

## **CHAPTER 4. EDUCATION IN NURSING SERVICE**

### **4.01 STATEMENT OF POLICY**

a. The educational program will assist staff members to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to provide effective patient care, and to fulfill organizational goals. The program will be consonant with current trends and concepts in health care and the nursing professional and standards of nursing practice.

b. Appropriate clinical experiences will be provided for nursing students in accordance with authorized affiliation agreements.

c. The Chief, Nursing Service, will designate a qualified registered nurse to establish, administer and evaluate the educational program.

d. Preceptorship training programs will be provided for key leadership positions in the Nursing Service in accordance with VA policies, guidelines, and the availability of funding.

### **4.02 GENERAL PROVISIONS**

a. The educational program will be an integral part of the Nursing Service quality assurance program. Identified problems in nursing practice will be addressed by appropriate educational activities.

b. Educational activities will be an integral part of the Nursing Career Development Program to assist registered nurses in attaining knowledge, skills, and experience needed for positions of progressive responsibility and leadership.

c. Licensed practical/vocational nurses and nursing assistants will receive assistance in planning for career progression which will enhance their contributions and effectiveness in the care of veterans.

d. Sharing of educational resources available at other VA facilities will be encouraged when needs related to patient care programs cannot be met locally.

e. Requirements for the documentation of educational activities will be established by local policy and procedure.

f. Principles of safety for patients, employees and visitors will be incorporated into educational activities as appropriate.

g. An orientation program will be provided for newly employed nursing personnel. Orientation will include instruction, supervision and guidance necessary to provide effective nursing care and to make a successful adjustment to the work environment.

h. Selected educational activities will be provided periodically on evening and night tours of duty.

i. Continuing education is the individual responsibility of registered nurses and licensed practical/vocational nurses. The purpose of continuing education will be to maintain currency in nursing practice through knowledge of trends and concepts in health care and the nursing profession.

j. Staff members who provide direct patient care will contribute to the orientation/ educational program.

k. Selected joint appointments between schools of nursing and the Nursing Service will be encouraged for qualified personnel.

l. An educational program will be provided for nursing personnel assigned to special care units, such as intensive care and hemodialysis units.

m. The educational program will be reviewed and revised as appropriate to ensure effectiveness in improving nursing practice and meeting organizational goals.

#### **4.03 MANDATORY TOPICS**

Nursing personnel will receive information to assist them in meeting their responsibilities for maintaining a safe patient care environment. VA policies and procedures related to mandatory topics will be presented during the orientation program and thereafter to all nursing personnel in an annual review. Mandatory topics follow:

- a. Safety and fire prevention
- b. Patient evacuation and health mobilization during local and national disasters
- c. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation
- d. Management of an obstructed airway
- e. Radiation safety
- f. Infection control
- g. Protective devices
- h. Patient abuse/neglect
- i. Disturbed behavior and suicide precautions
- j. Administration of blood transfusions
- k. Bioethics
- l. Medical devices, and
- m. Others as locally identified to assure a safe environment.