Essential Functions for the
Practical Nursing Program (LPN)

In order to provide safe, efficient and quality nursing care, students enrolled in the Practical Nursing Program students should be capable of performing the following functions:

Motor Skills
- Stand and maintain balance
- Stand for long periods (assisting with procedures)
- Reach below waist and overhead
- Squeeze with fingers
- Write with pen/pencil
- Enter data into computer (usually via typing skills)
- Ability to grasp, move or assemble small parts (assemble equipment)
- Ability to bend, stretch, twist or reach-out
- Ability to squat, bend, kneel, push, pull and pivot
- May need ability to walk up/down stairs

Endurance
- Have physical/mental tolerance to work a full shift, usually 8-12 hours
- Ability to walk/be on feet continuously for long periods

Physical Strength
- Move light objects weighing up to 10# (move an IV pole on wheels)
- Move heavy object weighing > 25# (turning patient in bed)
- Pushing/pulling equipment weighing >75# (moving a hospital bed)
- Ability to assist with pulling patient’s up in bed, perform one man transfer
- Ability to perform CPR when required
- Ability to carry/lift 45 pounds

Auditory
- Discern faint body sounds (blood pressure sounds, tube placement)
- Hear auditory alarms (monitors, call bells, fire alarms)
- Hear normal speaking level sounds (verbal reports, emergency orders, patient conversation)
- Effectively utilize telephone for communications

Vision
- See details of objects that are less than a few feet away
- Ability to utilize depth perception
- Ability to use peripheral vision
- Ability for gross color discrimination
• Ability to distinguish light from darkness
• Ability to measure correctly, read and make observations
• Have ability of muscles to support body for long periods
• Ability to push, pull, lift or carry objects < 40#

Tactile
• Feel vibrations (pulses, tactile fremitus)
• Feel differences in size and shape (identifying body landmarks)
• Detect temperature changes (extremity comparison; cool vs. warm)
• Feel differences in surface characteristics (rashes, turgor, and roughness)
• Ability to handle, control or feel objects (tools, instruments)

Olfactory
• Ability to distinguish odors from patient and environment
• Ability to smell smoke

Reading
• Ability to read graphs
• Students applying for admission to the Practical Nursing program must meet the English admission requirements before entry into the program

Mathematics
• Ability to count rates (pulse, respiration)
• Ability to tell time (military time, contraction duration, seizure time)
• Read digital print-outs
• Students applying for admission to the Practical Nursing program must meet the mathematical requirements for admission to the program

Emotional
• Ability to establish a therapeutic relationship in a supportive manner
• Ability to deal with unexpected events (patient crisis)
• Handle strong emotions of others while controlling personal responses
• Adapt to changes in environment (floating to other unit, HVAC problems)
• Ability to focus and maintain attention on tasks (patient care, codes)
• Ability to direct others when required
• Ability to resolve conflicts

Analytical
• Ability to think critically
• Ability to evaluate outcomes
• Transfer knowledge from one situation to another
• Ability to prioritize
• Ability to utilize short term and long term memory
• Ability to problem solve
• Synthesize knowledge and skills
• Identify cause and effect relationships
- Ability to ‘sequence’ information

**Communication**
- Ability to speak English clearly
- Possess good written and verbal communication skills

*The above list of Essential Functions is not meant to be totally conclusive or comprehensive. Students for admission to the nursing program will be evaluated on an individual basis, seeking advice and opinions of others related to one’s ability to perform in a nursing environment.*

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