



**REGENT
UNIVERSITY**

**College of
Healthcare
Sciences**

**R.N to B.S. in Nursing
Student Handbook**

2021-2022



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Introduction

Letter from Faculty

Regent University RN to B.S. in Nursing students,

It is our pleasure and honor to welcome you to Regent University. You have made a great investment in your future by selecting a school that will give you the high-quality, Christ-centered education necessary to bring innovative solutions to the field of nursing. We offer a supportive, collaborative environment to enhance your success as you progress through our program.

This handbook is a very important resource designed to provide you with information on life as a student at Regent University. Our highly trained faculty and staff will support you every step of the way and help you get the most out of your experience here.

Graduates of this program represent the future of nursing and are well-prepared to improve the care of the patients we serve.

We extend our best wishes for a dynamic and rewarding educational experience.

Thank you for being a part of Regent's mission to prepare Christian leaders for lives of significant purpose and service.

God's blessings,

Regent University Nursing Faculty

⁹ For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, ¹⁰ so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, ¹¹ being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, ¹² and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. ¹³ For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

~Colossians 1: 9-14

Purpose of the Handbook

The information in this RN to B.S. in Nursing Student Handbook is intended to provide you with the current policies and guidelines important to your success as an undergraduate student in the RN to B.S. in Nursing Program at Regent University. The policies and procedures and other information contained within this handbook are in compliance with and are supplements of the Regent University Student Handbook, Regent University Undergraduate Catalog, and other Regent University policies as specified.

Every reasonable effort has been made to ensure the accuracy, reliability, and completeness of the policies and guidelines found in the handbook. However, if any discrepancies exist between the information in the handbook and the official Undergraduate Catalog or other Regent University policies, the information in the official policies shall take precedence.

All students are responsible for following the policies and procedures in the RN to B.S. in Nursing Student Handbook. The plans, policies and procedures described in this handbook are subject to change by the Nursing Program faculty as deemed necessary. Per the student expectations and communications policy outlined in the handbook, students will be notified through a blackboard announcement and email and are responsible for remaining up to date.

Regent University RN to B.S. in Nursing Mission Statement

Mission

Regent University's nursing program exists to create a dynamic community of learning to develop exceptionally prepared nurses who will lead to improve health outcomes locally and globally. We promote excellence in teaching, research, service, and practice with a primary focus in faith integration and Christian leadership to change the world. We are committed to being purposeful, caring, disciplined, and celebrative with each student who enters our program.

Vision

The vision of Regent University's nursing program is to be a premier nursing program dedicated to cultivating Christian leaders in the field of nursing to improve health outcomes both locally and globally.

Regent University Nursing Philosophy

The philosophy of the Regent University nursing program is consistent with the mission, vision, and core values of Regent University in fostering Christian leaders to change the world in the discipline of nursing. The philosophy addresses the concepts of the nursing metaparadigm: patient, environment, health, and nursing. Additionally, it addresses learning. These pillars of nursing education and

nursing practice reflect the views of the faculty regarding learning, teaching, and specifically nursing education.

Person

The person is multidimensional and encompasses the physical, emotional, social and spiritual components of the individual that is receiving nursing care. A holistic approach is necessary to care for the patient in body, mind and soul and extends to the family and community. The patient is valued and is to be treated with respect and dignity and should be empowered to manage their own health and retain the right to make informed decision about their healthcare. Regent students value each individual as a creation of God complete with a giftedness to serve their unique purpose.

Environment

The environment represents external and internal influences for the patient and student. The external environment goes beyond surrounding physical parameters to include historical, political, economic, cultural, and spiritual influences. Individual experiences and perceptions form the internal environment. Thus, there is a relationship between the health of the patient and the quality of their environment, both externally and internally. It is important that the patient responds and adapts to their environment in order to achieve healthy outcomes. Likewise, it is important that the student responds and adapts to their learning environment in order to master their student outcomes. Regent University's nursing program seeks to support a healthy learning environment, with emphasis on spiritual adaptation and enlightenment, as an essential element in promoting wellness in student development and patient outcomes.

