Presentation Objectives

- Provide historical information of Ambulatory Nursing Practice
- Describe findings of study of Ambulatory Nursing in Practice
- Discuss the impact of non-nursing duties on Ambulatory nursing practice

Background / Significance:

- Nursing practice in the Ambulatory setting
  - requires knowledge integration that will enable nurses to care for complex patient/family care needs, incorporate safety, and comply with regulatory cost effectiveness and Magnet requirements.
- As an integral component of ambulatory nursing care, RNs must
  - think critically and interpret complex information while they assess, triage, consult, follow-up, collaborate and coordinate care outcomes for patients and families either via telephone triage of brief face-to-face office encounters.
- Role ambiguity and confusion of the nurse may exist
  - in some ambulatory environments due to high need of medication refills, prior authorizations, making appointments, and other essential, but not necessarily role-specific tasks that may be assigned to nurses.
- Such tasks can alter professional outcomes
  - related to patient satisfaction, quality patient outcomes, patient safety and effective transition of care activities.
- Evaluating ambulatory nursing practice will help describe the contribution of nursing in the Ambulatory Care setting.
Why Do Ambulatory Nursing Research?

Always starts with questions......

• Why do some clinic RNs get paid less?
• What is the return on investment (ROI) for nursing in ambulatory care?
  – Can RNs make a difference in the cost & outcomes of care
• Enhance awareness of role, value and impact of nursing practice within
  the ambulatory clinics
  – Is nurse triage nursing practice?
  – Are nurses operating at top of license?
  – Are ambulatory nurses trained to impact cost & outcomes
• Changing healthcare environment
  – Decrease length of stay
  – Early appointments in clinics
  – Readmission avoidance
  – High volume of nurse triage (sicker patients)
  – Impact of health literacy

Nursing Model Vs. Medical Model

Inpatient | Outpatient

Purpose:

• The purpose of this study was to describe nurses’ perception of their
  nursing practice in an Ambulatory Care setting within clinics associated
  with an acute care hospital.
• The original study was done on an inpatient unit.
Sample/Setting

• Sample Description/Population:
  – The study group was a convenience sample of registered nurses who provide direct patient care.

• Setting:
  – 23 ambulatory care clinics in a large Midwestern academic medical center were included in the study.

Method/Design:

• This IRB approved descriptive study used an electronic survey based on the Actual Scope of Nursing (ASCOP) instrument.
• Written permission obtained from author or original study
• The instrument included 26 questions scored on a 6-point Likert-type scale.
• Demographic information was also captured.
• The dimensions of practice addressed in this instrument were the following:
  – patient safety, assessment/planning, integration/supervision of staff, teaching of patients/families, knowledge updating/utilization, communication/care coordination, and quality of care.
  – Complexity levels of low (base level of practice for any RN, including novice RNs), moderate (requiring more complex interventions that be carried out by all RNs), and high (complex interventions by RNs with considerable experience and BSN training) were identified.

Electronic Questionnaire
Results/Outcomes:

- Total survey responses where 143. Of those, 123 were fully completed and included in the analysis.
- Among participants, nearly 70% were BSN prepared.
- Participants reported:
  - Almost 1/2 of their time doing face-to-face encounters
  - About 1/3 of their time was reported as being spent doing non-nursing work
  - Level 1 complexity: Assessment/planning were a primary task that was associated with.
  - Level 3 complexities: Communication/care coordination and integration/supervision of staff where associated with.
  - Level 3 Complexity: Communication/care coordination and integration/supervision were significant across all levels of nurse's education background.
  - Education level reflected the variable of quality for all nurses.

How Do RNs Spend Their Time?

Almost 1/2 of their time was spent conducting telephone triage, face-to-face encounters and communication/care coordination.

About 1/3 of their time was reported as being spent doing non-nursing work functions such as making appointments, doing prescription refills and completing prior authorizations.

How Ambulatory Nurses Spend Their Time
Primary Role Function

Level 1 Complexity:
Primary task associated with Assessment/planning

Level 3 complexity:
Communication/care coordination and integration/supervision of staff where associated with Variables of Level 3 Complexity, Communication/care coordination and integration/supervision were significant across all levels of nurse’s education background.

Variables of Level 3 Complexity:
Communication/care coordination and integration/supervision were significant across all levels of nurse’s education background.

Level of Education

Education level reflected the variable of quality for all nurses.

RN Experience

Years of Experience
Clinical Application of Results

- Promotion of Competency Outcome Performance Assessment (COPA) to leadership and with orientation process of RNs
- Quarterly forums with staff RNs and leadership in the Heart & Vascular Service Line
- Promotion of PDP in clinic setting
- Participation in the Ambulatory Business Process Team to evaluate phone triage
- Continued “hallway” conversations

More research is needed............

Conclusions/Implications:

- Ambulatory nurses’ perception of the value of their core competencies of assessment/planning, care coordination/communication and integration/supervision were significant in this study.
- More research needs to be done to see how leadership can support nurses to restructure their time from doing non-nursing functions of prior authorizations, medication refills and making appointments.
Research Dissemination

- October, 2014 Froedtert & MCW Fall Nursing Research Conference: Poster Presentation
- March, 2015 Froedtert & MCW Ambulatory Nursing Council
- May, 2015 Building Bridges: Podium Presentation
- August, 2015 National Black Nurses Association Conference: Podium presentation
- 2015 Plan: Nursing Economics publications
References