

# Competencies for Senior Nurse Leaders in LTC

## Vision Statement

*The Exceptional Nurse Leader in Long Term Care:*

- *Leads with integrity, knowledge, passion, and compassion to enhance an environment of shared values;*
- *Models excellence, advocacy, and innovation;*
- *Champions and inspires the provision of quality service that exceeds customer expectations; and*
- *Is a trusted steward of human and facility resources*

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## **Competency Parameters and Assumptions**

An excellent Nurse Leader in Long Term Care will demonstrate some level of competence in all the areas of the competency definition.

The following statements clarify the parameters of the competency definition:

1. Although it may be desirable, it is not realistic to expect that a Nurse Leader would be equally competent in all areas. Further, because of the diversity of educational backgrounds and experience, it is expected that the development of competence in all of the areas is unlikely. A reasonable expectation for that Nurse Leader (with education and experience) would be standard or above standard competence in all seven areas, and outstanding performance in some. This assessment would be on the basis of multiple data.
2. The definition does not deal with the nursing practice. What the Nurse Leader does and how that is accomplished are inseparable; both are of crucial importance in effective delivery of care. Every competent Nurse Leader will be well prepared, accurate, and up-to-date regarding nursing. Therefore, this definition of competency deals only with the Nurse Leader process.
3. The competency definition should not be considered as fixed and unchangeable. Nor should it be considered that all persons studying it must accept every point, although common acceptance is important for purposes of the workshop. It is the result of analysis and endorsement by a significant number of administrators, nurse leaders, and practitioners in multiple settings.
4. The definition does not prescribe a single style or method of leadership; there are many effective strategies. It does not suggest that an Nurse Leader fit a common mold; rather it clarifies and broadens the role of a Nurse Leader. The definition identifies those factors which contribute to competence.
5. The seven areas in the definition are not totally discrete, but to some degree are interrelated. They are separated here for the purposes of analysis and clarification by the workshop participants.
6. It will be noted that the definition is not limited to any single environment, facility or situation, but encompasses all responsibilities appropriately performed by the Nurse Leader. Therefore, some further clarification of areas most appropriate for different situations may need to be done. As noted earlier, this definition of competency is seen as a dynamic document.

# Final Competencies

## Senior Nurse Leaders in Long Term Care

### **Role 1 Leader**

The exceptional nurse leader in long term care models, advocates, communicates and leads in creating systems, processes and programs all within the focus of the facility/organizational mission and vision.

The Exceptional Nurse Leader in Long Term Care:

- 1.1** Models the organization's values and mission/vision in his/her daily work and interactions with others.
- 1.2** Works collaboratively with other managers to implement and achieve facility short and long term goals which are aligned with organizational vision/mission.
- 1.3** Collaboratively develops department's long and short range goals which are aligned with organization's vision/mission.
  - 1.3.1 Develops implementation strategies to achieve those goals.
- 1.4** Leads in creating systems, processes and programs that further attain organization's vision, mission and goals.
  - 1.4.1 Communicates needs to upper management.
  - 1.4.2 Reinvents his/her role as necessary to assist the organization in achieving its vision/mission.
  - 1.4.3. Explores relationship of organization strategic priorities with cues from the external environment and global trends.

Role 1 Leader - continued

- 1.5** Communicates the organization's vision /mission effectively to others.
  - 1.5.1 Helps teams and individuals maintain their focus on the organization's mission/vision.
- 1.6** Serves as clinical expert resource, involving other disciplines to achieve quality care and service.
- 1.7** Advocates for innovative and creative approaches to meeting organizational needs and furthering the mission/vision.
  - 1.7.1 models and reinforces positive thinking and positive outcomes.
  - 1.7.2 willingly accepts appropriate risk taking.
  - 1.7.3 encourages taking calculated risks in decision-making.
- 1.8** Is flexible, adapting to new ideas and paradigms.
  - 1.8.1 actively seeks to generate new ideas and change as appropriate.
- 1.9** Embraces position with passion for service to all customers and care givers.
- 1.10** Actively seeks ongoing feedback to make necessary changes/adjustments from current to desired state.
  - 1.10.1 Incorporates planning and implementation elements in every change.
  - 1.10.2 Is sensitive to staff needs at all levels to be involved and to feel part of the organizational/facility culture.
  - 1.10.3 Values and incorporates staff opinions in decision making.

