



2015

Ambulatory Care Nursing Role Delineation Study Executive Summary

October 2016

Executive Summary

In 2015, the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) conducted a Role Delineation Study (RDS) of the Ambulatory Care Nursing role. The study included a focus on entry-level practice and involved a collection of current data on the roles and responsibilities of ambulatory care nurses. A key outcome of this study was an update to the Test Content Outline and item distribution of ANCC's Ambulatory Care Nursing Examination. The study was conducted with two main parts: a national survey and a linking activity. To assist with the work of this study, ANCC selected eight content experts with expertise in Ambulatory Care Nursing to participate in an RDS Content Expert Panel (CEP). All content expert applications are reviewed by a Registered Nurse (RN) to determine if the applicant meets the basic criteria to be considered a content expert in the specialty to which they are applying.

The 2015 Ambulatory Care Nursing RDS involved two sets of activities that ran concurrently: a national web-based survey and a linking activity. The purpose of the development and administration of the national survey was to collect information on the work activities ambulatory care nurses actually perform in practice. The CEP met April 6-8, 2015, to draft a pilot version of the survey and construct the initial map of knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) relevant to the work activities included in the survey. The panel then met for a conference call in June 2015 to review the results of the pilot survey and finalize the national survey.

The national survey was administered as a web-based survey from July to August 2015 and consisted of 91 work activities. A total 1,500 ambulatory care nurses were invited via alert letter to participate in the study. A total of 332 eligible respondents completed the survey (response rate = 22.13%) and indicated that they currently work as an Ambulatory Care Nurse. Data analyses were conducted solely on these 332 respondents.

Concurrent with the survey administration, the Ambulatory Care Nursing CEP participated in a linking activity. In this activity, each panel member identified links between the work activities listed in the survey and the KSAs that are required to successfully perform the work activities. The results from the survey became the basis for discussion of the test content outline for the updated certification examination, and the linking activity results determined the relative weightings of the content domains.

Results from the demographic portion of the survey indicated that the majority of respondents reported being female (96%) and white (77%). Most respondents were in the 55 to 64 age range (45%) or in the 45 to 54 age range (31%). With respect to highest level of education obtained, the majority of respondents (51%) reported holding a Baccalaureate in Nursing. Ninety-nine percent of respondents had fewer than 20 years of experience as an ambulatory care nurse.

The survey respondents rated each work activity on the survey using three scales, which were frequency, performance expectation, and consequences. The responses were then combined and recoded into a new overall criticality scale with

scores that ranged from one to 41. The higher the score on the criticality scale, the more critical the work activity was considered for practice. A total of 22 of the 91 work activities were rated as highly critical by respondents, with an overall criticality rating of 32 or higher.

In September 2015, the panel met along with staff from ANCC for a two-day meeting. The purpose of this second RDS meeting was for the CEP to review the results of the national survey, examine the activity weight structures derived from the survey data and linking activity, and to revise the test content outline and item distribution for ANCC's Ambulatory Care Nursing Certification Examination accordingly.

The mission of the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), a subsidiary of the American Nurses Association (ANA), is to promote excellence in nursing and health care globally through credentialing programs. ANCC's internationally renowned credentialing programs certify and recognize individual nurses in various practice areas. It recognizes healthcare organizations that promote nursing excellence and quality patient outcomes, while providing safe, positive work environments. In addition, ANCC accredits health care organizations that provide and approve continuing nursing education. It also offers educational materials to support nurses and organizations as they work toward their credentials.



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