Professionalism:

The image of nursing

Our Nursing Contract With The Communities We Serve

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Discussion Points

- Reflection on the concepts profession and professionalism
- Contractual obligation
- Practicing professionalism in the realities of the 21st Century
- Our leadership and management accountability – Filling our shoes
- Conclusion
Reflection on the concepts profession and professionalism

Definitions

(register)

Nursing
A caring profession which supports, cares for and treats patients / healthcare users ill or well at all stages of life, so as to achieve and / or maintain health or where this is not possible, cares for the dying to live in dignity until death.

Accompaniment is fundamental to all nursing as an applied science and art.

Accompaniment
Deliberate assistance and support based on discretion and informed decision making, to enable a person to find meaning in a specific situation in a way that fosters self-respect and growth.
Reflection on the concepts profession and professionalism

Criteria of a Profession

Professionalism or professional recognition has it roots in:

- Specific professional solidarity
- Professional competence (theory & practice)
- Professional accountability
- Strict adherence to a professional code of ethics
- Protection and welfare of society as the primary concern
- Peer group control
- Continuing development through research
- Recognition as a significant, specialised social group with membership exclusivity
- A strong professional association to act as the voice of the profession
- Control of the profession vested in a statutory professional council
Contractual obligation

- Nurse’s pledge
- Ethos of caring
- Trust as an ethical responsibility
Nurse’s Pledge of Service

I solemnly pledge myself
To the service of humanity,
And will endeavour to practice my
Profession with conscience and with dignity.

I will maintain
By all the means in my power,
The honour and the noble traditions
Of my profession.

The total health of my patients
Will be my first consideration.

I will hold in confidence
All personal matters
Coming to my knowledge.

I will not permit considerations
Of religion, nationality, race
Or social standing,
To intervene between my duty
And my patient.

I will maintain the utmost respect
For human life.

I make these promises
Solemnly, freely
And upon my honour
Contractual obligation

- **Ethos of Caring**

  The nursing Ethos realises the characteristics, spirit and beliefs of nursing and midwifery as a profession which gives direction to professional socialization and professional practice.

- **Professional Practice**

  Is concerned with the legal and ethical framework, the dynamics of society, the strategies and processes of management and education as well as the inter-professional relationships that create and sustain the environment for safe quality service delivery.
Trust is the key to the contractual relationship between the health care consumer and any healthcare provider.

This implies trust in:

- The competence of the nurse / midwife
- Her / his professional morality
- Her / his integrity
- Her / his awareness of roles and functions within the legal and ethical parameters of her / his practice
Contractual obligation

Voice of Process / Voice of Customer

“Voice of Process”
- Operational Effectiveness
- Clinical outcomes
- Financial Measurements
- Plans and Budgets
- Technology
- Management & Nursing practices and controls

“Voice of Customer”
- Social Responsibility
- Information
- Fear, anxiety
- Patient Experience
- Empowerment
- Openness
- Accessibility
- Approachable

Professionalism moving the centre of gravity
Legislation – Constitution and other related legislation e.g. promotion of access to information

Informed patients / clients / users: understanding and demanding their rights

Nurses rights (Labour organisations)

Critical skills shortage

Low morale – high turnover

The “when we’s” vs the “liberated nursing youth” in practice
Our leadership and management accountability – filling our shoes

Leadership accountability – talking to all of us:

- Nursing Regulatory Body (SANC) and Nurse policy makers
- Nursing Executives / Directors
- Nurse Managers
- Nurse Educators (SANC)
- Nurse Labour (Union) Leaders
- Professional Nurses and role models
Lets understand and reaffirm accountability as:

- The legal and moral obligation to be answerable for or to give account for

Professionalism requires that nurses in all roles demonstrate professional standards and continuously do self-reflection on:

