

Advanced Practice in Nephrology Nursing

The present health care environment mandates increased access to high quality, cost-effective, patient and family focused care. Trends in the incidence and prevalence of chronic kidney disease (CKD) indicate that this patient population will continue to grow. This growth will be accompanied by an increased need for qualified health care providers who have the knowledge and skills to manage, provide, and coordinate the care of this complex patient population. Advance Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) in nephrology nursing are qualified providers to meet the needs of this patient population.

It is the position of the American Nephrology Nurses Association (ANNA) that:

- The APRN in nephrology, transplantation and related therapies, by virtue of education, training, and certification, as well as documented competencies, is able to provide safe, competent, high-quality care in a cost-effective manner. In addition, the APRN focuses on promoting the health and well-being of patients and on preventing disease and/or its subsequent complications along the entire continuum of kidney dysfunction. The APRN may provide and coordinate the care of patients with kidney disease in the acute, chronic, and primary care settings and across all treatment modalities. The APRN is an integral member of the health care team and works collaboratively with other health care professionals to assure the highest standard of quality care.
- The clinical role is central to the APRN. Nurses with graduate degrees may hold a variety of positions including, but not limited to, management, research, education, case management, care coordination, and quality management. The advanced practice nurse works collaboratively with these professionals to provide quality care.
- Consistent with ANA's Nursing's Social Policy Statement and Consensus Model for APRN Regulation: Licensure, Accreditation, Certification & Education (APRN Consensus Work Group, 2008), the minimum requirements for an APRN with specialization in nephrology are graduate level preparation and initial certification in an APRN role in one population focus, including family/individual across the lifespan, adult-gerontology, neonatal, pediatrics, women's health/gender related, and/or psychiatric-mental health. Certification of the APRN as a clinical nurse specialist or nurse practitioner is a method to recognize competence by the profession. Certification at the advanced practice level requires a graduate degree from an accredited program that provides both the necessary didactic and clinical experiences in the area of certification. The APRN in nephrology nursing refers exclusively to those caring for patients in the nurse practitioner or clinical specialist role with prescriptive and autonomous authority as defined by each state's nurse practice act. Additional certification as a Certified Nephrology Nurse (CNN) or Certified Nephrology Nurse - Nurse Practitioner (CNN-NP) is preferred.
- The scope of practice of the APRN should allow maximum utilization of their education and skill set including autonomous practice and full prescriptive authority with support of this practice within each state's nurse practice act. APRN regulations should be revised as necessary to support portability within states. The APRN should be recognized by insurance panels for direct reimbursement.

- The APRN should be included in care models/projects, e.g. End Stage Renal Disease Seamless Care Organizations (ESCOs), and/or Disease Management Programs, to assist in the development and facilitation of standards of care to improve kidney care.

Skill sets of the APRN in nephrology include the ability to:

- a. Independently assess, conceptualize, diagnose and coordinate care for complex health problems;
- b. Assess the health care needs of individuals, families, groups and communities across the health care continuum;
- c. Use the nursing process to diagnose, plan, implement, and manage care as well as to evaluate the outcomes of that care;
- d. Provide expert nursing care to individuals with varying degrees of kidney impairment;
- e. Assist patients and families with modality choices (including hemodialysis, peritoneal dialysis, transplant, and conservative management);
- f. Prescribe, administer, and evaluate pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic therapeutic treatment regimens;
- g. Focus on care that promotes health, prevents kidney disease, presents and/or manages the complications of acute and chronic disease and prevents disability;
- h. Support the palliative care and end-of-life needs of patients and their families;
- i. Manage acute and chronic kidney disease in a variety of health care settings;
- j. Explore, test, and advance scientific theories upon which nursing practice is based;
- k. Provide leadership within the area of nephrology through consultation, clinical practice, education, and research;
- l. Contribute to the generation of the knowledge base for nursing and specifically nephrology nursing through research, publications, presentations, and participation in the development of standards and clinical practice guidelines;
- m. Provide leadership for practice changes through advocacy and legislative activities;
- n. Provide leadership for nephrology nursing to be an integral part of disease management proposals, quality improvement measures and outcome management activities; and
- o. Contribute to the advancement of the profession as a whole.

Reference

APRN Joint Dialogue Group. (2008). *Consensus model for APRN regulation: Licensure, accreditation, certification and education*. Retrieved from <https://www.nursingworld.org/certification/aprn-consensus-model/faq-consensus-model-for-aprn-regulation/>

Suggested Readings

American Nurses Association (2015). *Code of ethics for nurses with interpretive statements*. Washington, DC: American Nurses Association. Retrieved from <https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/nursing-excellence/ethics/code-of-ethics-for-nurses/coe-view-only/>

Gomez, N. (2017). *Nephrology nursing scope and standards of practice* (8th ed.). Pitman, NJ: American Nephrology Nurses Association.

National Governors Association. (2012). *The role of the nurse practitioner in meeting the demand for primary care*. Retrieved from <https://www.nga.org/cms/home/nga-center-for-bestpractices/centerpublications/page-health-publications/col2-content/main-content-list/the-role-of-nurse-practitioners.html>

Institute of Medicine. (2010). *The future of nursing: Leading change, advancing health*. Retrieved July 14, 2013 from <http://www.nursingworld.org/MainMenuCategories/ThePracticeofProfessionalNursing/workforce/IOM-Future-of-Nursing-Report-1>

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