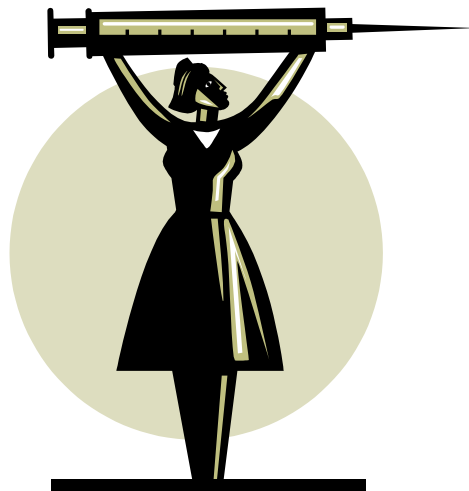
1972 Again a resolution was presented by the House of Representatives for the President to proclaim "National Regis-

tered Nurse Day." It did not occur.

1974 In January of that year, the International Council of Nurses (ICN) proclaimed that May 12 would be "International Nurse Day." (May 12 is the birthday of Florence Nightingale.) Since 1965, the ICN has celebrated "International Nurse Day."

1974 In February of that year, a week was designated by the White House as National Nurse Week, and President Nixon issued a proclamation.

1978 New Jersey Governor Brendon



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Byrne declared May 6 as "Nurses Day." Edward Scanlan, of Red Bank, N.J., took up the cause to perpetuate the recognition of nurses in his state. Mr. Scanlan had this date listed in Chase's Calendar of Annual Events. He promoted the celebration on his own.

1981 ANA, along with various nursing organizations, rallied to support a resolution initiated by nurses in New Mexico,

through their Congressman, Manuel Lujan, to have May 6, 1982, established as "National Recognition Day for Nurses."

1982 In February, the ANA Board of Directors formally acknowledged May 6, 1982 as "National Nurses Day." The action affirmed a joint resolution of the United States Congress designating May 6 as "National Recognition Day for Nurses."

1982 President Ronald Reagan signed a proclamation on March 25, proclaiming "National Recognition Day for Nurses" to be May 6, 1982.

1990 The ANA Board of Directors expanded the recognition of nurses to a week-long celebration, declaring May 6 - 12, 1991, as National Nurses Week.

1993 The ANA Board of Directors designated May 6 - 12 as permanent dates to observe National Nurses Week in 1994 and in all subsequent years.

1996 The ANA initiated "National RN Recognition Day" on May 6, 1996, to honor the nation's indispensable registered nurses for their tireless commitment 365 days a year. The ANA encourages its state and territorial nurses associations and other organizations to acknowledge May 6, 1996 as "National RN Recognition Day."

1997 The ANA Board of Directors, at the request of the National Student Nurses Association, designated May 8 as National Student Nurses Day.

Kathy Massing, RN, BSN, LNC
Risk Consultant

Florence Nightingale Pledge

I solemnly pledge myself before God and in the presence of this assembly, to pass my life in purity and to practice my profession faithfully. I will abstain from whatever is deleterious and mischievous, and will not take or knowingly administer any harmful drug. I will do all in my power to maintain and elevate the standard of my profession, and will hold in confidence all personal matters committed to my keeping and all family affairs coming to my knowledge in the practice of my calling. With loyalty I will endeavor to aid the physician in his work, and devote myself to the welfare of those committed to my care.

This modified "Hippocratic Oath" was composed in 1893 by Mrs. Lystra E. Gretter and a Committee for the Farrand Training School for Nurses, Detroit, Michigan.

Favorite Florence Nightingale Quotes:

“Apprehension, uncertainty, waiting, expectation, fear of surprise, do a patient more harm than any exertion”

“How very little can be done under the spirit of fear”

“I attribute my success to this - I never gave or took any excuse.”

