



Role of the Nurse Practitioner in Delivering Quality Care in the Radiology & Imaging Setting

Introduction/Problem Statement

Health care systems are grappling to keep up with the evolving health care changes while attempting to provide high-quality care, patient-centered holistic care, and equitable care in a cost-containment environment (Hernandez-Leveille, Bennett & Nelson, 2014). The evolving healthcare environment calls for delivery of high-quality patient care. Possible challenges to providing high quality care is the reality of an impending physician shortage of up to 100,000 primary and specialty care physicians by 2030 (Mangiofico, 2018). Within the radiology and imaging environment, advancements in technology and medicine require highly skilled healthcare providers to deliver safe quality care to patients with acute and/or chronic conditions undergoing image-guided interventions. Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) serve an important role within the environment and contribute to ever-changing demands within the wider healthcare field. Within diagnostic imaging and interventional radiology, APRNs have evolved to include the role of the nurse practitioner (NP). (Taylor, 2012).

Although the advanced practice role encompasses different specialties (i.e., physician assistant, radiology assistant), the NP role has made great strides in the field of radiology to meet these demands. Patients undergoing imaging and interventional procedures benefit from the advanced care provided by NPs adding value to patient outcomes. APRNs facilitate the throughput in the imaging and interventional radiology suites (Taylor, 2008). General duties of the NPs consist of conducting interviews, performing comprehensive physical examinations, ordering and interpreting appropriate diagnostic and laboratory tests, providing health teaching and counseling, managing contrast allergies, prescribing therapies, and managing the health care for patients through collaboration and communication with healthcare teams. In addition, NPs are capable and credentialed to perform identified surgical/minimally invasive procedures for which he/she has received training, education and has been deemed competent to perform within respective practice setting based on degree of certification, licensure, and scope of practice.

ARIN Position

The Association for Radiologic & Imaging Nursing (ARIN) advocates for the role of the NP in delivering high quality care in the radiology and imaging setting. NPs in the radiology and imaging environment are essential to the care of patients undergoing diagnostic and interventional procedures. The role of the NP includes clinical evaluation, intervention, management and education of patients prior, during and post imaging studies and/or

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procedures resulting in the delivery of high-quality care. NP scope of practice may vary based on certification, licensure and institutional policy.

Rationale and Supporting Information

APRNs are registered nurses who have advanced education, training and certification in assessment, diagnosis and treatment and focus on wellness and health maintenance of individuals (Taylor, 2008). Their contributions to health care have resulted in improved patient care that is evidenced-based and of higher quality (Dubree, Jones, Kapu, & Parmley, 2015). Because of the value APRNs contribute to healthcare, they continue to expand their roles in all settings to bridge the gap of access to care (Hernandez-Leveille, Bennette & Nelson, 2014).

The 2010 Institute of Medicine's (IOM) report *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*, details the recommendations for the nursing's role in the healthcare delivery system recommending that APRNs should practice to the full extent of their education and training. The report emphasizes the critical role that nurses play in the effort to improve cost-effective and quality healthcare delivery (Dubree, Jones, Kapu, & Parmley, 2015). Better quality outcomes equal lower costs for the health care system (Needleman, et.al, 2011; McHugh, Berez, Small, 2013).

The evolution of the advanced nursing practice has occurred within the context of a national mandate for significant improvements in our healthcare system and has revealed positive outcomes when integrating APRNs into the practice setting (Dubree, Jones, Kapu, & Parmley, 2015). Today, APRNs can be found working in outpatient settings, hospitals and specialty practices helping to promote evidence-based care, patient adherence to health promotion, and education (Kleinpell, 2007). Through educational preparation, training, national certification, and their states' specific scopes of practice APRNs are prepared to care for patients along a continuum of specialties.

Due to the increased demands of health care, physicians, such as interventional radiologists, have partnered with allied health professionals, such as NPs, to meet the needs of the growing and increasingly complex practices (Taylor, Sansivero, Ray, 2012). This partnership enhances interprofessional collaboration and patient-centered care.

The contributions of APRNs can be maximized by deliberately and thoughtfully integrating their practice into the organization's culture (Kutzleb et al., 2015).



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Conclusion

ARIN endorses the role of the NP in delivering high quality care in the radiology and imaging setting. This position is based on extensive literature review demonstrating the value APRN roles bring to various healthcare settings.

References and Other Resources

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