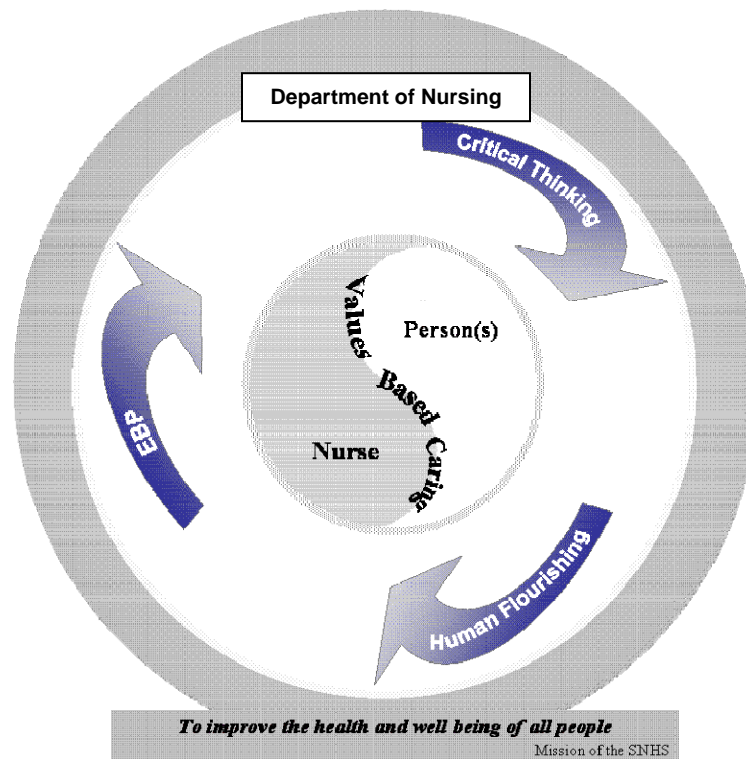


Model of Department of Nursing

The conceptual model of the Department of Nursing in the Georgetown University School of Nursing & Health Studies is a graphic representation of a paradigm that provides a “broad frame of reference for a systematic approach to the phenomena with which the discipline is concerned.” The purpose of the model is to explicitly recognize Georgetown’s vision of nursing that serves as the core of the curriculum. The model serves to guide the development of knowledge and to facilitate the understanding and application of nursing science.

The model is composed of two distinct elements- the core, represented by the circle at the center of the model, and the complementary processes, which contribute to and encourage the dynamic process. Each of these components is in dynamic motion, individually and interactively.

At the core of the model is Values Based Caring, surrounded by the nurse-patient synergistic component. At Georgetown, Values Based Caring is seen as essential to excellence in health care and practice and includes the core values of individual and collective excellence, professional care and compassion, person centered orientation and a commitment to human flourishing, commitment to the common good, and social justice. The goal of the Department of Nursing at Georgetown is to produce graduates who demonstrate great integrity and combine the highest level of scientific knowledge and technological skill with responsible, caring practice.



Definitions of the Model Components

Caring is reflective of the Department of Nursing Values Based Framework and includes individual and collective excellence, professional care and compassion, person centered orientation and commitment to human flourishing, commitment to the common good, and social justice. The Values Based Framework is seen as the core of the model, and synergy operationalizes these values.

1. Individual and collective excellence is the development and maintenance of a culture that challenges complacency and mediocrity. It applies life long commitment to learning, excellence in practice, and community and professional service.
2. Professional care and compassion are essential behaviors that embrace patients, families, and community groups (especially the most vulnerable), colleagues and external groups. These values provide a solid foundation for collaborative practice.
3. Person centered orientation and commitment to human flourishing are qualities that address respect for persons which is central to nursing at Georgetown. This demonstrates that confidence for better health care outcomes is placed not only in scientific and technologic advances but also in the choices humans make for themselves and their communities. This includes but is not limited to the recognition and integration of the influence of growth and development factors on health care outcomes.
4. Commitment to the common good is recognition of the sum total of those things necessary for all persons to have fulfilling lives. It includes working to create a world in which individuals and the communities in which they live and interact are empowered through the process of values, reflection, sharing, compassion, and developing partnerships.
5. Social justice is a commitment to utilizing health care education, practice, and research to address inequities in the way benefits and burdens of health care and other social goods are distributed among members of society

