

Homeopathic Nurses Association Standards of Practice

History of Development

The Homeopathic Nurses Association (HNA) Board of Officers identified the need for the development of the Standards of Practice in 2002. The impetus for this document stems from the need to articulate the role of the Homeopathic Nurse (HN) to this nursing association as well as to patients and their families, the public, organizations, employers, educators, and certifying, regulatory and legislative bodies. Additionally, the HNA wishes to promote the advancement of the legitimate role of homeopathic nursing in the health care system and the eventual recognition of HN as a specialty area of nursing that is based on a nucleus of competencies and knowledge.

A Standards Committee was formed in 2003 with members preparing a query and contacting all State Boards of Nursing via telephone, email, and visiting websites as to scope of practice for homeopathy use in nursing. Next, a three phase plan was created to gather, translate, and assimilate data from each BON; to develop a Position Paper and Homeopathic Nursing Standards of Practice; and finally to distribute these documents through informational/educational packets to each State Board Of Nursing. The third phase of this plan was re-evaluated during the general membership meeting in San Jose, California, April 2006 to become a "working document" within the organization as standards for membership in HNA. The goals of the Homeopathic Nurses Standards of Practice are designed to provide competency, consistency, and continuity in patient care through the development of a structure to standardize homeopathic nursing while maximizing patient outcomes and controlling health care costs.

The committee's work on these Standards was through teleconferencing, email, written comments and discussions at the

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Annual Meeting of the HNA and in quarterly tele-meetings of the Standards Committee. HNA is indebted to those members for the foundation they provided for the present Standards Committee. These standards are meant to reflect current knowledge and understanding of homeopathic nursing and were developed, using the American Nurses Association Scope and Standards of Practice and the American Holistic Nurses Association Standards of Holistic Nursing Practice.

INTRODUCTION

The Homeopathic Nurses Association acknowledges the increasing prevalence of homeopathy being offered in conventional healthcare settings. The number of nurses wishing to incorporate homeopathy into their nursing practice is also increasing to meet the needs of patients as well as nursing and public health goals. These current changes in our healthcare system necessitate the development of homeopathic nursing standards of practice to: ensure patient safety, provide patients with information needed to make informed decisions, maintain ethical and quality standards of care, assist nurses in attaining competence, skill, and awareness of current research and literature in homeopathy, and assure trained and certified homeopathic nurses will be a valuable asset to the health care profession. The HNA is the leadership organization for the advancement and integration of homeopathy in nursing.

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OVERVIEW

The HNA asserts nurses are obligated to contribute to shaping the nursing profession and, because nurses closely interact with health care consumers in a wide variety of settings, they have a broad appreciation of the homeopathic needs of patients.

Homeopathy is uniquely well suited as a modality for nurses to recommend and to practice professionally. Nurses are in excellent status and ability to assist in the transition from an allopathic model of medicine to integrative health care.

Homeopathic nursing is grounded in nursing and homeopathy and can be implemented in a framework of the nursing process.

Homeopathic nurses are committed to the principles of holism and to health promotion rather than disease identification.

Homeopathic nurses embrace knowledge, theories, and expertise of both nursing and homeopathy. Nursing provides the most holistic approach to healing of any of the conventional modalities because of nurses' unique bio-psycho-social understanding of the patient.

Homeopathy as a holistic healing system works on a collaborative model, with the nurse homeopath encouraging the patient to observe and report her/his own subjective experience of disturbance in the vital force as a primary basis for assessment in addition to more objective measures. Nurses have been actively promoting homeopathy since Florence Nightingale, who was one of its proponents (Calabria & Macrae, 1994; Seymer, 1954). Nurses can take a number of significant roles with respect to homeopathy.

Alternative and complementary therapies are being implemented in nursing curricula in the United States and Britain (Ching, 1998; Kligler, 1996; <http://web.uccs.edu/bethel>) and since homeopathy

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is not currently a licensed profession in the United States, it is a well-suited addition to the scope of practice in nursing. Advocates of homeopathy are working toward building a homeopathic profession that would encompass training in homeopathy and the medical sciences, ultimately leading to licensure and practice, but would be limited to the practice of homeopathy.

