

Coordination of Care

What does “coordination of care” mean? What is the RN role in coordination of care?

- RNs coordinate care when they identify the health needs of clients and organize the required care. (1)
- As coordinators of care, RNs are team leaders in their practice environments. They coordinate the health care team to analyze and organize complex health challenges into manageable components. They perform assessments and create care plans, provide care, make decisions about assignment and delegation to other care providers, and communicate with other care providers as they oversee and evaluate the ongoing care of clients. (2, 3 and 4)
- The nursing process is comprised of assessment of the client, development of the nursing care plan, care plan implementation and evaluation of the nursing care provided. This is part of the coordination of care and therefore the responsibility of RNs. The RN is responsible and accountable for all of these components. (5)
- Each client requires an RN coordinating the provision of their care needs. (6)
- Assignment is part of the coordination of care and is a decision that identifies the most appropriate care provider for the provision of a client’s care. (7)
- Assignment of care requires the RN to consider the three factors: the client, the RN and the environment. (8)
- Assignment of care occurs not only at the beginning of the shift but throughout the shift as client care needs change. (9)
- When resources are not available to provide appropriate or safe care, RNs collaborate with others to adjust priorities and minimize harm. RNs keep clients receiving the care informed about potential or actual plans regarding the delivery of care. They inform employers about potential threats to the safety and quality of health care. (10)

The RNs in my organization are reporting there are not enough RNs to meet the needs of our clients. What does this mean, since we have an RN/client ratio of 4:1?

The RNs appear to be bringing this concern forward based on the complexity of the care required for the clients for which they are responsible. As coordinators of care, the RN must consider the needs of each client and determine which care provider is best matched to provide the required care. It is possible the staff mix may not be at an optimal level and requires evaluation.

SRNA Resources

[Code of Ethics for registered nurses \(2017\)](#)

[Registered Nurse Practice Standards \(2019\)](#)

[Interpretation of the RN Scope of Practice \(2015\)](#)

[The Registered Nurses Act \(1988\)](#)

[Collaborative Decision-making Framework: Quality Nursing Practice \(2017\)](#)

RN is used to represent all SRNA members including NPs and RN(AAP)s.

External Resources

[CNA Staff Mix Decision-making Framework for Quality Nursing Care \(2012\)](#)

Resource Key		
Number	Resource	Reference
1	Interpretation of the RN Scope of Practice (2015)	page 7
2	Interpretation of the RN Scope of Practice (2015)	page 2
3	Registered Nurse Practice Standards (2019)	Indicator 19, page 4
4	Code of Ethics for Registered Nurses (2017)	B1, page 10
5	Interpretation of the RN Scope of Practice (2015)	page 7
6	Interpretation of the RN Scope of Practice (2015)	page 2
7	Interpretation of the RN Scope of Practice (2015)	page 8
8	Collaborative Decision-making Framework: Quality Nursing Practice (2017)	page 4
9	Collaborative Decision-making Framework: Quality Nursing Practice (2017)	page 9
10	Code of Ethics for Registered Nurses (2017)	A7, page 9