



POSITION STATEMENT

Nurse Navigator

INTRODUCTION

In the ever-changing healthcare environment, the Orthopaedic Nurse Navigator (ONN) plays a key role on the interdisciplinary team as the single point of contact to coordinate care both in and outside the hospital setting. With the introduction of value-based payment, the nurse navigator/care coordination model is a necessary fixture to improve outcomes while decreasing costs and readmissions. The ONN role focuses on patient advocacy, care coordination, disease-specific education and data management to improve outcomes and patient satisfaction during the transitions within the healthcare system. Through patient education at all stages of the care continuum the ONN bridges the gaps from pre-operative preparation, setting expectations of care and facilitating transition home while improving healthcare literacy and decreasing readmissions

RATIONALE AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The patient navigator role was first introduced in 1990 to improve care and access to services for cancer patients. The first patient navigators were laypersons that focused on education, arranging appointments and increasing access to care (Valentino, 2019). This model demonstrated improved outcomes and paved the way for the nurse navigator role. The nurse navigator has become the expert in disease specific clinical practice, patient education, research, both data and patient management, problem solving as well as the coordinator of care throughout the care continuum. This role is not only important to drive change and institute best practice, but is essential to optimize care, promote patient self-management, manage cost, and improve both patient experience and outcomes.

As the healthcare system evolves it is important to focus on patient-centered coordinated care; collecting, tracking, trending and analyzing data for quality improvement. Nurse managed care coordination, quality improvements, patient education and cost containment are essential for the transition to a bundled payment model (Lentz & Luther 2017).

POSITION

- Collect, track, trend and analyze data to improve outcomes
- Provide expertise as a professional Registered Nurse with orthopaedic clinical knowledge
- Coordinate care as the single point of contact/resource for patients, staff and physicians
- Provide nurse navigation services throughout the continuum of care
- Act as patient advocate and educator
- Promote orthopaedic evidence-based clinical practice R



RECOMMENDATIONS

Provide expertise as a professional Registered Nurse with orthopaedic clinical knowledge

Registered Nurses have the clinical knowledge, skill set and ability to manage and implement processes based on best practice. Nurses in the role of ONN require strong orthopaedic clinical knowledge to track, analyze and implement change based on clinical data (Salmond & Echevarria, 2017).

ONN's are the single point of contact to coordinate care requiring them to be knowledgeable in all aspects of orthopaedic care. These nurses should possess the Orthopaedic Nurse Certification as it promotes professional development, clinical practice and the commitment to care of the orthopaedic patient ("Orthopaedic Nurse Certification Board,"n.d.).

Coordinate care as the single point of contact/resource for patients, staff and physicians. The healthcare system is fragmented and hard for the patient to navigate. The ONN coordinates care acting as the point person and familiar voice lending guidance and support to the patient and caregiver through all phases of the care continuum (McMurray & Cooper, 2016). The ONN educates the patient, sets expectations, assists with pre-operative patient optimization, and improves patient's healthcare literacy.

The ONN acts as the single point of contact for orthopaedic care to staff and physicians. The ONN improves communication of care among providers, acts as a resource for orthopaedic care to improve processes and to assist with establishing staff education using evidence-based clinical practice (Zangerle, 2015).

Provide nurse navigation services throughout the continuum of care

The ONN is integral to transition the patient through the continuum of care; providing patient education, care coordination and preoperative optimization to prepare the patient and improve outcomes. The ONN continues to be a resource to the patient, caregivers, staff and physicians while maneuvering the patient through the hospital stay tracking outcomes and transitioning the patient back to their home environment. Nurse navigation across the continuum of care has shown a decrease in cost, length of stay and readmissions as well as improved patient satisfaction and communication.

Act as patient advocate and educator

Patient advocacy and education is essential to set expectations, improve communication and promote self-management throughout the continuum of care (Salmond & Echevarria, 2017). The ONN addresses the needs of the patient, provides explanation of care and supports and encourages the patient throughout the care continuum. The ONN has the unique knowledge and expertise to fulfill this role.

Collect, track, trend and analyze data to improve outcomes

The ONN is an expert in orthopaedic practice and has the clinical skills and knowledge needed to collect, track, trend and analyze data (Salmond & Echevarria, 2017). The ONN holds the key to organizing the data, implementing processes and improving outcomes based on evidence based clinical practice.

Promote evidence based clinical practice

As the orthopedic expert the ONN introduces and promotes the use of evidence based clinical practice to establish processes, improve outcomes and continually improve the orthopaedic program to meet the demands of the changing healthcare continuum.



SUMMARY

In the fast-paced healthcare system where the focus has shifted to value-based care and bundled payments it is imperative to focus on patient-centered care. The professional Registered Nurse who is an expert in orthopaedic care is the ideal candidate for the ONN role. The ONN is key to providing patient education and care coordination to navigate the patient through the healthcare continuum as well as the expert in data collection, tracking and trending to improve processes and outcomes based on evidence based clinical practice.

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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Note. These sources were used for general
research but were not directly
referenced.