Health

Health is a dynamic, multidimensional phenomenon that occurs on a wellness to illness continuum. It is influenced by a patient's body, mind, and spirit. The two concepts, wellness and illness, are mostly self-defined, allowing for individualized perceptions of health. Wellness is sought throughout the process of healing; therefore, wellness promotion and healthy patient goals are an integral element in nursing and patient education. Healing is an active process that is patient driven by perception, subjective information, and objective, physical evidence. It is therefore important to recognize the autonomy of patients in the healing process. Regent University's nursing program seeks to support the process of health and improving patient outcomes through creating a learning environment that emphasizes the three parts of the person and the definition of healing based on patient autonomy and world-view perspectives.

Nursing

Nursing is a multifaceted healthcare profession that seeks to enhance the quality of life for individuals, families and communities. Through coordinated care, nurses effectively promote health and prevent illness. Regent University's nursing program seeks to develop caring, service-minded nurses who believe nursing is a calling and a ministry of healing.

Learning

Learning is a continuous, life-long process that occurs at any developmental level and is evidenced by consistent changes in behavior. Students bring previous life experiences to the learning environment. These previous experiences influence the student's attitudes and motivation to learn. To facilitate learning, Regent University nursing faculty serve as teachers, resources, mentors, and professional role models for students. Faculty use a variety of teaching and learning strategies to facilitate the student's practice of professional and advance nursing. The goal of nursing education at Regent University is to assist the students to think critically, solve problems creatively, integrate faith in the decision-making process, and practice nursing from a caring perspective. The post- licensure BS student is prepared to function as a generalist in diverse roles, in a variety of settings, use culturally sensitivity, and adhere to the standards of professional practice guidelines. Their focus is on developing expertise in leadership and advance nursing roles to the meet the health and educational needs of the patient, community, and overall profession.

Overview of the RN to B.S. in Nursing Program

The RN to B.S. in Nursing curriculum consists of 120 credit hours: 30 credits of general education requirements, 60 general elective hours, and 30 credit hours of RN to B.S. in Nursing curriculum. Transfer credit may be applied to courses for previous coursework. All coursework is offered in an asynchronous online format. As per the standards set forth by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, students are required to complete practice immersion hours in three nursing courses: NURS 310 Professional Health Assessment, NURS 330 Nursing Leadership and Management Practices, and NURS 430 Community and Public Health Strategies.

The nursing program is designed to provide individuals with a broad educational background, which integrates the Christian faith, liberal arts, behavioral and social sciences as well as nursing. The curriculum for the nursing program at Regent University is directly derived from the stated purpose, philosophy, student learning outcomes, and the *Essentials for Baccalaureate Education* set forth by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). The *Essentials for Baccalaureate Education* provide a framework for practice and a conceptual approach to the nursing curriculum.

Program Learning Outcomes

The graduate of the Regent University baccalaureate nursing program will be able to:

- PLO 1. Deliver professional care that integrates faith, ethics, and morality in the art of nursing practice through caring behaviors and service-minded approaches. **(Essential VIII)**
- PLO 2. Deliver professional nursing care that is theologically, philosophically and scientifically informed from the arts, humanities, biological and social sciences. **(Essential I)**
- PLO 3. Evaluate current research and translate findings to provide evidence-based nursing care. **(Essential III)**
- PLO 4. Utilize information technology into the decision making required in providing safe, quality patient-centered care in healthcare settings. **(Essential IV)**
- PLO 5. Evaluate and apply legal aspects of healthcare policy, finance and regulatory environments locally, nationally, globally to ensure safe, quality patient-centered care. **(Essential V, VIII)**
- PLO 6. Communicate and collaborate, interprofessionally, in providing safe, quality patient-centered care. **(Essential VI)**
- PLO 7. Apply principles of prevention and health promotion in providing care to individuals, families, groups and communities. **(Essential VII)**
- PLO 8. Engage, professionally, with diverse and multicultural stakeholders in providing safe, quality nursing care. **(Essential II, VIII, IX)**

Alignment of General Education to Student Learning Outcomes

The nursing curriculum outcomes are consistent with the core curriculum outcomes of Regent University. The required supporting courses in the humanities, history, and social sciences provide the nursing student with a broad knowledge base which provide the basis for building life skills, as well as a basis for a career in nursing. The curriculum plan follows a logical sequence, building on levels of increasing complexity and previous knowledge through sequenced general education courses prior to entering into the nursing (NURS) curriculum. The general education courses are aligned with and contribute to the students' successful achievement of the RN to BS in Nursing Program outcomes as noted in the table below.

