**SPSCC Nursing Assistant Program Technical Standards**

**Introduction:**

The Nursing Assistant program at SPSCC prepares students to become nursing assistants in convalescent centers, hospitals, home settings, and community settings. It covers the nursing assistant’s role and responsibilities on the health care team and meets Washington State and federal requirements for nursing assistant education.

The nursing assistant course will combine cognitive learning and practice of basic caregiving skills in classroom, laboratory and clinical settings.

Nursing assistants work under the direction and supervision of licensed nursing staff, have a great deal of contact with patients, and provide personal care such as bathing, feeding, and dressing. They also perform support functions such as transporting patients, taking vital signs, making beds, helping patients become ambulatory and answering patient call lights. Nursing assistants are responsible for observing and reporting how patients respond to the care that is being given. Nursing assistants have far more contact with residents than any other staff and are expected to develop ongoing relationships with the patients and treat them in a positive, caring way. To be a successful Nursing Assistant, an individual must work in a multidisciplinary team and be able to follow directions. They must be emotionally stable and have a great deal of patience.

South Puget Sound Community College has an institutional commitment to providing equal educational opportunities for qualified students with disabilities in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Revised Code of Washington: Students with Disabilities – Core Services (RCW 28B.10.912), and Students with Disabilities – Accommodations (RCW 28B.10.914).

**Qualifications:**

A nursing assistant student must meet knowledge and skills competencies in the areas of basic technical skills, personal care skills, mental health and social service needs, care of cognitively impaired residents, basic restorative service, client or resident rights and promotion of independence, communication and interpersonal skills, infection control, safety and emergency procedures, and rules and regulations knowledge.

The following statement of Technical Standards identifies the functional abilities the nursing assistant instructors have determined to be necessary in the provision of safe, effective, professional nursing care. These Technical Standards are reflected in the Washington Administrative Code, The Washington State Board of Nursing (WABON) Nursing Assistant Scope of Practice, and in the Washington State Candidate Handbook.

Students with disabilities who have questions about, or who may require reasonable accommodations in meeting the NAC course Technical Standards should contact [SPSCC Disability and Access Services](https://spscc.edu/services-support/access)  prior to enrolling in the NAC course.

The practice of a nursing assistant requires the following functional abilities with, or without, reasonable accommodations.

**Communication:**

* Comprehend, communicate, and document information in the English language
* Communicate accurately and effectively with patients; their significant others and spouses;
* The healthcare team and other professionals, instructors, and classmates in both clinical and classroom settings.

**Cognitive Ability:**

* Develop and refine critical thinking, decision making and problem-solving skills in various settings and apply new information
* Ability to comprehend, integrate, and communicate verbally and in writing.
* Ability to make sound decisions within their scope of practice
* Ability to work in fast-paced environments and demonstrate the characteristics of adaptability and flexibility.

**Observations and Basic Technical Skills:**

* Collect, use and interpret information from residents, including (but not limited to) changes in skin color; use assessment tools accurately such as blood pressure cuff, stethoscope; detect sounds related to audible alarms
* Detect a fire in a patient care area
* Read fine print such as on equipment labeling and supplies
* Detect odors such as foul-smelling bodily fluids, spoiled foods or smoke
* Detect changes in skin temperature and detect unsafe temperature level in heat producing devices in patient care.

**Motor Ability:**

* Ability to lift or carry a minimum of twenty-five (25) pounds independently and fifty (50) pounds with assistance
* Perform patient care activities, including (but not limited to) transferring of patients in and out of bed; walking of patients; turning and positioning of patients; moving equipment to various heights; disposing of needles in sharp containers; and manipulating small equipment and containers.
* Comply with all safety standards in all clinical settings including (but not limited to) infectious control precautions (Standard, droplet, contact, air borne), and use of fire extinguisher, and evacuation equipment.
* Capability of moving within and among clinical environments without compromising the safety of others, including but not limited to intermittent standing, sitting, and walking on carpeting, linoleum for varying amounts of time; full range of motion of all joints
* Respond to emergency patient care situations in a timely manner and provide emergency care, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation
* Accurately place and maintain position of stethoscope for detecting sound of blood pressure and apical pulse

**Behavioral and Social Attributes:**

* Capacity to communicate effectively, respectfully, and with cultural humility, with all individuals whom they encounter
* Accept supervision, criticism, and constructive feedback of an instructor and/or preceptor
* Adapt quickly to rapidly changing situations/environments, and to withstand human trauma and its effects
* Correctly judge when assistance in required and seek appropriate assistance in a timely manner
* Exhibit professional behavior, personal accountability, compassion, integrity, concern for others, and care for all individuals in a respectful and effective manner regardless of gender identity, age, race, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or any other protected status.

**Legal and Ethical Standards:**

* Function within the legal and ethical principles of their professional scope of practice
* Maintain and display ethical and moral behaviors in all interactions with patients, faculty, staff, students and the public.
* Individuals whose performance is impaired by abuse of alcohol or other substances are not suitable for admission to the nursing assistant program.
* Meet guidelines established by healthcare organizations where they will be engaged in clinical experiences, and legally be able to be certified as a nursing assistant in the State of Washington.

**Background Check Disclaimer:**

The Nursing Assistant program’s policy is to screen with Washington State Patrol (WSP). A second background check is conducted through the Department of Social and Health Services Background Check Central Unit. This is a Washington State law and is required of every employee and student intern in a long-term care facility. It can take a minimum of three weeks for clinical agencies to receive results from the Department of Social and Health Services Background Chek Central Unit. The Background Check Central Unit criminal history screen results will go directly to the clinical facility.

This screening will include:

* Due process findings of abuse, neglect, abandonment, and exploitation.
* More specific Department of Corrections Information.
* Some out-of-state information may be available through self-discloser and/or past background checks.

In the event your criminal history report results with findings that prevent you from working with vulnerable adults, you will be notified by phone, email, and/or letter. Consequently, this would prevent you from completing the course. Please check this link to read over the negatives actions that may disqualify you. [Disqualifying Crimes and Negative Actions](https://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=388-113)

It is important to understand that your ability to attend the clinical portion of this program is contingent of the results of the WSP and DSHS Background Check investigations. Furthermore, you should understand that the WSP and DSHS background check investigations are only valid for six (6) months from the date the forms are submitted.