American Association of Nurse Life Care Planners

Membership Guide
VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT

AANLCP recognizes the Nurse Life Care Planner as the Registered Nurse (R.N.) who assesses, identifies issues and plans for appropriate interventions, implementation and evaluation in the nurse life care planning process. AANLCP promotes the professional practice that the Registered Nurse delivers to the life care planning process. AANLCP promotes education, collegiality, collaboration, research, and standards as they relate to the practice of nurse life care planning.


Definition of Nurse Life Care Planning

The Nurse Life Care Planner utilizes the nursing process in the collection and analysis of comprehensive client specific data in the preparation of a dynamic document. This document provides an organized, concise plan of estimated reasonable and necessary, (and reasonably certain to be necessary), current and future healthcare needs with the associated costs and frequencies of goods and services. The nurse life care plan is developed for individuals who have experienced an injury or have chronic healthcare issues.

Nurse life care planners function within their individual professional scope of practice and, when applicable, incorporate opinions arrived at collaboratively with various health care providers.

The nurse life care plan is considered a flexible document and is evaluated and updated as needed.

Standards of Practice

The American Nurses Association (ANA) recognizes that “the profession of nursing has one scope of practice that encompasses the full range of nursing practice” and that the particular role of practice, in which a nurse engages, is dependent upon education, experience and the population served. (ANA's Nursing: Scope & Standards of Practice 2004).

The American Association of Nurse Life Care Planners (AANLCP) maintains that nurse life care planning is a nursing practice role, based in Nursing Standards of Practice as demonstrated by the critical thinking model known as the nursing process, and as sanctioned by the state nurse practice acts. Additionally, the AANLCP recognizes that the nurse life care planner must acquire the knowledge and skills appropriate to this role and situational practice setting. The nurse life care planner is a professional who maintains current licensure as a registered nurse and has a minimum of five (5) years clinical experience. Nurse life care planning requires a formal educational and experiential foundation. The practice of nurse life care planning requires additional education in areas specific to the role of life care planning, as well as research, writing skills, critical thinking, and situational fundamental understanding of the law.

In practice, the nurse life care planner recognizes that conditions and healthcare issues destabilize with age and that nurse life care plans incorporate the individual's increasing needs across the continuum of care. Certification as a nurse life care planner should reflect the formal recognition of specialized knowledge, skills and experience.
American Association of Nurse Life Care Planners
Standards of Practice with Interpretive Statements

Standards of Practice

Standard 1. Assessment
The Nurse Life Care Planner collects comprehensive data pertinent to the individual's health or the situation/health case or claim.

Measurement Criteria:

The nurse life care planner:
- Collects data in a systematic and ongoing process;
- Involves the individual and parties germane to the individual's situation, when possible and as appropriate, to include family and caregivers, physicians, other health care providers, and representatives from the employer, school and other resources within the community, to ensure comprehensive data collection;
- Prioritizes data collection activities based on the immediate condition, with anticipated needs of the individual or situation/health case or claim;
- Uses appropriate evidence-based assessment techniques and instruments in collecting pertinent data;
- Uses analytical models and critical thinking skills;
- Reviews literature pertinent to the healthcare issues;
- Synthesizes/summarizes available data, information, and knowledge relevant to the situation to identify patterns and variances;
- Documents the relevant data in a retrievable format.

Standard 2. Nursing Diagnosis
The Nurse Life Care Planner analyzes the assessment data to determine the diagnoses or issues.

Measurement Criteria:

The nurse life care planner:
- Derives and prioritizes the medical and nursing diagnoses or issues based on the assessment data;
Standard 3. Outcomes Identification

The Nurse Life Care Planner discerns/considers expected outcomes for a plan specific to the individual or the situation/health case or claim.