Supporting General Education Courses	RN to BS in Nursing Program Learning Outcomes
GENE 100—Making of the Christian Mind GENE 402— The Making of a Christian Leader	PLO 1. Deliver professional care that integrates faith, ethics, and morality in the art of nursing practice through caring behaviors and service-minded approaches.
MAT 201- Math Stats BIOL 201 and 202 – Anatomy and Physiology I & II BIOL 210—Nutrition BIOL 215—Microbiology CHE 101—Chemistry	PLO 2. Deliver professional nursing care that is theologically, philosophically and scientifically informed from the arts, humanities, biological and social sciences.
PSY 201 – Introduction to Psychology PSY 202: Developmental Psychology	PLO 7 Apply principles of prevention and health promotion in providing care to individuals, families, groups and communities. PLO 8 Engage, professionally, with diverse and multicultural stakeholders in providing safe, quality nursing care.
ENG 101: English I ENG 102: English II	PLO 4. Utilize information technology into the decision making required in providing safe, quality patient-centered care in healthcare settings. PLO 6 Communicate and collaborate, interprofessionally, in providing safe, quality patient-centered care.
MAT 201—Math Stats ENG 102—English II	PLO 3 Evaluate current research and translate findings to provide evidence based nursing care.
GENE 100—Making of the Christian Mind GENE 402— The Making of a Christian Leader	PLO 1. Deliver professional care that integrates faith, ethics, and morality in the art of nursing practice through caring behaviors and service-minded approaches

Student Representation

- Appointed students are invited to participate in select committees to include Nursing Faculty Council. The function of the participating student is to foster communication among administrators, faculty, staff, and students. This occurs through structured meetings, dialogue, and facilitated constructive feedback.
- Student appointees will identify needs within the RN to BS in Nursing program and promote resources and support systems which will facilitate successful completion of the baccalaureate program.
- Student appointees may provide opportunities for involvement in community and university service.
- Students who are interested should contact the nursing program's Director of Nursing.

Policies for Admission, Progression, & Retention

Admission to the RN to B.S. in Nursing Program

To be considered for admission to the RN to B.S. in Nursing program of study, prospective students must meet the following qualifications:

- Adhere to all policies and procedures outlined in the current Regent University Undergraduate Catalog unless otherwise stated.
- Hold an unencumbered, active, and current Registered Nurse license
- Provide official transcripts from prior coursework documenting a GPA of 2.0 or higher
- Report no more than two previous documented failures in an RN to BSN or RN to B.S. in Nursing courses.

Progression and Retention Policy

To successfully progress through the RN to B.S. in Nursing program of study and graduate on time, current students must meet the following criteria:

- An overall GPA of 2.0 must be maintained to continue in the nursing major and a nursing student must achieve a “C” or better in every nursing course.
- If a student achieves a failing grade (e.g., achieves a grade of “C-” or below) in a nursing course, he/she must repeat that course when it is next offered to remain in the program.
- If a student’s cumulative grade point average falls below 2.0, she/he will be placed on academic probation the following semester. If the student does not achieve a 2.0 cumulative grade point average after one probationary semester, the Director of the School of Nursing will determine if the student should be dismissed from the nursing program or continue on academic probation. No student will be allowed more than two probationary semesters, whether consecutive or cumulative. At the end of a second probationary semester, a student whose cumulative grade point average is still below 2.0 will be dismissed from the program.
- Students whose performance results in a GPA so far below 2.0 as to make it mathematically impossible to attain an overall GPA of 2.0 after one semester may be subject to dismissal without a probationary term.
- An incomplete grade (“I”) indicates that the student was passing the course at the end of the semester but, due to circumstances beyond the student’s control, was unable to complete the course work for which the “I” is assigned. The “I” grade cannot be used to allow a student to do additional work to raise a deficient grade or to repeat a course.
- W/F will be treated as an unsuccessful attempt in all nursing courses.
- Students can only enroll in a nursing course twice.

Course Sequencing

The RN to B.S. in Nursing courses at Regent University are built and offered in sequence to foster student learning and facilitate best outcomes. NURS 301 Transitions to Professional Nursing is the foundation course for the program and is the required first nursing course. NURS 498 Capstone is the final nursing course taken. Additionally, all 300 level courses must be taken before 400 level courses. There may be circumstances where a late 300 level course may be taken with an early 400 level course.

