



COLLEGE OF NURSES  
OF ONTARIO  
ORDRE DES INFIRMIÈRES  
ET INFIRMIERS DE L'ONTARIO

THE STANDARD OF CARE.

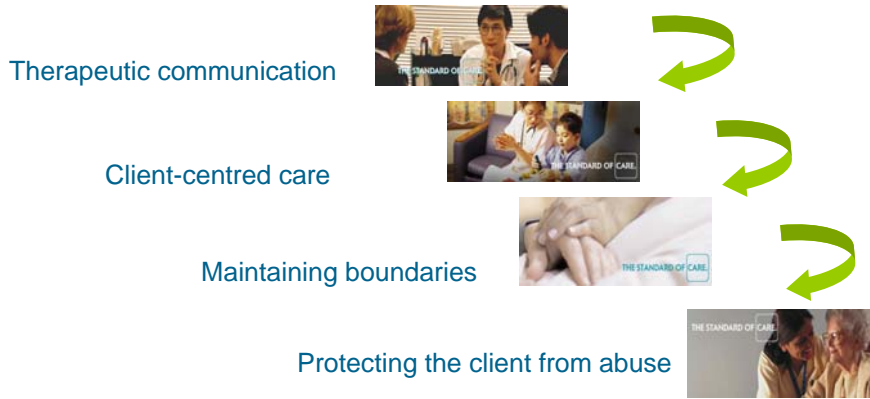
## Therapeutic Nurse-Client Relationship Practice Standard

### Protecting the Client From Abuse

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The College of Nurses of Ontario presents the Therapeutic Nurse-Client Relationship, Revised 2006, practice standard: Protecting the Client From Abuse.

## The four standard statements



Four standard statements describe what a nurse is accountable for in the therapeutic nurse-client relationship. Each statement has accompanying indicators, which are broad statements that nurses can modify to their particular practice reality. The standard statements are therapeutic communication, client-centred care, maintaining boundaries and protecting the client from abuse. In this chapter, you'll learn about therapeutic communication and client-centred care.

## Protecting the client from abuse

### The standard statement

Nurses protect the client from harm by ensuring that abuse is prevented, or stopped and reported.



The College's standard statement for protecting clients from abuse states that nurses protect the client from harm by ensuring that abuse is prevented, or stopped and reported.

## Abusive behaviours



**Financial**



**Verbal and  
emotional**



**Physical**



**Sexual**



**Neglect**

There are five forms of abuse: financial, verbal and emotional, physical, sexual and neglect.

Financial abuse includes, but is not limited to, borrowing money from a client, soliciting gifts, withholding finances, holding power of attorney for a client, and abusing a client's bank accounts or credit cards.

Verbal and emotional abuse includes, but is not limited to, using sarcasm, taking revenge, teasing, swearing and using cultural slurs.

Physical abuse includes, but is not limited to, hitting, pushing, shaking, slapping and using excessive force.

Sexual abuse includes, but is not limited to, using seductive or suggestive language, touching of a sexual nature, having sexual intercourse with a client or the client's significant other, and viewing pornography with a client. These behaviours are considered sexual abuse whether they're non-consensual or consensual.

Neglect includes, but is not limited to, non-therapeutic confining, denying care and privileges, and withholding the basic necessities of life.

## Scenario: Verbal and emotional abuse



Mrs. Lawrence is constantly using the call bell. On one occasion, the nurse is delayed in responding to the bell because of an emergency. By the time she answers the bell, Mrs. Lawrence has wet the bed. The nurse scolds Mrs. Lawrence, telling her that she'll have to sit in the wet sheets until she has time to change them.

The College's abuse prevention video, *One is One Too Many*, demonstrates the five forms of abuse through scenarios and provides abuse-prevention practices.

In one scenario, Mrs. Lawrence is constantly using the call bell. On one occasion, the nurse is delayed in responding to the bell because of an emergency. By the time she answers the bell, Mrs. Lawrence has wet the bed. The nurse scolds Mrs. Lawrence, telling her that she'll have to sit in the wet sheets until she has time to change them.

Click on the "Play Video" button to watch the scenario and then try the quiz.

## What kind of abuse is shown in this scenario?

- a) Neglect
- b) Financial abuse
- c) Verbal abuse
- d) Emotional abuse
- e) Sexual abuse
- f) Physical abuse

## Discussion

Mrs. Lawrence relies on the nurses to meet her basic functional needs, and is humiliated by wetting the bed. This scenario depicts emotional abuse and neglect. As well, chastising the client for wetting the bed is verbal abuse.

Mrs. Lawrence relies on the nurses to meet her basic functional needs, and is humiliated by wetting the bed. This scenario depicts emotional abuse and neglect. As well, chastising the client for wetting the bed is verbal abuse.

**What strategies would you use to prevent this abuse from happening?**

## Strategies:

- explore the meaning behind the client's behavior;
- implement a toileting regimen;
- ensure effective communication among nursing staff.



The nurse needs to explore the meaning behind Mrs. Lawrence's behaviour to discover why she is continually ringing the call bell. A toileting regimen should be part of the client's plan of care, and effective communication among all of the nursing staff will ensure that Mrs. Lawrence's needs are met.

## Scenario: Neglect



Scott, a client with cerebral palsy, is given his dinner tray but doesn't receive the help he needs to eat the meal. The nurse checks in on him and, assuming that Scott doesn't want his dinner, removes the tray. Scott ends up going hungry.

