

**BOARD OF REGISTERED NURSING**

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CURRICULUM GUIDELINES -- CLIENT ABUSE

Purpose:

Registered nurses have both legal and professional responsibilities to abused clients and are included in the group of health professionals required by law to report abuse of the elderly, children and dependent adults. In support of client advocacy, the Board of Registered Nursing adopted a policy statement November 15, 1985 stating that failure by a registered nurse to report abuse or suspected abuse of clients of any age constitutes unprofessional conduct.

A newly chaptered bill AB890, (effective 1-1-94) requires nurses to also have training in the detection and treatment of spousal or partner abuse.

The guidelines for client and spousal abuse content suggest objectives and content for interested schools of nursing and continuing education providers.* In schools of nursing the material may be addressed in a course or integrated throughout the curriculum. Continuing education providers may include all or part of the material in a course.

Objectives:

Upon completion of the course(s), the student will be able to:

- Define abuse for each of the client groups at risk - the elderly, children, dependent adults and spouse.
- Identify, through routine screening, spousal or partner abuse among patients.
- Differentiate between situations that must be reported and those which may be reported for each risk group.
- Describe the legal requirements for the reporting procedure for client abuse.
- Identify the appropriate protective agencies and time lines for reporting client abuse.
- State the legal and professional consequences of failing to report client abuse.
- Discuss the legal protection for nurses when fulfilling reporting obligations.
- Develop a nursing diagnosis for a dysfunctional family with potential or actual child abuse or spousal or partner abuse.

- Develop at least two nursing diagnoses for abused clients - child, elderly and/or dependent adults.
- Document patient injuries or illnesses attributable to spousal or partner abuse.
- Advise patient exhibiting signs of spousal or partner abuse of available crisis intervention services.

*The guidelines for client abuse should not be confused with the regulations for Public Health Nurse Certification requiring that all nurses have training in child abuse/neglect.
Content:

I. Definition - Abuse

- A. Kinds of Abuse
- B. Criteria for Risk Groups

II. Reporting Client Abuse

A. Mandatory and Additional Reporting

- 1. Elder Abuse Reporting Laws - Welfare and Institutions Code, Sections 15630.
- 2. Dependent Adult Abuse Reporting Laws - Welfare and Institutions Code, Section 15630.
- 3. Child Abuse Reporting Law - Penal Code, Section 11166.
- 4. General Abuse [includes adults, children, and other persons (including spouses)] - Penal Code Section 11160

B. Reporting Procedure

- 1. Telephone Report
- 2. Written Report
- 3. Information In Report

C. Protective Agencies For Reporting

- 1. Department of Social Services
- 2. Police or Sheriff's Department
- 3. County Welfare Department
- 4. County Probation Department
- 5. Long Term Care Ombudsman

D. Consequences Of Reporting/Not Reporting Client Abuse

- 1. Protection With Reporting
- 2. Legal and Professional Ramifications of Not Reporting

III. Nursing Process - Child Abuse

- A. Assessment
 - 1. Indicators of high risk families in the prenatal and post-partum periods.
 - 2. Characteristics of the child, parent and environment in abusive situation.
 - 3. Typical biophysical/psychosocial manifestations of abuse in the child.
 - 4. The abuser and the health care system.
 - 5. Sexual abuse vs. sexual activity in child 14 years and older.

- B. Intervention
 - 1. Prevention - Health Teaching
 - a. Parenting - Modeling
 - b. Growth and Development
 - c. Coping Skills

 - 2. Care Following Child Abuse
 - a. Physical Care and Safety of Child
 - b. Parental Counseling and Support Group
 - c. Health Teaching

IV. Nursing Process - Dependent Adult and Elder Abuse

- A. Assessment
 - 1. Biophysical/Psychosocial Manifestations of Abuse
 - 2. Criteria For Client Group - Elder/Dependent Adult

- B. Intervention
 - 1. Physical Care and Safety of Client
 - 2. Advocate Client Rights
 - 3. Counseling
 - 4. Referrals

V. Nursing Process - Detection of spousal/partner abuse

- A. Assessment
 - 1. Identification, through routine screening of spousal or partner abuse
 - 2. Nursing diagnosis
spousal/partner abuse victims nursing interventions

- B. Intervention
 - 1. Staff Education
 - a. Criteria for identifying spousal abuse
 - b. Procedures for handling injuries
 - c. Illnesses attributable to spousal abuse.
 - 2. Available crisis intervention services
 - 3. Patients exhibiting signs of spousal abuse

- a. Provide information on domestic violence
 - b. Offer a referral list of private and public community agencies that provide or arrange for evaluation and care of victims, eg, shelters, hotlines, temporary restraining orders
- C. Documentation requirements
- 1. Patient injuries or illnesses attributable to spousal abuse.
 - 2. Interventions

Clinical Experiences:

Clinical experience(s) specifically planned with attention to the special needs of abused clients is desirable. The focus of the experience may be revention/intervention/education.