Nursing courses sequence

NURS 301
NURS 305
NURS 307
NURS 310
NURS 330
NURS 410
NURS 430
NURS 440
NURS 498

Graduation Requirements

All requirements for a Bachelor of Science (B.S) in Nursing degree must be met. In addition, a grade of C or better must be earned in each nursing course. Students must follow the Regent University policy for Intent to Graduate and fulfill all Regent University requirements for graduation.

In order to qualify for graduation, baccalaureate degree candidates must complete all the requirements on the following checklist and any listed within the University catalog. A student deficient in any area will not receive a diploma until the requirement is complete.

- Submit a completed Graduation Application to the Registrar by the posted deadline.
- Successfully complete a minimum of 120 semester hours of credit (includes transfer credit from pre-licensure nursing program).
- Complete all required coursework with a minimum of 2.0
- Fulfill all financial obligations to Regent University.

RN to B.S. in Nursing Policies and Procedures

Performance and Competency Standards

Students who wish to qualify for admission and progression in the nursing program must meet both academic requirements and performance standards. A student must, with or without reasonable accommodation, satisfy the Program Learning Outcomes (see table below).

Other Essential Behavioral Attributes: Ability to engage in activities consistent with safe nursing practice without demonstrated behaviors of addiction to, abuse of, or dependence on alcohol or other drugs that may impair judgment. The student must demonstrate responsibility and accountability for actions as a student of Regent University and also as a developing professional nurse.

Program Learning Outcomes

PLO 1 Deliver professional care that integrates faith, ethics, and morality in the art of nursing practice through caring behaviors and service-minded approaches. (Essential VIII)
PLO 2 Deliver professional nursing care that is theologically, philosophically and scientifically informed from the arts, humanities, biological and social sciences. (Essential I)
PLO 3 Evaluate current research and translate findings to provide evidence based nursing care. (Essential III)
PLO 4 Utilize information technology into the decision making required in providing safe, quality patient-centered care in healthcare settings. (Essential IV)
PLO 5 Evaluate and apply legal aspects of healthcare policy, finance and regulatory environments locally, nationally, globally to ensure safe, quality patient-centered care. (Essential V, VIII)
PLO 6 Communicate and collaborate, interprofessionally, in providing safe, quality patient-centered care. (Essential VI)
PLO 7 Apply principles of prevention and health promotion in providing care to individuals, families, groups and communities. (Essential VII)
PLO 8 Engage, professionally, with diverse and multicultural stakeholders in providing safe, quality nursing care. (Essential II, VIII, IX)

Meeting the program learning outcomes are assessed through successful completion of discussions, quizzes, presentations and professional papers and practice immersion experiences.

Disability Services

Regent University and the nursing program strive to make courses and facilities as accessible as reasonably possible for all individuals. Please visit the Disability Services website at <https://www.regent.edu/community-spiritual-life/disability-services/> for further information.

Grading Scale for Theory and Practicum Courses

The following grading scale will be used for all NURS courses at Regent University:

Grade	Percentage	Quality Points	Meaning of Grade
A	93–100	4.00	Superior
A-	90-92	3.67	
B+	87-89	3.33	
B	83-86	3.00	Good
B-	80-82	2.67	
C+	77-79	2.33	
C	73-76	2.00	Satisfactory
C-	70-72	1.67	Failing
D+	67-69	1.33	
D	63-66	1.00	Failing
D-	60-62	0.67	
F	0-59	0.00	Failing

Preceptor and Affiliation Information

The nursing program at Regent University will utilize preceptors in the monitoring of student experience within practice immersion settings. Faculty will be responsible for the final student evaluation and grading with preceptor input. For the purposes of Regent University’s RN to BS in Nursing program, preceptor is defined as one who meets the criteria to facilitate the learning process in the practice immersion setting with the responsibility of serving as a practitioner and mentor for role acclimation.

Preceptors serve as a mediator between communicating the student’s performance and helping the student to reach the pre-established practice immersion goals for the assigned course.

