



NMNEC Concept: **Functional Ability**

Mega-Concept: Participant Attribute

Category: Diversity

Concept Name: Functional Ability

Concept Definition:

Refers to the person's physical, psychological, cognitive, and social ability to perform the individual's activities of daily living according to their basic needs.

Scope:

The broad scope of functional ability in a patient can be visualized on a spectrum which occurs fully independent to completely dependent. A patient's functional ability during the lifespan can fall anywhere on the spectrum and can change. A patient's position on this spectrum depends on and is influenced by the one's physiological, psychological, and sociological factors. With independent full functional ability one has the capability to meet all activities necessary for living without any assistance. Dependence on the continuum refers to the amount of assistance or assistive devices necessary for basic life activities.

Life span considerations include meeting developmental milestones in infants and children and interventions needed for any trauma and illness such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, and any specialty rehab required to return to normal function within the continuum.

Attributes/Criteria:

- Basic activities of daily living (BADLs & ADLs)
 - Dressing – Ability to get clothes from storage, put them on and fasten them
 - Toileting – Ability to exercise control over elimination, go to, get on and off toilet, arrange clothes and clean self
 - Eating – Ability to get food from plate to mouth
 - Ambulating – Ability to move in and out of chairs and the bed and to travel through the home environment
- Instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs)
 - Preparation of meals
 - Shopping
 - Medication management
 - Financial management



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- Ability to travel within the community

Theoretical Links:

Roper-Logan-Tierney Model of Nursing (Sargent, 2017, p. 14)

- In this theory there are twelve activities of daily living that are central to human life. This theory focuses on health promotion and those activities that aid in health promotion.
 1. Maintaining a safe environment
 2. Breathing
 3. Communication
 4. Mobilizing
 5. Eating and drinking
 6. Eliminating
 7. Personal cleansing and dressing
 8. Maintaining body temperature
 9. Working and playing
 10. Sleeping
 11. Expressing sexuality
 12. Dying

Context to Nursing/Healthcare:

Knowledge that nurses need to care for patients with different functional abilities includes:

- **Risk Recognition:** Includes a systematic assessment of the patient to identify functional deficits that allows for an appropriate plan of management (Geron, n.d.).
 - Developmental abnormalities
 - Physical or psychological trauma or disease
 - Social or cultural factors
 - Physical environment

Skills that nurses need to care for patients with different functional abilities includes:

- **Functional Assessment:** Is determined with multiple specific assessment tools in an interprofessional effort to evaluate a person's dependence in relationship to their identified risks. (Savage, 2017; Geron, n.d.). This requires assessment of vision, hearing, mobility, nutrition, cognition and continence.
- **Self-report assessment tools:** Which entail the patient's perception of their functional ability.
 - Functional Activities Questionnaire (FAQ)



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- Geriatric Depression Scale
- **Performance-based assessment tools:** Are developed to be utilized for specific physical or psychological independence disabilities.
 - Functional Independence Measure
 - Functional Status Scale (FSS)
 - Mini-Mental Status Examination (MMSE)
 - Functional Ability Descriptor Tool for Children
 - This tool assesses physical capabilities of children to assess interventions necessary for therapy and safety.
- **Ability to collaborate** in a multidisciplinary effort to improve the patient's functional ability.
- **Planning for discharge** from a health care facility or program must consider the functional ability of the patient. This entails the use of support services such as home health care, inpatient or outpatient or long term care in order to meet the person's ability to perform essential activities of living.

Interrelated Concepts

- **Development:** The developmental level of an individual will greatly influence their functional ability.
- **Culture:** Cultural beliefs will affect the expectations for functional ability in different circumstances.
- **Motivation:** An individual's motivation to overcome physical challenges may affect their functional abilities.
- **Mobility:** Mobility is an important aspect of functional ability.
- **Nutrition:** The functional ability to obtain, prepare, and consume food is essential for maintenance of optimal nutrition.
- **Sensory Perception:** Deficits in sensory and perception may increase the difficulty in meeting functional needs.
- **Cognition:** Processes related to the reception of sensory input, its processing, and storage, retrieval and its use.

New Mexico Nursing Education Consortium (NMNEC) Required Exemplars:

- Functional Assessment Across the Lifespan

Optional Exemplars:

- Medication management
- Financial management



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