G: Surgical Nursing
Major Competency Area: G

Surgical Nursing

Priority: One

Competency: G-1

Knowledge of Surgical Procedures

Date: September 1, 2005

A Licensed Practical Nurse will:

G-1-1 Demonstrate knowledge of a variety of surgical procedures such as:
- cardiovascular surgeries and procedures
- gastrointestinal surgeries and procedures
- genitourinary surgeries and procedures
- gynecological surgeries and procedures
- dermatological surgeries and procedures
- neurological surgeries and procedures
- thoracic surgeries and procedures
- orthopedic surgeries and procedures
- plastic surgeries and procedures.

G-1-2 Demonstrate knowledge and ability to provide care for client before and after surgical procedure as per agency policy.
A Licensed Practical Nurse will:

**G-2-1 Demonstrate knowledge and ability to perform pre-operative teaching as necessary such as:**
- continuation of usual medications
- demonstrate effective deep breathing and coughing
- demonstrate use of incentive spirometer
- demonstrate exercises appropriate to type of surgery
- discuss common pain control options
- discuss location of personal directive / personal will
- discuss post-operative care and rehabilitation
- external drains and tubes expected following surgery
- refer to other health team members as necessary
- respond to client questions, e.g., probable length of surgery
- supply available literature / information pertinent to type of procedure / surgery.

**G-2-2 Demonstrate knowledge and ability to perform and reinforce post-operative teaching as necessary such as:**
- safety
- pain control
- observation of surgical site and dressing
- explanation of external drains
- dietary needs and restrictions
- ambulatory aids
- review literature pertaining to surgery
- encourage attendance at discharge class by client and family, if available
- educate about discharge medications and follow-up appointments
- discuss appropriate activities, dress, limitations
- contact home care, if applicable.
A Licensed Practical Nurse will:

**G-3-1** **Demonstrate knowledge and ability to perform pre-operative care as per agency policy such as:**
- pre-operative database assessment such as:
  - type of surgery
  - special tests and procedures as required
  - height and weight
  - ensure client / witness consent
  - pre-existing medical conditions and allergies
  - specimen collection
  - vital signs
- bowel preparation
- confirm oral intake restrictions
- family contact information
- secure valuables and personal property
- skin preparation as necessary.

**G-3-2** **Demonstrate knowledge and ability to prepare and transfer client to the operating room (OR) as per agency policy.**
Major Competency Area: G
Surgical Nursing

Priority: One

Competency: G-4
Post-operative Care

Date: September 1, 2005

A Licensed Practical Nurse will:

G-4-1 Demonstrate knowledge and ability to receive a post-operative client from the recovery room.

G-4-2 Demonstrate knowledge and ability to perform post-operative care such as:
- initial post-operative assessment-systems or head to toe:
  - circulation, sensation, movement (CSM)
    - other neurovascular checks
  - drainage devices and connections
  - dressing / wounds
  - infusion therapy
  - oxygen saturation
  - pain and discomfort
  - positioning and precautions
  - possible post-operative psychosis
  - vital signs
- review physician / surgeon orders
- safety precautions / mobilization / transfer methods
- pain management as per protocol:
  - administer analgesics (see Competency Band U)
  - pain assessment
  - comfort measures
- meet nutritional needs as per protocol
- aid elimination as per protocol
- provide emotional and psychological support to client and family.
Major Competency Area: G  
*Surgical Nursing*  

Priority: One

Competency: G-5  
*Wounds, Tubings and Drains*  

Date: September 1, 2005

A Licensed Practical Nurse will:

**G-5-1**  
Demonstrate knowledge and ability to perform wound care related to surgical sites using medical asepsis or sterile technique as appropriate.

**G-5-2**  
Demonstrate knowledge and ability to manage and maintain drainage devices such as:  
- Penrose  
- T-tube  
- Hemovac  
- continuous bladder irrigation.

**G-5-3**  
Demonstrate knowledge and ability to remove or shorten drainage devices such as:  
- Hemovac drainage system  
- Multi-tube system  
- Penrose drain.

**G-5-4**  
Demonstrate knowledge and ability to insert, care for, and remove urinary catheters. (See Competency Band E)

**G-5-5**  
Demonstrate knowledge and ability to insert, care for, and remove nasogastric tube. (See Competency Band E)

**G-5-6**  
Demonstrate knowledge and ability to perform wound irrigation, packing of wounds, and removal of packing as per agency policy.

**G-5-7**  
Demonstrate knowledge and ability to apply sterile dressings to surgical incisions and wounds.
Major Competency Area: G

Surgical Nursing

Priority: One

Competency: G-6

Removal of Staples and Sutures

Date: September 1, 2005

A Licensed Practical Nurse will:

G-6-1 Demonstrate knowledge and ability to remove staples and sutures as per protocols:
- assess the site i.e., gaping, drainage, inflammation, signs of infection, presence of a healing line, etc.
- prepare the suture area
- swab wound as necessary
- apply steristrips as needed, or ordered
- apply appropriate dressing if needed
- count number of staples / sutures
- note client’s tolerance to procedure
- document and report procedure and findings.