Preceptor Requirements

- Must hold a BSN or BS in Nursing or Higher.
- Must be actively employed in the specified fields.
- Must have an un-restricted, active RN license.
- Must be willing to adhere to mutually established goals/objectives of the course.
- Must be willing to offer the necessary practice immersion hours required to complete NURS 330 and NURS 430.
- Must actively work with the patient population to ensure efficient role orientation for the student.
- Must submit a copy of the CV or resume to the student

Practice Immersion Requirements

In order to complete the nursing curriculum, students within the RN to B.S. in Nursing are required to complete practice immersion hours in NURS 310, NURS 330, and NURS 430. Students will enter practice immersion courses at different times according to their individualized degree plans. Prior to entering these courses, students will be directed to the Clinical Clearance Coordinator to ensure all proper documentation is complete prior to obtaining practicum hours. Faculty will work with students on documentation of preceptors and facilities for practicum sites

Complio

The Department of Nursing requires students to enroll in American Databank's electronic service (Complio) that provides electronic management of student screenings as required by Regent University. Complio is both FERPA and HIPAA compliant. Components of Complio include a background check, drug screen, AHA CPR certification, immunizations, and signed program forms (including verification of meeting program technical standards).

Students will be required to maintain current documentation in Complio throughout program progression.

Substance Abuse Policy

The substance abuse policy of the nursing program is consistent with that of the University. The Regent University nursing program is committed to maintaining a healthy and drug and alcohol-free environment for the safety of our students, faculty and staff, visitors, and patients. The program believes that each nursing student has a personal obligation to practice health conscious behaviors intended to foster clear and rational decision making as well as function in a safe and therapeutic manner throughout the program. Our patients' safety is paramount; this concern serves as the foundation of the Substance Use Policy. Use, possession or distribution of illegal drugs, impairment while in the educational setting, and/or abuse of drugs or alcohol that impacts a student's ability to operate in the nursing program will subject a student to dismissal from the program (see Regent University Student Handbook).

Drug testing is required prior to beginning practice immersion coursework into the RN to B.S. in Nursing program and is to be completed by the nursing program's procedure. Additional information can be found on Complio.

Unsafe and Unethical Nursing Practice

The safety of the students, faculty and staff, and patients is of utmost importance to Regent University and the Regent University nursing program. Any behavior that is deemed unsafe or unethical will immediately be addressed by the nursing program and Regent University. The nursing program will follow the discipline procedures as outlined in the Regent University Handbook: *The Student Discipline Process*.

Academic Integrity/Plagiarism

All students are expected to adhere to the Regent University Honor Code which can be found within the Student Handbook. Each examination, paper and other written or electronically submitted assignment is submitted pursuant to the Honor Code Policies on Plagiarism.

Confidentiality and Privacy in Practice (HIPAA)

HIPAA - Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act- "The Department of Health and Human Services and all other health care agencies must ensure their customers (ex: clients, insured individuals, providers and health plans) that the integrity, confidentiality, and availability of electronic protected health information they collect, maintain, use, or transmit is protected" (Federal Register, 2003, p. 1). Individual practice immersion sites may require students to attend their own HIPAA training sessions.

All students of the Department of Nursing are required to sign the HIPAA form and upload to Complio. (See Appendix A)

Leave of Absence Policy

The Regent University nursing program faculty understand that students may have to take a leave of absence due to family emergencies, military obligations, and other situations beyond the student's control. The nursing program follows the *Leave of Absence* policy outlined in the Regent University Student Handbook.

Communication Policy

The Regent University nursing program maintains open and clear communication with all students and constituents. As such, it is the policy to update students on changes via their Regent University email address and blackboard announcement. As outlined in this handbook, students are expected to check their email on a regular basis.

Necessary changes to curriculum will be communicated and approved via the University's Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee (CIRC).

Late Assignment Penalties

Quizzes: Quizzes submitted 1-7 days late will receive a 5% reduction. Quizzes submitted 8-14 days late will receive a 10% reduction. Quizzes submitted 15 days late or more will receive a 0%. No work submitted past the last day of the course can be accepted.

Written Assignments: Written assignments submitted 1-7 days late will receive a 5% reduction. Written assignments submitted 8-14 days late will receive a 10% reduction. Written assignments submitted 15 days late or more will receive a 0%. No work submitted past the last day of the course can be accepted.

Dialogue Posts: Due to the nature of dialogues (specifically, regarding responses), dialogue posts are more time-sensitive than other assignments. Accordingly, students may submit their initial post (responses to classmates are not required for late submissions) up to 7 days after the due date but will only receive a maximum grade of 60% for that the discussion assignment. Dialogue assignments submitted 8 days late or more will receive a 0%. No work submitted past the last day of the course can be accepted.

Please note: Regardless of the details described above for late assignments, it is very important that you keep your instructor apprised of your progress and any significant factors that may be contributing to your delay and requiring additional time.