Role 1 Leader - continued

- 1.11** Consistently models effective leadership through personal behavior.
  - 1.11.1 Executes tasks and responsibilities with utmost integrity, credibility and trustworthiness.
  - 1.11.2 Models excellence and a commitment to quality.
  - 1.11.3 Integrates standards of professional practice.
  - 1.11.4 Respects the beliefs, values and customs of individuals.
  - 1.11.5 Inspires mutual trust and confidence.
  
- 1.12** Carries out supervisory responsibilities in accordance with organizational policies and applicable laws.
  - 1.12.1 Delegates as appropriate.
  - 1.12.2 Mentors and develops subordinates in their professional growth.
  - 1.12.3 Uses independent judgment and discretion.
  
- 1.13** Efficiently uses time management principles to ensure timely accomplishment of all duties.
  
- 1.14** Champions lifelong personal and professional learning.
  - 1.14.1 Systematically assesses need for personal and professional education.
  - 1.14.2 Uses various strategies to improve, such as continuing education, professional credentialing, collaboration with other community organizations, public speaking, research, marketing, networking, etc.
  - 1.14.3 Creates a variety of growth and self-improvement opportunities.

Role 1 Leader - continued

**1.15** Actively participates in the profession's efforts to implement and improve standards of:

- 1.15.1 professional practice and
- 1.15.2 long term care.

**1.16** Functions as facility liaison with community professionals and leaders for:

- 1.16.1 providing coordinated client care.
- 1.16.2 maintaining public relations.
- 1.16.3 improving community perception of the facility's image.

**Role 2 Performance Improvement Catalyst**

The exceptional nurse leader in long term care acts as a catalyst to systematically analyze and evaluate performance, design and implement strategies, and empower staff toward performance improvement.

The Exceptional Nurse Leader in Long Term Care:

- 2.1** Models continuous quality performance improvement philosophy and techniques in daily behavior.
- 2.2** Communicates performance expectations clearly.
- 2.3** Evaluates situations to identify performance improvement opportunities.
  - 2.3.1 Identifies underlying dynamics or root cause of problems.
  - 2.3.2 Examines clinical practice.
- 2.4** Maintains objective focus on needed changes in operational process rather than on people involved.
- 2.5** Collects objective data.
- 2.6** Uses objective data to analyze problems and measure outcomes to enhance continuous improvement.

Role 2 Performance Improvement  
Catalyst - continued

- 2.7 Uses analysis strategies including both quantitative and qualitative measures.
- 2.8 Ensures implementation of planned interventions that promote performance improvement.
- 2.9 Implements, monitors and updates plans to improve facility/department quality indicators.
- 2.10 Develops and uses a variety of instruments to evaluate outcomes regarding customer satisfaction, employee turnover/retention, quality of care, etc.
- 2.11 Empowers staff to participate in decision-making.
  - 2.11.1 Promotes and enables interdisciplinary collaboration and cooperation.
  - 2.11.2 Utilizes collective wisdom and decision making capabilities of staff.
  - 2.11.3 Integrates processes and programs across departments.
- 2.12 Promotes staff self-evaluation and learning targeted toward performance improvement.
  - 2.12.1 Encourages staff to set individual and team goals.
- 2.13 Seeks feedback on own performance from supervisors, peers, and staff.
- 2.14 Acknowledges and celebrates successes to reinforce progress and achievement.

**Role 3 Interpersonal Relations**  
**Facilitator**

The exceptional nurse leader in long term care models healthy communication, interacts sensitively, and promotes cooperative behaviors.

