

American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing

Definition of Ambulatory Care Nursing

Glossary of Terms

Continuum of care -- Over the course of the patient's life, the patient will receive health-related care from a variety of health care and service professionals in a variety of health care settings (AAACN, 2010, p. 41).

Continuity of care – Health care that remains consistent and uninterrupted throughout the care process (AAACN, 2010, p. 41).

Nursing process – The nursing process is a rational, systematic method of planning, providing and evaluating nursing care. It has six steps: assessment; nursing diagnosis; identification of expected outcomes or goals; planning; implementation; and evaluation. (AAACN, 2010, p. 15)

Nursing personnel (Licensed) – Licensed personnel in ambulatory care include registered, practical and vocational nurses, serving in both clinical and administrative roles, who have completed an appropriate course of nursing studies, passed a national nursing board examination, and meet state nursing board requirements. Licensed nursing personnel also include advanced practice nurses (APNs) who have completed advanced nursing studies, are certified in specialty care areas, and function as independent practitioners.

Nursing personnel (Unlicensed) – Unlicensed nursing personnel in ambulatory care include medical administrative personnel, medical and nursing assistants, and other technical assistive staff.

Nursing skill mix -- In ambulatory care settings, this term refers to the different levels of licensed and unlicensed nursing personnel who provide patient care.

Telehealth nursing practice – The delivery, management, and coordination of care and services provided via telecommunications technology within the domain of ambulatory care nursing. Telehealth nursing is a broad term encompassing practices that incorporate a vast array of telecommunications technologies, (e.g. telephone, fax, email, Internet, video monitoring, and interactive videos) to remove time and distance barriers for the delivery of nursing care. (AAACN, 2009, p. 5)