Emergent situations may include, but are not limited to:

- Hospitalization
- Serious illness
- Military service obligation
- Natural disaster
- Death or serious injury/illness of an immediate family member

➤ *All non-emergent situations will be subjected to the late assignment penalty outlined above.*

Non-Emergent situations may include, but not limited to:

- Work and or family obligations
- Vacations
- Computer or internet problems
- Other personal reasons that may interfere with the student's ability to submit assignments by the due date.

Student Expectations

Student Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of Regent University nursing student to adhere to the Regent University Code of Conduct and to the policies and procedures described in this Handbook. It is the student's responsibility to periodically check the student handbook for changes and updates.

Online Learning Responsibilities/ Email Etiquette

Regent University RN to B.S. in Nursing students must also demonstrate academic readiness and technological proficiency.

- **Academic Readiness-** It is the responsibility of the student to have those supplies necessary to participate in the online environment and practice immersion setting. This includes but is not limited to a computer, secure internet connection and Microsoft Office software.
- **Technology Proficiency-** All Regent University students should demonstrate a minimum level of technological proficiency to be successful in the online environment. The Help Desk is available to students via telephone at 757-352-4076.
- **Email Etiquette** – Students are expected to read, and when appropriate, respond to emails within 24 hours. Email will be utilized as the standard mode of communication and will be utilized to disseminate changes. All email communication will use the student's Regent University email address.

Course expectations

Courses will be delivered on the online learning platform Blackboard. Student engagement and attendance will be closely monitored by the instructor. Assessments will include (but are not limited to) dialogues, quizzes/tests, case studies and presentations. It is the responsibility of the student to access the course at least once weekly to be considered present. Attendance and participation policies are clearly outlined in course syllabi.

Practicum expectations

Students are expected to obtain 45 clock hours (equivalent 1 credit hour) in three RN to B.S. in Nursing courses: NURS 310, NURS 330, and NURS 430. Students must receive practicum clearance from the Clinical Clearance Coordinator and maintain compliance within Complio prior to obtaining practice immersion hours. Preceptor verification and affiliation agreements will be maintained by the instructor for the course.

Student Rights

Student Evaluations

At the end of each course, students are given the opportunity to evaluate the course and the instructor/s. Evaluations will be reviewed by faculty and administrators. Evaluations will be used to continually improve the program.

Access to Student Records (FERPA)

FERPA is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records and information. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. The rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond high school level. Please see: <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>. Faculty must have documented written permission from a student before they can speak to a parent/spouse regarding the student's education record or academic progress.

Academic Advising

Students will be assigned an academic advisor upon admission to the University. The advisor and nursing faculty collaborate to foster the best experience possible for the student.

Student Grievance Procedure

Student appeals and grievances must follow the procedures as outlined in the Regent University Student Handbook.

Appendix A

Regent University's Nursing Program Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)

Information Packet Protecting the Privacy of Patient's Health Information

Overview: The first-ever federal privacy standards to protect patient's medical records and other health information provided to health plans, doctors, hospitals, and other health care providers took effect on April 14, 2003. Developed by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), these new standards provide patients with access to their medical records and more control over how their personal health information is used and disclosed. They represent a uniform, federal base of privacy protections for consumers across the country. State laws providing additional protections to consumers are not affected by this new rule.

The HIPAA legislation had four primary objectives:

1. Assure health insurance portability by eliminating some instances of failure to insure due to pre-existing conditions.
2. Reduce healthcare fraud and abuse.
3. Enforce standards for health information.
4. Guarantee security and privacy of health information.

Congress called on HHS to issue patient privacy protections as part of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). HIPAA included provisions designed to encourage electronic transactions and also required new safeguards to protect the security and confidentiality of health information.

Patient Protections:

The new privacy regulations ensure a national floor of privacy protections for patients by limiting the ways that health plans, pharmacies, hospitals, and other covered entities can use patients' personal medical information. The regulations protect medical records and other individually identifiable health information, whether it is on paper, in computers, or communicated orally. Key provisions of these new standards include:

- Access to Medical Records.* Patients generally should be able to see and obtain copies of their medical records and request corrections if they identify errors. Health plans, doctors, hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, and other covered entities generally should provide access to these records within 30 days and may charge patients for the cost of copying and sending the records.
- Notice of Privacy Practices.* Covered health plans, doctors, and other health care providers must provide a notice to their patients how they may use personal medical

information and their rights under the new regulation. Patients will be asked to sign, initial, or otherwise acknowledge that they received this notice.