Measurement Criteria:

The nurse life care planner:
- Involves the individual, family, healthcare providers and others when possible and appropriate in formulating expected outcomes;
- Considers culturally appropriate expected outcomes from the diagnoses;
- Considers associated risks, benefits, costs, current scientific evidence, and clinical expertise when formulating expected outcomes;
- Discerns expected outcomes in terms of the individual, the individual's values, ethical considerations, environment, or situation/health case or claim with such consideration as associated risks, benefits and costs, and current scientific evidence;
- Includes timeframe estimates for attainment of considered outcomes;
- Considers expected outcomes that provide direction for continuity of care;
- Considers modifications of expected outcomes based on changes in the status of the individual, when possible and appropriate, or of the situation/health case or claim;
- Considers outcomes that are culturally appropriate and realistic in relation to the individual's present and potential functional, emotional and developmental capabilities.

Standard 4. Planning

The Nurse Life Care Planner develops a plan that prescribes strategies and alternatives to attain the considered outcomes.

Measurement Criteria:

The nurse life care planner:
- Provides a plan for age-related services in a culturally and ethnically sensitive manner;
- Develops an individualized plan considering the individual's characteristics or the situation/health case or claim;
- Develops the individualized plan in conjunction with the individual, family, pertinent health care providers when possible and appropriate, and others as appropriate to the situation;
- Includes strategies within the plan that address each of the identified diagnoses or issues, which may include strategies for promotion and/or restoration of health and prevention of illness, injury, and disease;
- Provides for continuity within the plan;
- Incorporates an implementation pathway or timeline within the plan;
- Establishes plan priorities with the individual, family, physicians and others when possible and appropriate;
- Develops the plan to reflect current statutes, rules and regulations, and standards;
- Integrates current trends and research affecting care in the planning process;
- Considers the associated costs and benefits when formulating expected outcomes;
- Uses standardized language or recognized terminology to document the plan.
Standard 5. Implementation
The Nurse Life Care Planner provides for implementation of the identified plan.

Measurement Criteria:
The nurse life care planner:
- Provides for implementation of the plan in a reasonable and timely manner appropriate to the situation/health case or claim or appropriately documents the delegation of implementation within the plan;
- Documents implementation or delegation and method of implementation and any modifications, including changes or omissions of the identified plan;
- Utilizes evidence-based interventions, treatments, and strategies specific to the diagnoses or issues appropriate to the situation/health case or claim;
- Recognizes community resources and systems as appropriate to implement the plan;
- Collaborates with others as appropriate to implement the plan.

Standard 5A. Coordination of Care
The Nurse Life Care Planner provides for coordination of the care and services within the individualized plan related to the situation/health case or claim.

Measurement Criteria:
The nurse life care planner:
- Coordinates or delegates the implementation of the plan as appropriate to the situation/ health case or claim;
- Documents the coordination of care within the plan.

Standard 5B. Health Teaching and Health Promotion
The Nurse Life Care Planner employs strategies to promote a better understanding of health and safety.

Measurement Criteria:
The nurse life care planner:
- Evaluates health and safety issues when possible and appropriate in a health case or claim;
- Provides health teaching, as appropriate to the individual and/or family or as appropriate to the situation/health case or claim, which addresses such topics as risk-reducing behaviors, developmental needs, activities of daily living, restorative measures and preventive care;
- Synthesizes/summarizes the facts from the data collected in developing an effective plan, which also provides a better understanding of the health/healthcare related issues;
- Applies health teaching methods appropriate to the situation/health case or claim;
- Seeks opportunities when possible and appropriate for feedback and evaluation of the effectiveness of the utilized strategies.

Standard 5C. Consultation
The Nurse Life Care Planner provides consultation where appropriate in regards to the identified plan, enhancing the abilities of others and effecting change when necessary and needed.

Measurement Criteria:
The nurse life care planner:
- Synthesizes/summarizes data, information, research and evidence on a health case or claim when providing consultation;
- Communicates recommendations when appropriate that facilitate learning.
Standard 6. Evaluation
The Nurse Life Care Planner evaluates and/or documents appropriate delegation of evaluation for progress toward the attainment of outcomes as related to the situation/health case or claim.

