



UTAH NURSING INFORMATICS NETWORK

May 17, 2007

Dear Dr. Stagers,

Thank you for inviting public comment on the draft of the American Nurses Association Scope and Standards for Nursing Informatics. As a regional organization of informatics nurses, the Utah Nursing Informatics Network (UNIN) is keenly interested in the content of this document, and we thank you for speaking to us at our recent membership meeting. Our membership has actively discussed the document and we offer the following comments:

Addition of Wisdom to Data Information and Knowledge

“It’s about time.” Our membership is very pleased to see this addition to the revised scope and standards.

Terminology

We noted that the term “Interdisciplinary” is used throughout the document (vs. “Multidisciplinary”). Since “multidisciplinary” may be a more appropriate term for the field of informatics, we ask the authors to discuss this terminology issue and consider whether a change is appropriate.

In the table with the terminologies (page 13), LOINC should be interventions and outcomes, not just outcomes (from Susan Matney).

Informatics Nurse Specialist prepared with Master’s Degree

There is concern among our members that they will be unable to fill positions if those positions require a master’s degree. It is currently difficult to fill positions with baccalaureate prepared nurses. We wonder if the ANA has a plan to put this requirement in place through some sort of licensure or regulation? The practice of informatics nurses is not currently regulated/ licensed by the states. We wonder if this educational requirement will be simply ignored by employers, who need not comply by statutory law, and must fill vacant positions.

Non-nurses in nursing informatics:

In reality, many non-nurses practice nursing informatics. Because of the multidisciplinary nature of health informatics, non-nurses DO address nursing informatics issues and problems in the clinical setting. Similarly, informatics nurses address informatics needs and issues of other disciplines (allied health, medicine, etc...). We feel strongly that the scope and standards document should more directly acknowledge and address this multidisciplinary nature.

The document does not address the training and education responsibilities of nurses to adequately prepare non-nurses to work in the field of nursing informatics. We feel this document could support the value of clinically educated and experienced nurses engaged in nursing informatics, but also recognize the importance of educating and training non-nurses in nursing informatics, in order to better serve the entire nursing community. We are concerned that this document does not recognize the fact that non-nurses engage in nursing informatics, and we are concerned that nursing informatics education for non-nurses would be precluded or discouraged by this document.

Nurses in Health Informatics:

In employment settings, our members have experienced distress over losing nursing titles or the ability to wear "R.N." on a name badge. We feel informatics nurses uniquely contribute to multidisciplinary teams and we identify strongly with the nursing discipline. The ANA has recognized the value of nurses involved in this work by identifying Nursing Informatics as a nursing specialty. However, employers need not consider informaticists as nurses since the work of the informatics nurse is not regulated as the practice of nursing. This is a difficult issue that will persist in coming years, and a dilemma that could be addressed by this document and this group.

We sincerely thank the authors of this document for their time, effort, and leadership.

On behalf of the UNIN membership,



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President, Utah Nursing Informatics Network