Scott, a client with cerebral palsy, is given his dinner tray but doesn't receive the help he needs to eat the meal. The nurse checks in on him and, assuming that Scott doesn't want his dinner, removes the tray. Scott ends up going hungry.

Click on the "Play Video" button to watch the scenario and then try the quiz .

## What kind of abuse is demonstrated in this scenario?

- a) Neglect
- b) Financial abuse
- c) Verbal abuse
- d) Emotional abuse
- e) Sexual abuse
- f) Physical abuse

## Discussion

The nurse was neglectful by not recognizing that Scott is dependent on the nurse to meet his basic need for food. Scott endured emotional abuse because he did not know if he was going to eat that day.

The nurse was neglectful by not recognizing that Scott is dependent on the nurse to meet his basic need for food. Scott endured emotional abuse because he did not know if he was going to eat that day.

**What strategies would you use to prevent this abuse from happening?**

## Strategies:

- ensure effective communication among care providers;
- seek, effective and ethical care to clients with special needs; and
- take the time to listen to clients.



Nurses need to ensure effective communication among care providers about client needs; seek the specialized knowledge to provide safe, effective and ethical care to clients with special needs; and take the time to listen to clients so they can determine client needs.

## Scenario: Physical abuse



Annie, an elderly woman in a long-term care facility, is confused when approached by two nurses who want to prepare her for a bath. The nurses start to undress Annie but she is startled and resists. The situation escalates and Annie becomes combative and starts to cry.

Annie, an elderly woman in a long-term care facility, is confused when approached by two nurses who want to prepare her for a bath. The nurses start to undress Annie but she is startled and resists their efforts. The situation escalates and Annie becomes combative and starts to cry.

Click on the “Play Video” button to watch the scenario and then try the quiz.

## What kind of abuse is demonstrated in this scenario?

- a) Neglect
- b) Financial abuse
- c) Verbal abuse
- d) Emotional abuse
- e) Sexual abuse
- f) Physical abuse

## Discussion

The nurses' struggle with Annie, forcing her to undress against her will, is physical abuse.

Struggling with Annie, forcing her to undress against her will, is physical abuse.

**What strategies would you use to prevent this abuse from happening?**

## Legislation requiring further reporting of abuse

- The *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991*, sets out provision for the mandatory reporting of sexual abuse by regulated health care professionals.
- The *Child and Family Services Act, 1990*, requires nurses to report suspected child abuse.

The Regulated Health Professions Act requires regulated health professionals, including nurses, to report the sexual abuse of a client by a regulated health professional to the appropriate regulatory college. The Child and Family Services Act requires nurses to report suspected child abuse to the Children's Aid Society.

To read the College's Mandatory Reporting of Sexual Abuse fact sheet, click on the link at the bottom of the screen.

## Scenario: Sexual abuse



Two female nurses make sexual jokes and remarks about a young male client while outside his room. The client overhears the comments.

A male client overhears two female nurses making sexual jokes and remarks about him.

Click on the “Play Video” button to watch the scenario and then try the quizzes.

## What kind of abuse is demonstrated in this scenario?

- a) Neglect
- b) Financial abuse
- c) Verbal abuse
- d) Sexual abuse
- e) Emotional abuse
- f) Physical abuse

## Discussion

Many people think that inappropriate touching and sexual intercourse are the only forms of sexual abuse. However, making inappropriate sexual comments to and about a client is sexual abuse too.

In this situation, the client also endured emotional abuse. He felt humiliated and embarrassed by the nurses' sexual comments.

Many people think that inappropriate touching and sexual intercourse are the only forms of sexual abuse. However, making inappropriate sexual comments to and about a client is sexual abuse as well.

In this situation, the client also endured emotional abuse. He felt humiliated and embarrassed by the nurses' sexual comments.

## How might this sexual abuse incident affect the nurse-client relationship?

- a) The client might not trust and respect the nurses.
- b) The client might respond negatively to their care.
- c) The situation might escalate if the client participates in this behaviour.

## What type of abuse is mandatory to report to the offender's regulatory college?

- a) Neglect
- b) Financial abuse
- c) Verbal abuse
- d) Emotional abuse
- e) Sexual abuse
- f) Physical abuse

## Scenario: Financial abuse



While attending to a regular client during a home visit, the nurse casually tells the client that he can't afford his wife's school expenses. The client offers to write the nurse a cheque.

A nurse can't afford his wife's school expenses. He mentions this to a client in one of their regular visits. The client offers to write the nurse a cheque. Click on the "Play Video" button to watch the scenario and then try the quiz.

## What type of abuse would have occurred had the nurse accepted the client's cheque?

- a) Neglect
- b) Financial abuse
- c) Verbal abuse
- d) Emotional abuse
- e) Sexual abuse

## Therapeutic Nurse-Client Relationship learning module

1. Guiding Principles
2. An Overview
3. Therapeutic Communication and Client-Centred Care
4. Maintaining Boundaries
5. Protecting the Client From Abuse

You have now completed Chapter 5. To work through another chapter in this module, close this presentation and return to the Learning Centre.

To ask a College Practice Consultant a question, click on the “Contact” button in the top right-hand corner of your screen.

Click here to read the College’s Therapeutic Nurse-Client Relationship practice standard.