There are a growing number of homeopaths that are unlicensed and practicing in the United States who are practicing with safety and efficacy in various states with Health Freedom Acts. The demand for well-trained homeopaths in the United States is increasing and nursing is the ideal prerequisite for professional homeopathic practice. Currently, advanced practice nurses educated in homeopathy provide safe care to patients, have credibility with the public as well as with traditional health care providers, and are at the forefront of health care reform. It is not necessary to be educated at the advanced practice nursing level to be a safe and effective homeopathic nurse. Nurses educated in homeopathy possess the ability to assist in the integration of allopathic and homeopathic care.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Nursing and homeopathy parallel each other as arts and sciences. Both focus on the whole person caring for patients at all stages of the life cycle and in all states of health from health promotion, enhancement, and education related to normal growth and development, to caring for persons and their families experiencing an acute health crisis or a persistent illness. Nursing and homeopathic science involves the study of life processes within the human system and environment for the purpose of assisting clients in the promotion, maintenance and restoration of optimal levels of wellness. Both nursing

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philosophy and homeopathic philosophy each encompass a specialized body of knowledge built upon science with specified outcomes related to health and holism. The art and science of homeopathic nursing proffers theories grounded in Rogers and Newman, where pathology is seen as a manifestation of a total pattern and health is the unity and harmony of the body-mind-spirit.

The parallel between homeopathy and nursing continues. Samuel Hahnemann (1755-1820, was a German physician and the founder of homeopathy. Hahnemann and Florence Nightingale lived in a time when homeopathy and allopathy (Western medicine) were in opposition with each other. Like Nightingale, Hahnemann wanted a safer, more natural, and whole approach to the patient, than what was being offered. By the 17th Century, scientific approach to treating illnesses was heralded and believed to be more significant than natural approaches to healing. Thus began the separation of the body from the mind and the spirit with regard to illness and healing and Nightingale's and Hahnemann's quest for whole patient care.

Both were scientists, reformers, prolific writers and visionaries. Like Hahnemann in medicine, Nightingale offered many contributions to the field of nursing, believing in a holistic approach to health and wellness. They both believed in providing the safest, most effective and efficient way to treat patients. Their adherence to the concepts of: proper sleep and exercise, proper nutrition, exposure to sunlight, fresh air, and good water were tantamount to maintaining health. Nightingale and Hahnemann worked to improve sanitary conditions in hospitals, Nightingale reducing mortality rates with sanitary commissions and Hahnemann reducing mortality rates of plaque victims using homeopathic

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remedies. Both were researchers and scientists who documented their findings with outcomes definitively relating to health and holism. The strength of nursing's heritage corresponds to the foundations of homeopathy and it is only fitting that nurses be permitted to incorporate homeopathy into their scope of practice

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Homeopathic Nursing Practice

The homeopathic nurse utilizes homeopathic and holistic philosophy in the process of implementing homeopathic health care. The homeopathic nurse conducts the assessment, analysis, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the homeopathic nursing process. The homeopathic nursing process is based on nursing theories that incorporate the concepts of human energy field and the environmental energy field, which are explained in Rogers' Theory of Unitary Human Beings Newman's Theory of Expanding Consciousness and on homeopathic theories based on the work of Samuel Hahnemann, the founder of homeopathy. Homeopathic nursing practice is a thorough, unique, individualized and holistic philosophical process based on the following five standards of care.

1.0 Assessment

Homeopathic nurses assess each patient homeopathically through correct nursing and homeopathic techniques.

