

Health Sciences Technical Standards

Certified Nursing Assistant Technical Standards

Certain functional abilities are essential for the delivery of safe, effective nursing care. These abilities are essential in the sense that they constitute core components of nursing practice, and there is a high probability that negative consequences will result for patient/clients under the care of nursing assistants who fail to demonstrate these abilities. A program preparing students for the practice of nursing must attend to these essential functional abilities in the education and evaluation of its students.

This statement of the Technical Standards of the nursing program at Montgomery College identifies the functional abilities deemed by the nursing faculty to be essential to the practice of nursing. Reference material used in the development of these standards includes the Maryland Nurse Practice Act, The Functional Abilities Essential for the Delivery of Safe, and Effective Nursing Care (a descriptive research study conducted by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing). The Technical Standards are the basis for teaching and evaluating all nursing assistant students.

In accordance with the American Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Nursing Assistant Program provides reasonable accommodations to otherwise qualified students with disabilities. The decision regarding appropriate accommodations will be based on the specifics of each case. Students with disabilities who think they may require accommodation in meeting the Technical Standards of the Nursing Assistant program should contact Disability Support Services (DSS) to discuss the process of identifying reasonable accommodations. Please contact Natalie Martinez, Assistant Professor, Disability Support Services Counselor, Rockville Campus (240) 567-4118

Students should seek accommodation advising as soon as possible so that a plan for accommodation can be in place at the beginning of the program. Applicants seeking admission to the nursing assistant program who may have questions about the Technical Standards and appropriate reasonable accommodations are invited to discuss their questions with Disability Support Services. Reasonable accommodation will be directed toward providing an equal educational opportunity for students with disabilities while adhering to the standards of nursing practice for all students.

Technical Standards

All individuals, including persons with disabilities, who wish to participate in the Nursing Assistant program, must be able to perform specific technical functions with or without reasonable accommodations.

1. **Visual acuity** sufficient to evaluate patients and their environments the nursing care plans that are developed from such assessments.
Examples of relevant activities:
 - Collect data from recording equipment and measurement devices used in patient care
 - Detect a fire in a patient area and initiate emergency action
2. **Hearing ability** sufficient to evaluate patients and their environments
Examples of relevant activities:
 - Detect audible alarms within the frequency and volume ranges of the sounds generated by mechanical systems that monitor bodily functions
 - Communicate effectively with patients and with other members of the health care team

3. **Olfactory ability** sufficient to identify patient's problems.
Examples of relevant activities:
 - Detect foul odors of bodily fluids or spoiled foods
 - Detect smoke from burning materials

4. **Tactile ability** sufficient to identify patient's problems.
Examples of relevant activities:
 - Detect changes in skin temperature
 - Detect unsafe temperature levels in heat-producing devices used in patient care
 - Palpate pulses

5. **Strength and mobility** sufficient to perform patient care activities and emergency procedures
Examples of relevant activities:
 - Safely transfer patients in and out of bed
 - Safely ambulate patients
 - Turn and position patients as needed to prevent complications due to bed rest
 - Perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation

6. **Fine motor skills** sufficient to perform psychomotor skills integral to patient care
Examples of relevant activities:
 - Manipulate small equipment and container

7. **Physical endurance** sufficient to complete assigned periods of clinical practice
Examples of relevant activities:
 - Ability to stand on feet for long periods of time

8. **Ability to communicate** sufficiently to teach others, explain procedures, interact effectively with others, and convey information in writing.
Examples of relevant activities:
 - Ability to speak, comprehend, read and write English at a level that meets the need for accurate, clear, and effective communication.
 - Ability to read, interpret, and communicate relevant data

9. **Emotional stability** to function effectively under stress and emergency situations, to adapt to changing situations, and to follow through on assigned patient care responsibilities and to withstand human suffering.

10. **Cognitive ability** to collect information and knowledge to promote positive patient outcomes.
Examples of relevant activities:
Ability to prioritize tasks to meet patient needs
 - Ability to use long-term and short-term memory to provide safe, effective nursing care