Integral to the core are nurse competencies and person characteristics. Adapted from the American Association of Critical Care Nurses Synergy Model, the nurse competencies include clinical judgment, advocacy, caring practices, facilitator of learning, collaboration, systems thinking, response to diversity, and clinical inquiry. The nurse competencies include an expanded view of the professional nurse as providing health promotion, education, and primary, secondary, and tertiary care in both institutional and community settings. The nurse competencies provide a framework for the nurse to address the health and well being of all people. The “person (s)” as recipient of nursing care may be an individual, a family, or a population. Person characteristics include stability, complexity, vulnerability, resiliency, predictability, resource availability, and participation in decision making and care.

Nurse Competencies

1. Clinical judgment- is the combination of clinical reasoning, decision making, creative thinking, acquired formal and experiential knowledge and skill.
2. Advocacy-is the nurse's ability and desire to work on another's behalf- to represent the concerns of both patients and their families, and includes the identification and willingness to assume a leadership role in ethical and clinical concerns. Effective communication skills are crucial to the role of advocate.
3. Caring practices- is the development of a compassionate and therapeutic environment driven by the unique needs of the patient.
4. Facilitator of learning is the nurse's use of self to facilitate learning.
5. Collaboration is the use of each person's contribution (interdisciplinary or intradisciplinary) to care with the purpose of achieving optimal or realistic goals for the patient.
6. Systems thinking- is the ability of the nurse to recognize the holistic relationships that exist in and across the health care system in the context of the care environment.
7. Response to diversity- is the recognition of the uniqueness of person (s) and the ability to incorporate this uniqueness in the provision of care.
8. Clinical Inquiry- is the ability to engage in an ongoing process of evaluating and questioning health care practice.

In each nurse/patient interaction, the nurse competencies assume a higher or lower degree of importance, depending on the nature of the relationship and the importance of a situation.

Person Characteristics

1. Stability is the person's ability to achieve some level of physiological or psychosocial equilibrium.
2. Complexity is a condition of the person that involves the intricate entanglement of two or more systems (body, family, community, therapies).
3. Vulnerability is the person's susceptibility to actual or potential stressors that have the potential of affecting the outcome adversely.
4. Resiliency is the person's ability to return to a restorative level of functioning by using compensatory and coping mechanisms.

5. Predictability is a summative person characteristic that allows the nurse to expect a typical pattern of human response.
6. Resource availability is the reserves that the person, the family, and the community bring to a situation. These reserves can be personal, psychological, spiritual, social, technical, and financial.
7. Participation in decision making and care is the ability of the person and the family to engage in the plan of care and the outcome.

The premise of this part of the model is that person characteristics drive nurse competencies. When both patient characteristics and nurse competencies match, patient's outcomes are optimized and mutually enhancing. It is the needs of the patient, and not the goals of the nurse, which guide the nursing plan of care and approach to practice.

A goal of the Department of Nursing is to instill in the graduate the complementary processes that contribute to an effective nurse/person dynamic. Complementary processes include critical thinking, human flourishing, and evidenced based practice.

Complementary Processes

- 1.) Evidenced Based Practice is the conscientious, explicit and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the care of person(s). It is the practice of integrating an evaluation of the effectiveness of nursing interventions through scholarly inquiry and research utilization.
- 2.) Critical thinking is a method of problem solving that utilizes a purposeful, systematic approach to thinking. Critical thinkers are characterized by a professional curiosity and demonstrate an organized approach to assessing, prioritizing, and acting to optimize the care of person(s).
- 3.) Human flourishing is the ability for all patients to fulfill their potential. Nurses enhance human flourishing by acknowledging and respecting diversity in culture, beliefs, values, and health practices of persons, families, and communities. Human flourishing supports the philosophy that all persons have potential and that nurses can optimize conditions that maximize the possibilities for each human being to uniquely fulfill their potential.

Additionally, the faculty of the Department of Nursing acknowledges the ever changing and increasingly complex health care environment and the expected competencies that are required of contemporary baccalaureate students. In using this model as a framework, the faculty also accepts the responsibility of integrating technological advances, emerging issues in ethics, expanding and changing nursing theory, global health care concerns, health and social policy, and the professional responsibility of the nurse to contribute to patient advocacy.

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