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- 1.1 The homeopathic nurse assesses each patient according to homeopathic principles utilizing accepted nursing techniques and homeopathic methods of assessment.
- 1.2 The homeopathic nurse documents each patient's history and findings utilizing traditional nursing methods and the unique method of the homeopathic interview (otherwise known as "case taking").
- 1.3 The homeopathic nurses encourages the patient's history to be given in the patient's own words, to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the individuality of the patient.
- 1.4 Homeopathic nurses view symptoms as manifestations of an imbalance in the vital force of the patient that reveal the susceptibility of the patient to illness. All aspects of the person--physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, psychosocial, cultural, and transpersonal are taken into consideration when assessing the patient's symptoms.
- 1.5 The homeopathic nurse acknowledges and understands the significance of different types of patient

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symptoms and symptom modalities. In addition to objective signs and subjective symptoms, other considerations regarding types of symptoms include presenting, general, concomitant, and characteristic symptoms, as well as strange, rare, and peculiar symptoms. Symptom modalities include time of day, periodicity, effects of food, environmental influences, effects of motion, symptom location, body position, sleep state, and other factors that may aggravate or alleviate symptoms.

2.0 Homeopathic Nursing Case Analysis

- 2.1 The homeopathic nurse conducts an analysis of the patient's information (the "case") from the homeopathic interview to determine the unique symptom picture of the patient which is the sum total of the patient's heredity, past history, spiritual condition, and present complaint.
- 2.2 The homeopathic nurse repertorizes the case after the homeopathic interview is completed. The homeopathic case analysis is to determine the imbalance in the vital force or energy of the patient for the purpose of health restoration and maintenance.
- 2.3 The homeopathic nurse organizes the data collected in the assessment process and creates symptom hierarchies to determine the correct rubric to determine the proper remedy based on the "Law of Similars." The symptom picture of the patient is the key to the energetic imbalance in the vital force and indicates the appropriate homeopathic remedy to correct the imbalance in the vital force.
- 2.4 The homeopathic nurse is competent in the skill of choosing the correct rubrics to correspond to the unique presentation of the patient's symptom picture. The homeopathic nurse strives for a complete understanding of the whole patient.
- 2.5 The homeopathic nurse displays competence in matching the similimum with the case (the patient's energetic pattern). The similimum correlates to the patient's vital force (the state of the patient's

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energy field) that is analyzed as part of the component of the patient.

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3.0 Homeopathic Nursing Planning

- 3.1 The homeopathic nurse reviews the assessment data collected during the homeopathic case-taking interview. The data becomes the foundation of the case and from this information the homeopathic nurse repertorizes the patient's case to determine the required homeopathic remedy to correct the imbalance in the vital force.
- 3.2 The patient's unique symptom picture (energetic pattern) is identified from the assessment and is examined for similarities to homeopathic remedies. When the patient's unique symptom picture matches a remedy that has been "proven" (according to homeopathic principles) to create a similar picture, the homeopathic plan is established and the appropriate homeopathic remedy (the simillimum) is chosen for administration.

4.0 Homeopathic Nursing Implementation

- 4.1 The homeopathic nurse recommends a specific homeopathic remedy is chosen based on the plan.

The homeopathic nurse educates the patient regarding proper administration of the homeopathic remedy. The health education includes information regarding dosing, antidoting the effects of the homeopathic remedy, and the possibility of aggravation of the patient's symptom picture, as well as the plan for the evaluation of the effect of the homeopathic remedy.

5.0 Homeopathic Nursing Evaluation

- 5.1 The homeopathic nurse evaluates the effectiveness of the homeopathic remedy in the patient's process of health. The evaluation is ongoing with the interval for following up determined by the acuteness or chronicity of the patient's case. At that time the homeopathic nurse and patient review together any changes, which have occurred since the remedy was taken. The homeopathic nurse determines whether or not the homeopathic remedy is effective in assisting the patient's movement towards health or if a different homeopathic remedy is indicated based on the patient's report.

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- 5.2** The homeopathic nurse documents the outcome of the patient's progress and any changes in the symptom picture that occur subsequent to the administration of the chosen homeopathic remedy.