- Values
- Behaviours
- Relationships
The word “professional” is derived from the Latin word “professio”, which is a public declaration claiming a belief, faith or opinion. Professions therefore declare publicly that their members will act in certain ways.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domains of professionalism</th>
<th>Themes for role modeling / acting out the behaviour</th>
<th>Professional nurse leaders is this applicable to ...</th>
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| Attitude and personal conduct | **Empathy**  
   - Compassionate / caring  
   - Sensitive to needs / beliefs / culture  
   - Warm / friendly  
   - Non-judgmental  
**Respect – for others and property**  
   - Grooming / appropriate dress code / demeanour  
   - Punctuality and attendance  
**Trustworthy / honest / reliable**  
**Responsibility and reliability**  
**Maturity**  
   - Recognising own errors / limitations  
   - Willingness to learn from others  
   - Acceptance of criticism  
   - Decision making and coping mechanisms in crisis | SANC  
DENOSA (and other)  
Nurse Directors  
Nurse Managers  
Nurse Educators  
Unit Managers  
Professional Nurses/Staff Nurses |
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| Team work                 | Integrity / fairness / distinguishing between right and wrong  
Consults / shares with colleagues / gives recognition / is loyal  
Conflict management  
Appropriate relationship with team  
Leadership  
- Inspire and lead “the values”  
- Create meaningful work  
- Establish and sustain an enabling environment  
- Give tangible rewards  
- Ensure work and life balance  
- Create learning / growth opportunities | SANC  
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<tr>
<td>Quality patient care</td>
<td>Ethical standards: patient autonomy / equality / beneficence / social justice / distributive justice</td>
<td>SANC DENOSA (and other) Nurse Directors Nurse Managers Nurse Educators Unit Managers Professional Nurses/ Staff Nurses</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Confidentiality</td>
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<td>Primacy of patient welfare / altruism / conflict of interest / act in best interest of patient / advocacy on behalf of patient / positive clinical outcomes</td>
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<td>Appropriate relationship with patient</td>
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<td>Just distribution of resources</td>
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<td>Professional Competence</td>
<td>Knowledge and skill / lifelong learning</td>
<td>SANC</td>
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<td>Commitment / dedication to quality of care /</td>
<td>DENOSA (and other)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>enthusiasm / does his/her share</td>
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Leadership in action …

How can we create and sustain a professional compelling workforce.

Choose which of the following actions are we committed to go back to our workplace and implement:

- Publicly, formally, and informally acknowledge how hard nurses are working.
- Translate the organisational strategy into critical outcomes that nurse managers can easily discuss with nurses.
- Enforce a “no tolerance” policy regarding disrespect of colleagues.
- Provide managers and supervisors with survival skills and tools to deal with emotions and minimise generational conflict in the workforce.
Leadership in action ... cont.

- Instruct managers in the desired management style and organisational climate.
- Provide managers working in high-stress and high-turnover areas with training in coaching and service excellence.
- Focus on new employee orientation in critical entry-level jobs and high-turnover areas.
- Develop a process of identifying, developing, and maintaining informal senior mentors and leaders.
- Design a curriculum to train selected senior nurses for leadership roles.
- Create non-negotiable, organisation-wide standards of behaviour, expectations, and norms for nurses.
- Make nurses responsible for mastering them.
Leadership in action ... cont.

- Make senior nurse’s responsible for mentoring less experienced nurses.
- Establish the goal of consistency among nursing teams within the organisation.
- Develop nursing teams headed by employees who have been on staff for two to five years.
- Put the nurse back in nursing.
- Support nursing teams with relevant non nursing resources.
- Provide a customizable career track for nurses who have been on staff for longer than five years.
- Acknowledge the necessity of scheduling restrictions in an aging nursing workforce.
Celebrate what is right with the world in the words of Dewitt Jones – National Geographic

- Believe it and you’ll see it
- Recognize abundance
- Look for possibilities
- Unleash your energy to fix what’s wrong
- Ride the changes
- Take yourself to the edge
- Be your best for the world
I am just a nurse …

Let us as leaders break the cycle of the negative image by declaring that:

- I just make the difference between life and death
- I just have the educated eyes that prevent medical errors, injuries, and other catastrophes
- I just make the difference between healing and coping, and despair
- I just make the difference between pain and comfort
- I’m just a nurse researcher who helps nurses and doctors give better, safer and more effective care
- I’m just a professor of nursing who educates future generations of nurses
- I just work in a major teaching hospital managing and monitoring patients who are involved in cutting-edge experimental research
- I just educate patients and families about how to maintain their health
- I’m just a geriatric nurse practitioner who makes a difference between an elderly person staying in his own home or going to a nursing home
- I just make the difference between dying in agony and dying in comfort and with dignity
- I’m just the real bottom-line in health care
- A nurse manager who lead and support nursing teams to live out their dream of caring for people

Wouldn’t you like to be just a nurse, too?
Signing off ....

I can do what you can’t do

You can do what I can’t do

But

Together we can do great things!

(Mother Teresa)