



Practice Direction

Documentation

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Background

Practice directions set out requirements related to specific aspects of registered psychiatric nursing practice and provide more detailed information related to the *Registered Psychiatric Nurses Act*, the *Registered Psychiatric Nurse Regulation*, other relevant legislation, the *Standards of Psychiatric Nursing Practice* and the *CRPNM Code of Ethics*.

The intent of this practice direction is to set standards for RPNs regarding documentation principles in the context of current theory, practices and best available evidence. This document is intended to complement the *Code of Ethics* and the *Standards of Psychiatric Nursing Practice* and any legislation and other resources that help to guide professional practice.

Practice Direction

All Registered Psychiatric Nurses must document information in a clear, factual, objective, timely, accurate and consistent manner that is reflective of the care they provide. These standards apply to all psychiatric nurses regardless of their role, job description or area of practice.

Practice Expectations

1. The Registered Psychiatric Nurse is responsible and accountable for documenting in the client care record they provide to the client. This is regardless of the role, job description or area of practice.
2. The Registered Psychiatric Nurse recognizes that documentation is a valuable tool for demonstrating sound psychiatric nursing knowledge, skills and judgment within the context of the therapeutic client-nurse relationship.

- 3.** The Registered Psychiatric Nurse documents on all clients- whether an individual, family, group, community or population. The Registered Psychiatric Nurses adapts their documentation accordingly for the client(s) needs and outcomes. For example, when working with groups, the RPN would document the service provided and overall observations pertaining to the group as well as individual client records when the information pertains to one client within the group.
- 4.** The Registered Psychiatric Nurse documents based on integrated assessment findings. When the client is acutely ill, in a high-risk situation or has complex health care needs, the RPN carries out more comprehensive, in-depth and frequent documentation.
- 5.** The Registered Psychiatric Nurse must practice within the boundaries of legislative, regulatory, legal, ethical and professional standards and must adhere to employer policies surrounding documentation principles.
- 6.** The Registered Psychiatric Nurse documents all relevant information about the client in chronological order in the client record. The documentation must be: clear, factual, objective, timely, accurate and consistent manner that is reflective of the care they provide.
- 7.** The Registered Psychiatric Nurse applies the nursing process to their documentation. This includes: assessment, formulating a psychiatric nursing diagnosis, planning, implementation and evaluation of the outcomes. The RPN documents based on data collected through all aspects of the nursing process.
- 8.** The Registered Psychiatric Nurse documents, at minimum, enough information to coordinate and carry out the client's treatment and/or care plan.
- 9.** The Registered Psychiatric Nurse documents at the time of care or immediately after care is provided. If the RPN is required to document care after the point in time at which it occurred, the RPN documents late entries accordingly.
- 10.** The Registered Psychiatric Nurse does not alter, modify or destroy client care records in any way. The RPN follows standards regarding appropriate way(s) for disposal of health records.
- 11.** The Registered Psychiatric Nurse corrects all documentation errors in a timely, honest and forthright manner. The RPN clearly shows the person making the alteration, the date and time and the original entry that is being corrected.

- 12.** The Registered Psychiatric Nurse safeguards the privacy, security and confidentiality of the client care records and upholds the laws of relevant privacy legislation and informed consent.
- 13.** The Registered Psychiatric Nurse signs with a unique identifier and always indicates their professional designation whether by written signature or electronic record.
- 14.** The Registered Psychiatric Nurse follows all applicable electronic documentation standards and guidelines for telehealth or telecommunication.
- 15.** The Registered Psychiatric Nurse documents in collaboration with other health care providers and recognizes each individual role in documentation. The RPN does not assume responsibility for documenting for another health care provider.
- 16.** RPNs participate in shared standardized documentation systems; i.e. the client's medical record, that promote interprofessional communication, documentation, transparent decision making and care planning that is evidenced based, transparent and accessible.

Contact the Practice Consultant

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