C.N.A. & Resident Assistants: Job Duties, Education and Certification

At this time of year, when we show our appreciation for our hard working C.N.A.'s and RA's, we like to review your actual duties, responsibilities, and career advancement opportunities as well. As most of our insured are employed in Skilled Nursing Facilities and Assisted Living Facilities, my focus will be in these areas. However, most of this information is applicable no matter where you are employed.

Most state's provisions and regulations treat certified nursing assistants in the same manner as the resident aide. Therefore, all job duties and training requirements are the same for both. For example, in Florida, all C.N.A.'s and RA's are approved for and expected to provide the following services:

- Observe the physical appearance and mental functioning of their residents and report these findings to the caregiver or RN in charge.
- Maintain a clean, safe, and healthy environment - which may include light cleaning and straightening of the resident's living areas.
- Provide assistance with all activities of daily living.
- Perform the following activities after documented training has been pro-

vided by an RN. These are restricted to the following tasks: assisting with changing of a colostomy bag; assisting with ROM exercises; measuring intake and output; and taking vital signs.

- Document in the medical file regarding resident status, vital signs, and weights.
- A C.N.A. or RA shall *not* perform invasive procedures routinely performed by an RN, such as: sterile dressing changes; irrigations; enemas; catheterizations; insertion of a gastric tube; application of heat; or caring for a tracheotomy tube.

In order to be employed and provide the care outlined above, you must complete orientation training to consist of at least 40 total hours of the following:

- Communication skills
- Observation, reporting, and documentation of the resident's status and care provided
- Reading and recording of temperature, pulse and respirations
- Infection control procedures, including HIV/AIDS training
- Basic elements of bodily functions that must be reported to an RN or M.D.

- Recognition of emergencies and knowledge of emergency procedures
- Physical, emotional, and developmental characteristics of the population served at your facility
- Appropriate and safe techniques in personal hygiene and grooming – including bathing, shampooing, nail care, skin care and oral hygiene (ADL's)
- Safe transfer and ambulation techniques
- Normal range of motion and proper positioning
- Adequate nutrition and fluid intake
- State laws and rules as related to your facility
- Reporting of incidents and adverse events
- Resident rights and reporting abuse, neglect or exploitation
- Fire safety requirements, evacuation procedures, and elopement drills
- Specific job related duties

Additionally, you may be able to provide self-medication assistance only if you complete the required 4 hour classroom training. Post training you will be



C.N.A. & Resident Assistants: Job Duties, Education and Certification—Continued

allowed to:

- Prepare necessary items such as juice, cups, or spoons to assist the resident.
- Open and close the medication container or tear the pre-packaged foil.
- Assist the resident by steadying their hand, arm, or other body part to allow for ease of self-administration.
- Assist the resident in placing unused doses of solid medication back in to the container.
- Document on the MOR.

As for advancement, you should definitely become certified in First Aid & CPR. This certification is usually provided by your facility.

A copy of your certification should be given to your employer for your file. Additionally, you may want to consider taking the 4 hour medication assistance course, if this is not already required for your job.

Some facilities have an increased pay scale for those who are trained to assist with self-medication. Attend any in-services offered by your facility or community and be sure to provide completion certificates to your employer. Try volunteering for additional duties.

If you wish to advance your education, you may also want to talk with your employer to see if any tuition assistance is provided.

Many times the facility will reimburse a certain percentage of your tuition provided you continue your employment with them for a pre-determined length of time. There are many programs, some via the internet, where you can take LPN courses. Once you obtain an LPN education and license, there are many LPN to RN bridge programs. The goal is to be a life long learner. No matter what age you are, you can always push yourself further and better your mind and circumstances.

Linda McCallum, BSN, RN
Risk Consultant

Vice President of Risk Management's Corner

THANK YOU TO OUR NURSES

One of the most critical things we can do is simply say "thank you". I have another opportunity to recognize and say thank you to all nurses for an outstanding job. Nurses are compassionate care givers and are critical members of the healthcare team. Take a moment and enjoy your recognition, it's well deserved!

- Susan Bugg
Vice President of Risk Management

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