



Why is a Nursing Care Delivery System Important?

Care delivery systems are conceptual or philosophical frameworks that describe how organizations approach the care delivered to their patients. It is important to identify the nursing concepts that keep care delivery focused on the patient and their family.

This framework defines nursing as a *profession rather than a task-based job*. It also provides structures that allow the nurse to function as a professional, as a colleague and supports the organization and effective use of resources.

The UVA Nursing Care Delivery System:

The care delivery system endorsed by the UVA PNSO is Relationship-Based Care. Relationship-Based Care is a framework that identifies the three fundamental relationships that define the patient experience: the nurses' relationships to self, to colleagues, and to patients and families. Relationship-Based Care aligns with the organizational goals and values and provides a synergistic approach to excellent outcomes. This system emphasizes the human aspect of care and the relationships that surround the patient.

There are seven principles of a Relationship-Based Care delivery system that help further explain it:

Caring and healing environment- The physical environment and the interactions with those delivering care are the immediate context for the patient's experience. The combination of therapeutic relationships and an environment that meets physical needs and comfort, promotes healing.

Leadership- Each individual nurse has a leadership role in providing care. Compassionate nursing leadership supports the emergence of caring and compassionate leaders from all levels of the organization.

Teamwork- Every individual nurse is accountable for his or her own actions, supports the success of those around them and contributes to the mission of the organization. Commitment to excellent communication and strong collegial relationships creates an environment for great care.

Professional nursing practice – Nurses embrace the responsibilities of professional practice: holding to a set of technical and ethical standards, ongoing self-improvement and development, and accountability for autonomy. The six practice roles that describe the nurse in the context of Relationship-Based Care are: sentry, guide, healer, collaborator, teacher, and leader.

Patient care delivery- Continuity of care is of great value to the patient and supports the relationship between the patient and the nurse. The four elements that define any care delivery system:

1. Nurse/patient relationship and decision-making
2. Work allocation and/or patient assignments
3. Communication between members of the health care team
4. Management of the unit environment

Resource-driven practice- A focus on what resources are available and prioritization of what matters most to the patient and family, instead of what resources are lacking, refocuses the care to benefit the patient and the team. Staffing fluctuations are inevitable in our environment. An empowered approach to prioritized care promotes critical thinking, decision-making and individualization of care.

Outcomes measurement- Meaningful data is used to measure the impact of both relationships and care. Patient satisfaction and clinical outcomes data are used to inspire and motivate so that members of the team understand their relationship to the outcomes they influence.