The Exceptional Nurse Leader in long-term care:

- 3.1** Communicates organizational values in daily work.
- 3.2** Communicates effectively with various populations based on their needs, interests, and desired results. Populations include nursing members, physicians and other clinical practitioners, internal and external customers, families and visitors and staff at all levels.
- 3.3** Models healthy communication.
  - 3.3.1 Builds trust through honest interactions.
  - 3.3.2 Extends courtesy to every person.
  - 3.3.3 Exhibits empathy toward individuals in all situations.
  - 3.3.4 Is sensitive to the impact of his/her communication on others.
- 3.4** Interacts sensitively with diverse populations.
  - 3.4.1 Respects beliefs, values, and customs of all individuals.
- 3.5** Communicates effectively with all levels of the organization - senior management, peers, and employees.
- 3.6** Communicates effectively through written, speaking and listening channels
  - 3.6.1 Uses active listening skills.
- 3.7** Honors confidentiality as appropriate to the situation.
- 3.8** Supports appropriate communication for small groups and teams.
  - 3.8.1 Communicates expectations.
  - 3.8.2 Promotes cooperative behaviors.

Role 3 Interpersonal Relations  
Facilitator – continued

3.8.3 Seeks feedback in order to improve communications.

**3.9** Uses effective communications in managing conflict and making decisions.

3.9.1 Presents feedback constructively.

**3.10** Displays and encourages appropriate humor.

**Role 4 Human Resources Developer**

The exceptional nurse leader in long term care develops strategies to recruit and retain, coach, assure quality education/training, and ensure meaningful work to maximize job satisfaction of the facility's human resources.

**4.1** Works collaboratively to recruit and select exceptional staff.

**4.2** Exhibits skillful interview techniques.

**4.3** Implements effective strategies to retain quality staff.

4.3.1 Participates in developing, reviewing, and revising job descriptions.

4.3.2 Reviews retention policies and procedures and modifies them as needed.

4.3.3 Makes jobs meaningful, challenging, and contributory to the department and the organization.

**4.4** Ensures staffing patterns and processes which maximize resident care and deployment of staff.

**4.5** Enforces regulatory and employee law compliance. Such may include:

4.5.1 OSHA requirements.

Role 4 Human Resources Developer -  
continued

- 4.5.2 Physical, TB or drug testing.
- 4.5.3 Worker compensation.
- 4.5.4 Child/adult abuse reporting.
- 4.6** Maintains complete, accurate, and confidential staff records or collaborates with appropriate department (such as Human Resources.)
  - 4.6.1 Initiates, maintains, and follows up on each work related injury/illness with complete and accurate worker compensation reports and records, adhering to company policy.
  - 4.6.2 Verifies current licensure, registration or certification.
- 4.7** Oversees an effective staff performance appraisal system.
  - 4.7.1 Bases system on clear and meaningful, job-based criteria
  - 4.7.2 Collects objective data as basis for feedback.
  - 4.7.3 Supports timely completion and delivery of performance appraisals by staff.
  - 4.7.4 Ensures follow-up with coaching/counseling and mentoring/training.
- 4.8** Implements the organization's progressive disciplinary policy in a fair and consistent manner.
- 4.9** Assures implementation of organization's internal grievance process when activated.
- 4.10** Provides staff with outside resources and other services as appropriate.
- 4.11** Provides effective clinical orientation and on-going training.

Role 4 Human Resources Developer –  
continued

- 4.11.1 Uses adult learning principles.
- 4.11.2 Analyzes patterns and trends to develop programs.
- 4.11.3 Utilizes staff as trainers and mentors.

**4.12** Collaboratively ensures that employee handbook, policy and procedure manuals, and other materials are current, readily available, and used in orientation and training.

**4.13** Actively promotes training and education for staff, residents and community.

- 4.13.1 Participates in all new programs and attends or drops in on others.
- 4.13.2 Promotes flexible scheduling so staff on all shifts can attend.

**4.14** Models expert coaching and mentoring

**Role 5 Resource and Finance  
Manager**

The exceptional nurse leader in long term care budgets, manages resources, and monitors revenues and expenses in order to optimize available resources and finances.