Measurement Criteria:
The nurse life care planner:
- Provides for a systematic, ongoing, and criterion-based evaluation of the outcomes in relation to the structures and processes in the development of life care plans;
- Includes the individual and others involved in the plan, situation/health care case or claim in the evaluative process when possible and appropriate;
- Provides for evaluation of the effectiveness of the planned strategies in relation to the individual's responses and the attainment of expected outcomes;
- Uses ongoing assessment data to revise the nursing diagnoses, outcomes, the plan, and the implementation as needed during the life care planning process;
- Disseminates the plan results to the individual and/or family as well as others involved in the situation/health care case or claim, as possible and appropriate, and in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations.

Standard 7. Quality of Practice
The Nurse Life Care Planner systematically enhances the quality and effectiveness of nursing practice.

Measurement Criteria:
The nurse life care planner:
- Demonstrates quality by documenting the application of the nursing process in a responsible, accountable, and ethical manner;
- Uses the results of quality improvement activities to initiate changes in nursing practice, and in the healthcare delivery system;
- Uses creativity and innovation in nursing practice to improve the delivery of nurse life care planning consulting services;
- Incorporates new knowledge to initiate changes in nursing practice if desired outcomes are not achieved;
- Participates in quality improvement activities. Such activities may include:
  - Identification of aspects of nursing practice important for quality monitoring
  - Collection of data to monitor quality and effectiveness of nursing practice
  - Formulation of recommendations to improve nursing practice or outcomes
  - Participation on interdisciplinary teams to evaluate health services
  - Analysis of organizational systems for barriers
  - Analysis of factors related to safety, satisfaction, effectiveness and cost/benefit options

Standard 8. Education
The Nurse Life Care Planner attains knowledge and competency that reflects current nursing practice.

Measurement Criteria:
The nurse life care planner:
- Participates in ongoing educational activities related to appropriate knowledge bases and professional issues;
- Demonstrates a commitment to learning through self-reflection and inquiry to identify learning needs;
- Seeks experiences that reflect current nursing practice in order to maintain skills and competence in clinical practice or role performance;
- Acquires knowledge and skills appropriate to the specialty area, practice setting, role, or situation;
- Maintains professional records that provide evidence of competency and learning;
- Seeks experiences as well as formal and independent learning
activities to develop/maintain professional nursing skills and knowledge;
- Uses current research findings and other evidence to expand knowledge, enhance role performance, and increase knowledge of professional issues;
- Obtains and maintains professional certification as available in appropriate areas of expertise.

**Standard 9. Professional Practice Evaluation**

The Nurse Life Care Planner evaluates one’s own nursing practice in relation to professional practice standards and guidelines, relevant statutes, rules, and regulations.

**Measurement Criteria:**

The nurse life care planner’s practice reflects the application of knowledge of current practice standards, guidelines, statutes, rules and regulations.

The nurse life care planner:
- Engages in self-evaluation of practice on a regular basis, identifying areas of strength, as well as areas in which professional development would be beneficial;
- Obtains informal feedback regarding one’s own practice from clients, peers, professional colleagues, and appropriate others;
- Requests a performance appraisal after completion of a health case from the referral from the referral source and/or other parties involved when possible and appropriate;
- Establish collegial relationships with other nurse life care planners for reflection and review of one’s practice;
- Participates in systematic peer review as appropriate;
- Takes action to achieve goals identified during the self-evaluation process;
- Revise the formatting or template of the life care plan to improve presentation and comprehension by the reader;
- Provides, when possible and appropriate, the rationale and foundation for nursing practice beliefs, decisions, and actions in preparing the life care plan as part of any formal and/or informal evaluation processes.

**Standard 10. Collegiality**

The Nurse Life Care Planner interacts with and contributes to the professional development of peers and colleagues.

**Measurement Criteria:**

The nurse life care planner:
- Shares knowledge and skills with peers and colleagues as evidenced by such activities as participating in appropriate conferences or presentations and at appropriate formal or informal meetings;
- Provides peers with feedback regarding their practice and/or role performance as appropriate;
- Maintains professional, caring and collegial relationships with peers and colleagues;
- Contributes to an environment that is supportive and conducive to the education of nurses entering the field of nurse life care planning;
- Mentors other nurse life care planners and colleagues as appropriate;
- Contributes to an environment that is conducive to the education of peers, colleagues, attorneys, individuals, families, insurance adjustors, jurors and others.

