
**ORIENTATION, TRAINING,
AND QUALITY ASSURANCE
FOR
NURSE PROTOCOLS**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ORIENTATION, TRAINING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE FOR NURSE PROTOCOLS	5
A. Initial Orientation and Training	5.1
B. Continuing Education/Training	5.1
C. Documentation of Training	5.2

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ORIENTATION, TRAINING, AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

A. Initial Orientation and Training

A comprehensive orientation and training program ensures that registered professional nurses are effectively integrated into the Public Health system, are prepared to practice under the authority of nurse protocols, are introduced to the concepts of population health-based nursing practice and are able to contribute to quality assurance and quality improvement (QA/QI) for public health nursing practice.

Orientation and training of public health nurses includes both the general orientation given to all new public health employees and more specific clinical orientation and training necessary to function under standards and nurse protocols for one or more specific programs. The Office of Nursing has the responsibility to set training and practice standards in accordance with the most current research and evidence-based practice. The extent to which the standards are implemented is determined by those who govern the day-to-day activities of public health programs and services at the local level. The QA/QI “**initial required**” and “**annual required**” training practice standards are delineated in Section IV of the QA/QI Manual and must be used to document the training completed by an individual RN as part of the preparation for practicing under nurse protocol. Although, orientation and training should be individualized as much as possible according to the expertise the nurse brings to the job, and to meet the needs of the particular public health setting, individual RN practicing under nurse protocol must complete all listed **initial** required trainings prior to practicing under a specific nurse protocol.

The clinical orientation may be concurrent with the general orientation. By observing other nurses and beginning to perform some tasks under supervision, the nurse should gain understanding of the role of the public health nurse and the use of nurse protocols in the delivery of client services.

District/county orientation, training and QA/QI plans should be consistent with nursing practice standards and Department of Public Health guidelines such as the latest *Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement for Public Health Nursing Practice* manual, programmatic manuals and nurse protocols which may be viewed at:

<http://dph.georgia.gov/sites/dph.georgia.gov/files/QAQIManualFullVersion2011.pdf>

B. Continuing Education/Training

Every public health nurse should have the opportunity for continuing education and training in accordance with changes in technology and job needs. Specific programmatic expectations for continuing education are included in the QA/QI manual described above. Training programs are an appropriate way to educate nurses about any changes to nurse protocols after the annual review.

C. Documentation of Training

1. Professional growth and development, which is the responsibility of each RN and APRN, is documented at least once annually (e.g., workshops, seminars, community/professional meetings).
2. Documentation of all training that demonstrates RNs and APRNs are prepared to function under standards and nurse protocols for one or more specific programs should be maintained on file for five years at the district office and by the individual nurse.
3. Training files must be made available for review by RNs and APRNs during QA/QI reviews.