



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

THE STANDARD OF CARE.

A background image showing a close-up of a person's hands being held and supported by another person's hands. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter. The hands are positioned in the center-right of the page, with one hand resting on top of the other, suggesting care and support.

**Therapeutic Nurse-Client Relationship
Practice Standard**
Therapeutic Communication and Client-Centred Care

Copyright © College of Nurses of Ontario 2006

The College of Nurses of Ontario presents the Therapeutic Nurse-Client Relationship, Revised 2006, practice standard: Therapeutic Communication and Client-Centred Care.

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.

Therapeutic communication

The standard statement

Nurses use a wide range of effective communication strategies and interpersonal skills to appropriately establish, maintain, re-establish and terminate the nurse-client relationship.



The standard statement for therapeutic communication states that nurses use a wide range of effective communication strategies and interpersonal skills to appropriately establish, maintain, re-establish and terminate the nurse-client relationship. Now we'll review some of the indicators for therapeutic communication.

Nurses achieve therapeutic communication by:

- introducing themselves to clients;
- giving clients an opportunity to express themselves; and
- telling clients that information will be shared with the health care team.



Nurses achieve therapeutic communication by introducing themselves to clients by name and category; giving clients an opportunity to express themselves without diminishing the clients' feelings or immediately giving advice; and telling clients about the role of the health care team and that information will be shared with other members of the team.

Nurses achieve therapeutic communication by:

- being aware of their verbal and non-verbal communication style; and
- modifying their communication style as necessary.



Nurses also achieve therapeutic communication by being aware of their verbal and non-verbal communication style and how clients may perceive it. For example, if you stand with your arms crossed while listening to a client, the client may feel you are not interested. It's also essential to use communication resources as necessary. For example, when language or literacy is hampering communication, you may use a translator or provide an easy-to-read pamphlet.

Nurses achieve therapeutic communication by:

- recognizing that all behaviour has meaning;
- respecting the client's beliefs and values;
- integrating the client's beliefs and values into the plan of care; and
- engaging the client in how the client will meet care needs after the termination of the relationship.



In addition, nurses achieve therapeutic communication by recognizing that all behaviour has meaning. They try to understand the cause of a client's unusual comment, attitude or behaviour. For example, the meaning behind a client refusing to eat may be that the client is fasting as part of a religious practice. By exploring the client's refusal to eat, you're respecting the client's beliefs and values, and can integrate these into the plan of care.

Throughout the relationship, engage the client in discussions on how the client will meet care needs after the nurse-client relationship ends. For example, you'll need to discuss discharge planning and arrange follow-up appointments or a referral to a community agency.

Client-centred care

The standard statement

Nurses work with the client to ensure that all professional behaviours and actions meet the therapeutic needs of the client.



The standard statement for client-centred care states that nurses work with the client to ensure that all professional behaviours and actions meet the therapeutic needs of the client. Now we'll review some of the indicators of client-centred care.

Nurses achieve client-centred care by:

- actively including the client and significant others in the care;
- identifying the client's goals, wishes and preferences;
- recognizing that the client's well-being is affected by the nurse's ability to establish and maintain a therapeutic relationship;
- acknowledging that biases and feelings can affect the relationship; and
- requesting to transfer care when the relationship is not evolving therapeutically.

Nurses achieve client-centred care by actively including the client and significant others as partners in the care; identifying the client's goals, wishes and preferences and making these the basis of the plan of care; recognizing that the client's well-being is affected by the nurse's ability to establish and maintain a therapeutic relationship; acknowledging that biases and feelings can affect the nurse-client relationship; and requesting to transfer care when the relationship is not evolving therapeutically.

Test your knowledge



Test your knowledge on therapeutic communication and client-centred care by choosing the correct answers in the following quizzes.

**Name two of a nurse's accountabilities
in the nurse-client relationship.**

- a) Power
- b) Therapeutic communication
- c) Client-centred care
- d) Professional intimacy

Communication can break down in the nurse-client relationship because the nurse:

- a) Didn't identify the client's goals
- b) Assumed the client's values are the same as the nurse's
- c) Has a communication style that the client perceives as uncaring
- d) Did not address a language barrier

Nurses need to understand that all behaviour has meaning.

- a) True
- b) False

To establish therapeutic communication, nurses should:

- a) Introduce themselves to the client
- b) Give clients an opportunity to express themselves.
- c) Inform the client that relevant information will be shared with the health care team
- d) All of the above

Terminating the nurse-client relationship includes:

- a) Discharge planning
- b) Agency referrals
- c) Acting as a resource contact for the client
- d) Arranging follow-up appointments

Therapeutic Nurse-Client Relationship: Communication and client-centred care

Your Score	{score}
Max Score	{max-score}
Number of Quiz Attempts	{total-attempts}

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 3. To work through another chapter 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.