

6Cs + Principles = Care

Linda Watterson brings together the chief nursing officer for England's 6Cs with the RCN's Principles of Nursing



Every nurse needs to be mindful of their personal contribution to the quality of care delivery. Crucially, this involves the everyday nursing interactions and activities that make up a patient's direct experience of care.

Each nurse needs a clear understanding of what constitutes good nursing. They should then consider whether their personal values and behaviours encompass all of these factors and if they are confident that they demonstrate them in action.

This article offers a means of undertaking such reflection by bringing together the Royal College of Nursing's Principles of Nursing Practice, the CNO's 6Cs and the Nursing Standard/Patients Association CARE campaign.

The four most common areas of complaint from hospital patients and relatives received by the Patients Association are addressed in the CARE campaign:

- C – Communicate with compassion.

- A – Assist with toileting, ensuring dignity.

- R – Relieve pain effectively.

- E – Encourage adequate nutrition.

SUMMARY

Delivering quality care can be guided by mutual sets of priorities as outlined in the chief nursing officer's '6Cs', the RCN's Principles of Nursing Practice and Nursing Standard's Care campaign. Nurses can use the table opposite to help them reflect on their own approach to patient care.

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It recognises that everyone who enters a care setting is entitled to these four aspects of care as a human right. It encourages nurses, nursing directors, chief executives and non-executive directors of NHS organisations to strive to make them a reality.

The list clearly reflects that patients see nursing as not just about what you are doing, but the way you are doing it.

England's chief nursing officer Jane Cummings, in her vision for nursing set out in Compassion in Practice, states that nurses must ensure they are 'delivering quality of care as well as quality of treatment'. She proposes 6Cs for nursing, midwifery and care staff that focus on putting patients at the heart of everything they do.

Need for reflection

Devised with wide stakeholder input, the 6Cs outline 'enduring values and beliefs that underpin care wherever it takes place'.

Like the 6Cs, the RCN's Principles of Nursing Practice cover aspects of behaviour, attitude and approach that underpin good nursing care. The principles apply to all nursing staff, in any setting.

They were developed through working with patients, the public, healthcare colleagues and nurses, and are endorsed by the Nursing and Midwifery Council and patient groups.

The table opposite, which maps the RCN's principles and the 6Cs together, shows that both are concerned with similar issues as the Care campaign.

For example, the first of the Care campaign's concerns – communication – encompasses better listening and shared decision making. It includes accurate record-keeping and sensitive handling of information, and points us towards effective team working.

This highlights the way in which a good patient experience is not only about what the patient sees and feels happening, but is about what the nurse does elsewhere, away from the bedside.

The table can be used to aid individual reflections. Think about a recent interaction with a patient. What stood out positively? What elements made this positive in your view?

Can you identify anything from the table within these positive elements? Having recognised this, how do you feel? What learning can you take forward from this reflection?

Similarly, you can use the table to generate a team discussion about behaviour, attitudes and good nursing care. It may help you to identify what needs to be improved, and occasions when you provided good care.

Mapping the RCN's Principles of Nursing Practice with the CNO's 6Cs is an accessible way of highlighting core professional values and behaviours.

As a nurse, you need to be confident that your approach to nursing embraces these and that you demonstrate them in action. Reflecting on this can help you to understand how quality nursing care is achieved and where you fit in to making sure it is delivered **NS**

Further information

The Care campaign
www.thecarecampaign.co.uk
Compassion in Practice
www.england.nhs.uk/nursingvision
Principles of Nursing Practice
www.rcn.org.uk/principles

Nursing care essentials for reflection and practice			
6Cs	6Cs definitions	RCN Principles of Nursing Practice	RCN Principles themes
CARE	<p>Care is our core business and that of our organisations. The care we deliver helps the individual person and improves the health of the whole community. Caring defines us and our work. People receiving care expect it to be right for them consistently throughout every stage of their lives.</p>	<p>Principle D Nurses and nursing staff provide and promote care that puts people at the centre; involves patients, service users, their families and their carers in decisions; and helps them make informed choices about their treatments and care.</p>	Advocacy, empowerment, patient-centred care and patient involvement in their care.
COMPASSION	<p>Compassion is how care is given, through relationships based on empathy, respect and dignity. It can also be described as intelligent kindness and is central to how people perceive their care.</p>	<p>Principle A Nurses and nursing staff treat everyone in their care with dignity and humanity. They understand their individual needs, show compassion and sensitivity, and provide care in a way that respects all people equally.</p>	Dignity, equality and diversity, and humanity.
COMPETENCE	<p>Competence means all those in caring roles must have the ability to understand an individual's health and social needs and the expertise, clinical and technical knowledge to deliver effective care based on research and evidence.</p>	<p>Principle F Nurses and nursing staff have up-to-date knowledge and skills, and use these with intelligence, insight and understanding in line with the needs of each individual in their care.</p>	Evidence-based practice, technical skills, education, training and clinical reasoning.
COMMUNICATION	<p>Communication is central to successful caring relationships and to effective team working. Listening is as important as what we say and do, and essential for 'no decision about me without me'. Communication is the key to a good workplace, with benefits for staff and patients alike.</p>	<p>Principle E Nurses and nursing staff are at the heart of the communication process: they assess, record and report on treatment and care; handle information sensitively and confidentially; deal with complaints effectively; and are conscientious in reporting the things they are concerned about.</p> <p>Principle G Nurses and nursing staff work closely with their own team and with other professionals, making sure patients' care and treatment is co-ordinated, is of a high standard and has the best possible outcome.</p>	<p>Communication, handling feedback, record-keeping, reporting and monitoring.</p> <p>Care and treatment, multidisciplinary and multi-agency working, and co-ordination, integration and continuity of care.</p>
COURAGE	<p>Courage enables us to do the right thing for the people we care for, to speak up when we have concerns and to have the personal strength and vision to innovate and to embrace new ways of working.</p>	<p>Principle B Nurses and nursing staff take responsibility for the care they provide and answer for their own judgments and actions. They carry out these actions in a way that is agreed with their patients, and the families and carers of their patients, and in a way that meets the requirements of their professional bodies and the law.</p> <p>Principle C Nurses and nursing staff manage risk, are vigilant about risk, and help to keep everyone safe in the places they receive health care.</p>	<p>Ethical integrity, legal integrity, accountability and responsibility.</p> <p>Safety of all people (patients, visitors and staff), the environment, organisational health and safety, management of risk, and clinical safety.</p>
COMMITMENT	<p>Commitment to our patients and populations is a cornerstone of what we do. We need to build on our commitment to improve the care and experience of our patients, to take action to make this vision and strategy a reality for all and meet the health and social care challenges ahead.</p>	<p>Principle H Nurses and nursing staff lead by example, develop themselves and other staff, and influence the way care is given in a manner that is open and responds to individual needs.</p>	Leadership contributing to an open and responsive culture.