The exceptional Nurse Leader in long term care:

**5.1** Continually collects and assesses staffing, equipment, and supply data to note budget implications.

- 5.1.1 Makes realistic budget projections.
- 5.1.2 Considers clinical profit and loss information.

**5.2** Develops a realistic budget for the nursing department that meets objectives & financial parameters.

Role 5 Resources and Finance  
Manager – continued

- 5.3** Monitors revenues and expenses throughout the year.
  - 5.3.1 Uses regular reports (daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly) to track expenditures.
  - 5.3.2 Modifies budget priorities, based on budget variances.
- 5.4** Creatively manages flexible staffing patterns that meet changing client service level/needs.
- 5.5** Manages non-personnel resources to minimize negative impact on financial operations.
  - 5.5.1 Develops creative and efficient use of budget resources.
  - 5.5.2 Monitors adequate inventory of supplies and equipment.
  - 5.5.3 Engages staff in exploring best use of budget resources.
- 5.6** Delegates and then holds staff accountable for efficient use of resources.
- 5.7** Establishes and nurtures vendor relationships.
- 5.8** Keeps current on reimbursement program regulations and methodology.

**Role 6 Standards and Compliance**  
**Expert Resources**

The exceptional nurse leader in long term care is a regulatory (expert) resource, institutes pro-active strategies to meet and exceed standards, and assures meeting of ongoing compliance standards and high standards of care.

The exceptional Nurse Leader in long-term care:

- 6.1** Maintains current knowledge of Federal, State and local standards and regulations for long term care, such as those for certification, licensure and accreditation, Medicare, state Medicaid and, if applicable, JCAHO.
- 6.2** Educates his/her staff and other departments on regulations and standards.
- 6.3** Interprets regulatory standards to residents and external customers such as families, discharge planners, referral sources, insurance companies, etc.
- 6.4** Establishes optimum care standards which meet or exceed compliance requirements.
- 6.5** Establishes systems and protocols that promote meeting and exceeding regulatory standards.
- 6.6** Ensures maintenance of high standards of nursing care in daily operations.
- 6.7** Promotes survey preparedness at all times.
  - 6.7.1** Maintains survey readiness via current accurate reports and department records.
- 6.8** Takes a proactive position during the survey by being well-informed regarding regulations, the survey process, and the facility, residents and staff.
- 6.9** Implements necessary corrective action based on accurate analysis of non-compliance areas.
- 6.10** Institutes pro-active risk management strategies

## **Role 7 Customer Service Advocate**

The exceptional nurse leader in long term care is continually customer-focused, builds and maintains trust relationships, initiates/seek satisfaction feedback, and implements/evaluates improvement in customer services.

The Exceptional Nurse Leader in Long Term Care:

- 7.1** Builds and maintains trust relationships with customers.
- 7.2** Initiates customer feedback to determine satisfaction with nursing care and services.
- 7.3** Conducts ongoing customer service monitoring in order to assess customer needs, expectations, and priorities.
- 7.4** Empowers staff to develop new ideas and standards to exceed customer expectations.
- 7.5** Makes adjustments to current services to accommodate changing customer needs and expectations.
- 7.6** Ensures timely response to customers, by both developing new systems and upgrading existing ones.
- 7.7** Models customer focus in all interactions.
- 7.8** Supports staff orientation and ongoing training on positive customer service by all staff to all customers.
- 7.9** Ensures a complaint friendly culture.
  - 7.9.1** Creates safe and comfortable opportunities for customers to complain.
  - 7.9.2** Patiently facilitates conversations to uncover underlying situation dynamics
  - 7.9.3** Maintains confidentiality regarding resident and employee information
  - 7.9.4** Handles every complaint discreetly and professionally.

- 7.10** Assures smooth transition of new admissions.
  - 7.10.1 Reviews new and potential admissions to ensure needs can be met
  - 7.10.2 Communicates effectively with newly admitted residents and family members to ensure that their expectations are heard and that the facility's capabilities are clear.
- 7.11** Assures follow-through on customer issues.