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Methodology

- Percent Not Performing
- Mean Importance Rating
- Mean Frequency Rating

Of the 129 activity statements, 103 (79.84%) were considered part of core practice by at least 75% of the respondents. Of the 129 activity statements, 123 (95.34%) were on average performed at least one or more times in a typical day. Regarding importance of the activity statements, 123 of the 129 activity statements (95.34%) were rated a “3.0” (Important) by the participants.

Subgroup Analyses

To ensure practice was consistent across practice settings, specialty areas, years of experience, and geographic setting, separate analyses were conducted to determine if RN practice was viewed similarly among the nurses participating in the study. Importance ratings for all activity statements were calculated based on the aforementioned demographic subgroups. These subgroups were derived from responses to demographic questions on the survey. In most of the analyses, a majority of the respondents in the demographic subgroups indicated that the mean importance rating of each activity statement used for core competencies was at least “3.0” which corresponds to “Important” on the rating scale.

Summary & Conclusion

A non-experimental, descriptive study was conducted to explore the importance and frequency of activities performed by post entry-level RNs as well as those activities that are part of core RN practice. More than 4,700 RNs responded to the survey. The 2006 RN Post Entry-Level Practice Analysis study collected data on core practice and the frequency and importance of RN activity performance. NCSBN’s Continued Competence Task Force reviewed the results of the study and noted that importance ratings provided by the RN respondents were comparable across facilities, specialty practices, years of experience, and geographic regions.

In general, findings indicate that nursing practice, as it relates to patient care, is essentially the same regardless of facility, specialty, years of experience, and geographic region. The results of this study can be used to develop core RN competencies for a continued competence assessment instrument. While the practice analysis lays an essential foundation, extensive development and research

is needed to produce a standardized, psychometrically sound, evidenced-based assessment instrument that will measure current nursing knowledge, skills, and abilities for the post entry-level practitioner.

In addition to the post entry-level practice of the RN, NCSBN is also utilizing the same methodology to conduct a comprehensive review of post entry-level practice of the Practical Nurse (PN). While it is uncertain at this time whether these practice analyses will ultimately result in psychometrically sound and legally defensible examinations for post entry-level RN and PN licensure, these studies do provide an empirical grounding to support future activities related to assessing on-going nurse competence. Both of these studies can be found at no charge and in their entirety, along with all other information on the NCSBN Continued Competence initiative, online at www.ncsbn.org. ■