



# NMNEC Concept: Communication

**Mega Concept:** Professional Nursing

**Category:** Professional Attributes

**Concept Name:** Communication

**Concept Definition:**

A complex, ongoing, interactive process that forms the basis for building trusting interpersonal relationships that impacts the provision of health care.

**Scope, Categories, and Types:**

The scope of communication ranges from effective communication to no communication.

There are three categories of communication:

- Linguistics: Verbal exchange of messages through spoken words and written symbols.
- Paralinguistic: Nonverbal exchange of symbols (ex: gestures, eye contact, facial expressions).
- Meta-communication: All factors that influence communication (ex: environment, relationships).

Types of Communication:

- Intrapersonal communication: Occurs within an individual.
- Interpersonal communication: Communication between two or more people.

**Attributes/Criteria:**

- Process: Transmission that occurs between sender and receiver.
- Complementary Exchange: The sender encodes and delivers a message and the receiver receives and decodes the message. The roles change back and forth between the sender and receiver
- Context: Factors that affect perception and interpretation of messages.
  - Internal Factors:
    - Culture, gender
    - Experience
    - Generation
    - Values/beliefs
    - Education
    - Physical state
    - Emotional state



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- Relationship between sender and receiver.
- External Factors:
  - Environment: noise, temperature, space. The interaction between sender and receiver can be influenced greatly by the environment (Potter, Perry, Stockart, and Hall, 2017).
- Learned skill: Effective communication is a skill that can be learned. Critical thinking promotes effective communication (Potter, Perry, Stockart, and Hall, 2017).
  - Professional Language: Nursing has a unique language specific to the profession.
- Listening: Is a component of communication and is a learned skill. Nurses need to be active listeners when communicating with patients. Active listening includes things such as: understanding verbal and nonverbal messages, understanding the context of the interaction, and providing feedback (Varcarolis, 2017).

### Theoretical Links:

- Basic Communication Theory
  - The sender encodes and delivers a message and the receiver receives and decodes the message. The roles change back and forth between the sender and receiver.
  - Vigor in communication: Communication needs to be clear and have a goal.
  - Levels of Communication
    - Verbal: Spoken word and written symbols.
    - Nonverbal: Nonverbal communication accounts for a large portion of a message. Nonverbal communication includes:
      - Gestures
      - Eye contact
      - Facial expressions
      - Posture
      - Personal space
      - Artwork
- Peplau's Therapeutic use of self in the Nurse-Patient Relationship: Communication is a key concept in the development of the nurse-patient relationship. Peplau (1991) identified clarity and continuity as principles for guiding communication during the nurse-patient interview. Peplau's model was developed for psychiatric mental health nursing, but many of the principles can be used in any nursing interaction.
  - Phases of the Nurse-Patient Relationship
    - Orientation Phase: Nurse and patient meet. Initial interview occurs.
    - Working Phase: Nurse and patient work together to identify and solve problems.
    - Termination Phase: Final phase of the nurse patient relationship.



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- Ruesch's Elements of Communication: Focuses on perceptions and interpretations of communication. Communication skills develop in stages and occurs overtime.
  - Communication is influenced by perception, evaluation and transmission.
    - Perception
    - Evaluation: Includes past experiences and value systems (Kneisl, 2013).
    - Transmission: Involves the quality of the message.

### **Context to Nursing/Healthcare:**

Communication is fundamental in forming relationships with health care participants and when collaborating with inter-professional teams. Proficiency in communication skills is just as important as proficiency in clinical skills (AACN, 2016).

Communication Competence: Communication competence is needed to effectively meet standards of nursing care (Potter, Perry, Stockart, and Hall, 2017)). To safely and competently care for patients, nurse's need to be skilled in communication. Effective and appropriate communication in nursing requires critical thinking skills. Communication is necessary throughout the nursing process (Potter, Perry, Stockart, and Hall, 2017):

- Assessment (ex: interviewing)
- Nursing Diagnosis (ex: documentation)
- Planning (ex: care plan meetings, communicating expected outcomes)
- Implementation (delegation, teaching activities)
- Evaluation (explanation of revisions to care plan)

Patient Safety and Health Care Quality: Breakdown in communication is a leading cause of sentinel events (Patient Safety Advisory Group, 2017). SBAR (Situation, Background, Assessment and Recommendation) is a tool that can be used between inter-professional team members to communicate important patient information.

Electronic Health Record: Documentation is a form of communication among all healthcare providers. The electronic health record helps to increase patient safety and reflect patient care processes (Malloch, Patterson, Sheets & Bowen, 2010). However, when used at the bedside it has the potential to become a barrier an environmental barrier to effective communication. (Potter, Perry, Stockert, & Hall, 2017).

**Knowledge:** Being knowledgeable about communication

Nurses need to know that communication:

- Happens on multiple levels which include: intrapersonal, interpersonal, small group, public and electronic communication.
- Includes several forms: verbal, nonverbal, and metacommunication.
- Varies according to relationships such as nurse-patient, nurse-public, or nurse healthcare team



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- Documentation is a form of communication that provides: consistency of assessment and evaluation data for the health care team, a legal record, data for financial billing and reimbursement, information for auditing and monitoring, data for research. (Potter, Perry, Stockert, & Hall, 2017).

**Skills:** Able to use effective appropriate communication to achieve patient centered goals (Buchanan and Godfrey, 2017).

Nurses need to be able to:

- Engage in a therapeutic relationship by use silence, active listening, and applying clarification techniques
- Adapt communication to meet the needs of the patient
- Be clear, concise, and timely for effective professional communication
- Apply a means to protect the confidentiality information
- Document in a factual, accurate, organized, complete and timely manner
- (Potter, Perry, Stockert, & Hall, 2017).

**Attitudes:** Nurses' personal and professional attitudes are instrumental in shaping their nursing practice.

Nurses need to be able to:

- Value their own role communication for patient centered care
- Recognize that their own beliefs can affect the communication process when developing and maintaining a therapeutic or professional relationship
- Attitude for the use of positive, effective communication to promote collaboration with inter-professionals to support patient centered care.
- Value the use of informatics and technology as a means for communication

### Interrelated Concepts:

- Culture: Different cultures may use different non-verbal communication techniques.
- Sensory Perception: Sensory perception deficits can interfere with the reception of communication.
- Collaboration: Communication skills are necessary to effectively collaborate.
- Health Care Participant
- Technology and Informatics
- Advocacy

### Exemplars:

#### New Mexico Nursing Education Consortium (NMNEC) Required Exemplars:

- Therapeutic Communication
- Situation, Background, Assessment and Recommendation (SBAR)



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- Documentation
- Lateral Violence
- Conflict Resolution

### **Optional Exemplars:**

- Motivational Interviewing
  - Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT)
- Translation Services



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## References

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