- *Limits on Use of Personal Medical Information.* The privacy rule sets limits on how health plans and covered providers may use individually identifiable health information. To promote the best quality care for patients, the rule does not restrict the ability of doctors, nurses, or other health care providers to share information needed to treat their patients. In other situations, though, personal health information generally may not be used for purposes not related to health care, and covered entities may use or share only the minimum amount of protected information needed for a particular purpose. In addition, patients would have to sign a specific authorization before a covered entity could release their medical information to a life insurer, a bank, a marketing firm or another outside business for purposes not related to their health care.
- *Prohibition on Marketing.* The privacy rule sets new restrictions and limits on the use of patient information for marketing purposes. Pharmacies, health plans, and other covered entities must first obtain an individual's specific authorization before disclosing their patient information for marketing. At the same time, the rule permits doctors and other covered entities to communicate freely with patients about treatment options and other health-related information, including disease management programs.
- *Stronger State Laws.* The new federal privacy standards do not affect state laws that provide additional privacy protections for patients. They confidentiality protections are cumulative; the privacy rule will set a nation's "floor" of privacy standards that protect all Americans, and any state law providing additional protections would continue to apply. When a state law requires a certain disclosure---such as reporting an infectious disease outbreak to the public health authorities---the federal privacy regulations would not preempt the state law.
- *Confidential Communications.* Under the privacy rule, patients can request that their doctors, health plans, and other covered entities take reasonable steps to ensure that their communications with the patient are confidential. For example a patient could ask a doctor to call his or her office rather than home, and the doctor's office should comply with that request if it can be reasonably accommodated.
- *Complaints.* Consumers may file a formal complaint regarding the privacy practices of a covered health plan or provider. Such complaints can be made directly to the covered provider or health plan or to HHS' Office for Civil Rights (OCR), which is charged with investigating compiling and enforcing the privacy regulations.
- Information about filing complaints should be included in each covered entity's notice or privacy practices. NOTE: 866-627-7748 or <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/hipaa>.

Civil and Criminal Penalties. Congress provided civil and criminal penalties for covered entities that misuse personal health information. Penalties may range from \$100 per violation up to \$25,000 per year for each requirement or prohibition violated. A more severe penalty may be

levied (up to \$250,000 and 10 years in prison) if the offenses are committed with the intent to sell, transfer, or use protected health information for commercial advantage, personal gain, or malicious harm.

A major outcome of HIPAA is the creation of security rules that ensure the safety and privacy of individually identifiable healthcare information and records.

REFERENCES/RESOURCES:

U. S. Department of Health & Human Services. (2003). *Fact sheet: protecting the privacy of patients' health information*. Available online: <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/hipaa>

University of California, San Francisco. (2002). UCSF Campus & UCSF Medical Center:

what is HIPAA? Available online

<http://www.fresno.ucsf.edu/housestaffportal/documents/HIPAA101module.pdf>

Acknowledgement of Receipt of HIPAA Privacy Guidelines

I have received a copy of the HIPAA Privacy Guidelines. I have read and understand the privacy regulations set form in the Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act of

1996. I will not violate these guidelines in any way when working with clients, patients, or residents in healthcare facilities.

Signature

Printed Name

Date



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to Change the World

Appendix B

RN to BS in Nursing Program Student Signature Page

I, _____, have read the RN to B.S. in Nursing Student Handbook in its entirety. I understand that I am bound to the policies and procedures outlined in the handbook and those in the University Catalog and Regent University Student Handbook.

I have read and understand the Progression and Retention Policy _____ (initial)

I have read and understand that while didactic courses are in an asynchronous online format, per CCNE requirements, I must complete practice immersion hours in NURS 310, NURS 330, and NURS 430 _____ (initial)

I understand that NURS 498 is the final course in the RN to BS in Nursing program
_____ (initial)

I have read and understand the necessity of medical clearance prior to obtaining practice immersion hours. Medical clearance will be documented on Complio and reviewed by the Clinical Clearance Coordinator _____ (initial)

I understand that a background check and drug screening will be complete using the Complio/American DataBank program prior to obtaining clinical hours. _____ (initial)

Student Name

Student Signature

Date