

Conclusion: The Benefits of a Unified Classification

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This monograph focuses on the effort to develop a common organizing structure (taxonomy) for harmonization of NANDA diagnoses, NIC interventions, and NOC outcomes. The structure itself appears as Table 2-6 (see Chapter 2, page 20), entitled Taxonomy of Nursing Practice. It is a good first effort toward providing a means to organize diagnoses, interventions, and outcomes in the same way. Having a common structure is more efficient than having separate structures and facilitates implementation of all the languages in practice and education. The proposed structure is placed in the public domain so that developers of other classifications and various other users can have easy access. The developers of NANDA, NIC, and NOC are committed to placing their diagnoses, interventions, and outcomes in the structure and to disseminating this in forthcoming publications. Future discussions of the issues involved in various placements will assist in refining the structure. The long-range goal is to achieve one unified classification consisting of diagnoses, interventions, and outcomes organized within the same structure.

Many groups may benefit from having a common unified nursing language classification, including educators, clinicians, researchers, and administrators. Informatics specialists will also be able to integrate a common unified classification of nursing language in the development of information systems that can be improved from refinement, accuracy, and clarity of terms used to communicate nursing to others. Some of the advantages for a common structure were listed in Chapter 2; the advantages and uses are further defined here so that readers of this monograph will be able to more readily implement the knowledge gained.

Education

Educators have long been concerned with the effectiveness and overall utility of teaching students different classification systems for communicating nursing

diagnoses, interventions, and outcomes. The proposed unified nursing classification system will

- Help define essential content for nursing practice at the undergraduate and graduate levels.
- Provide a structure for curriculum design.
- Support the continued teaching of clinical judgment and critical thinking within the nursing curriculum.
- Enable faculty to focus on teaching one classification system.
- Increase student ease with documenting, especially within the proposed standardized electronic patient record.
- Provide a focus for research and clinical investigations by student researchers.
- Foster the integration of nursing theory to guide clinical practice.
- Increase opportunities for concept development, analysis, and evaluation in graduate courses, advancing both language and knowledge development
- Assist educators in linking knowledge with clinical practice.

Clinical Practice

Within the current healthcare environment, clinicians are searching for ways to accurately document care comprehensively, efficiently, in a timely way, and accurately. Stressors in the workplace and the impact of decreased resources challenge the nurse and often compromise documentation. The use of a unifying nursing classification will help clinicians

- Improve documentation by providing a structure for nurses to describe the patient experience more accurately.
- Identify nursing contributions to patient care outcomes more efficiently and effectively.
- Increase the use of language to articulate practice to consumers, other healthcare providers, administrators, and policy makers.
- Promote the use of the content addressed in the proposed unifying NNN structure as essential content for evidence-based practice.
- Create movement toward a culturally sensitive, standardized nursing assessment framework to evaluate function.
- Provide support for the use of all three dimensions of clinical reasoning, including assessment data used to make a clinical judgment, the diagnoses linked to outcome measures, and nursing actions used to resolve the problem.
- Help articulate concepts such as complexity and differentiated practice more accurately and with sensitivity to provider knowledge and experience.

Research and Knowledge Development

As nursing grows as a science, it will be important to articulate the content of the discipline and describe the patient problems solved by the nurse giving care.

The development of a common unifying nursing language can facilitate knowledge development and promote research initiatives that develop, test, and refine knowledge. This will result in

- Continued development and refinement of concepts and content essential to the discipline of nursing and language development.
- Development of midrange theories that can guide practice and be linked to the clinical judgment process within nursing.
- Use of new research methodologies that test and refine existing nursing language.
- Generation of research initiatives to identify high-incidence patient problems within and across settings.
- Evaluating patient outcomes that are linked to diagnosis and intervention strategies.
- Establishment of outcome indicators described by using nursing language.
- Defining essential content for nursing practice at the undergraduate and graduate levels.
- Development, testing, and evaluation of predictive models that can be used to respond to the patient experience with quality cost-effective care strategies.
- Analyzing an extensive, available database that can more accurately examine the effectiveness of nursing's contributions to patient care.

Administration

Nurse administrators will benefit from the use of a common unified classification of nursing language in multiple ways. These include, but are not limited to:

- Improved documentation of nursing care across patient populations and settings critical to meeting standards used in clinical organizational evaluation.
- Participating in the development and purchase of information systems and defining the content needed to capture nursing practice particularly in the electronic patient medical record information (PMRI).
- Standardization of nursing data that can be analyzed and further researched by more accurate costing out services.
- Accurately informing the development of a reimbursement system for nursing services within the organization's infrastructure.
- Identification of common nursing problems, patient co-morbidity, and the mix of staff needed to address patient problems in a quality, cost-effective manner.
- Use of nursing diagnoses, interventions, and outcomes to communicate and substantiate the contributions of nursing to policy makers and hospital administrators.
- Describing a practice environment that is patient focused and grounded in nursing inquiry and knowledge needed to identify, explain, and effect patient responses in health and illness.

These lists of various uses demonstrate the importance of harmonization. We believe that the publication of this monograph represents an important step forward in the ongoing efforts of many individuals in the United States and other countries to describe, document, and study the contributions of nursing care. Although the Taxonomy of Nursing Practice structure may not be a perfect fit for all concepts from differing classifications, it represents a good beginning effort in effecting a harmonization of previous work in this area.

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