Accountability, Competence and Autonomy EP12

a. *Provide one example, with supporting evidence, of clinical nurses having the authority and freedom to make nursing care decisions within the full scope of their nursing practice.*

**Example One: Skin Integrity Care Plan Provides the Authority and Freedom for Nursing Care Decisions within the Full Scope of Clinical Nurse Practice**

Nurses at WakeMed Health & Hospitals are expected and encouraged to practice to the full scope of nursing practice as defined by the North Carolina Board of Nursing (NCBON). Activities endorsed by the NCBON and expected of the WakeMed clinical nurse include assessing, teaching, counseling, reporting, evaluating and implementing nursing care. The Skin Integrity Care Plan is one tool clinical nurses use to autonomously initiate care based on their meticulous assessment and evaluation of patients and their needs. (Evidence EP12-1, Chapter 90 of Article 9A of the NCBON Nurse Practice Act Definition 7 a-j) (Evidence EP12-2, Clinical Nurse Position Description)

**Clinical Nurses Use Assessment Skills and Care Plans to Make Nursing Care Decisions**

Patient X was admitted to WakeMed Health & Hospitals in the middle of the night. 5A clinical nurse Rita C Seuraj, BSN, RN completed an initial assessment and recognized that the Braden Score of 10 placed this patient at risk for skin breakdown. Seuraj therefore initiated the Skin Integrity Care Plan. (Evidence EP12-3, Skin Integrity Care Plan)

Seuraj also assessed the patient as having a skin tear on the arm and hand, so she activated the part of the care plan that suggests appropriate treatment for a skin tear. She was able to initiate the correct therapy at 1 a.m. without needing to wait for a wound care consult or a specific physician order. The Skin Integrity Care Plan gave Seurai the authority and freedom to make a nursing care decision based on her assessment of the patient’s needs. (Evidence EP12-4, Admission Assessment Wound Care Flow Sheet)

Seuraj also placed a consult for WakeMed Wound Care Specialist Gloria Tabron, BSN, RN, CWON. Tabron saw the patient the next morning, corroborated that the treatment plan was appropriate for the patient and provided education to the patient and family. (Evidence EP12-5, Wound Care Specialist Note)

**Authority and Freedom**

WakeMed Health & Hospitals supports clinical nurses’ independent practice by providing evidence-based nursing care plans that they can initiate based on their assessment. In addition, specialty nurses such as wound care specialists are readily available to consult with clinical nurses and patients to ensure the care is coordinated and comprehensive.