**Standard 11. Collaboration**

The Nurse Life Care Planner collaborates with individuals, families, health care providers, and others when possible and appropriate, in the conduct of nurse life care planning practice.

**Measurement Criteria:**

The nurse life care planner:
- Communicates with individuals, families, and health care providers, when possible and appropriate, and relevant others as appropriate to the situation/health case or claim, in development of a life care plan;
- Collaborates in creating a documented plan focused on diagnoses, outcomes and decisions related to care, delivery and approximate costs of services that indicates communication with individuals, families, when possible and appropriate, and relevant others as appropriate;
- Documents communications, and referrals, including provisions for continuity of care, as appropriate;
- Documents communications and rationales for any plan changes and collaborative discussions as appropriate.

Standard 12. Ethics

The Nurse Life Care Planner integrates ethical provisions in all areas of practice.

Measurement Criteria:
The nurse life care planner:
- Uses the current American Nurses Association (ANA) Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements and the AANLCP Code of Professional Ethics and Conduct for Nurse Life Care Planners With Interpretive Statements;
- Practices in a manner that preserves and protects the individual's autonomy, dignity and rights;
- Maintains patient confidentiality within legal and regulatory parameters;
- Serves as an advocate for the individual, assisting in developing skills for self-advocacy while maintaining appropriate professional role boundaries;
- Maintains a professional relationship in the healthcare, community and legal environments;
- Demonstrates a commitment to practicing self-care, managing stress, and connecting with self and others;
- Participates on multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary teams that address ethical risks, benefits, and outcomes;
- Reports illegal, incompetent, or impaired practices, as appropriate and necessary.

Standard 13. Research

The Nurse Life Care Planner integrates research findings into practice.

Measurement Criteria:
The nurse life care planner:
- Utilizes the best available evidence, including research findings, and uses critical thinking skills to apply research findings in guiding practice decisions.
- Actively participates in research activities at various levels appropriate to the nurse life care planner. Such activities may include:
  - Participating in a formal research committee or program
  - Sharing research activities and/or findings with peers and others
  - Critically analyzing and interpreting research for application to the nurse life care planning practice
  - Incorporating research as a basis for learning
  - Using research findings in the development of policies, procedures and standards of practice as applied to the nurse life care planning practice
  - Formally disseminating research findings through activities, such as presentations, publications, and consultations

Standard 14. Resource Utilization

The Nurse Life Care Planner considers factors related to safety, effectiveness, cost, and impact on practice in the planning and delivery of the Nurse Life Care Planner's services.

Measurement Criteria:
The nurse life care planner:
- Evaluates factors such as safety, effectiveness, availability, cost and benefits, efficiencies, and impact on practice when choosing practice options that would result in the same expected outcome;
- Assigns and delegates tasks based on the complexity of the task, and the needs of the individual, situation/health case or claim, as appropriate;
- Develops innovative solutions and applies strategies to obtain
appropriate resources;
• Promotes activities that assist others, as appropriate, in becoming informed about costs, risks and benefits of care or of the plan.

Standard 15. Leadership
The Nurse Life Care Planner provides leadership in their professional practice setting and in the profession.

Measurement Criteria:
The nurse life care planner:
• Provides leadership to the profession as a nurse life care planner through diligent practice;
• Displays the ability to define a clear vision, associated goals and a plan to implement and measure progress;
• Demonstrates a commitment to continuous learning for self and others;
• Promotes the professional development of others through mentoring and other strategies;
• Exhibits creativity and flexibility through times of change;
• Demonstrates commitment to quality work;
• Inspires loyalty through valuing of people;
• Promotes advancement of the profession through participation in professional organizations;
• Works to influence decision-making bodies to improve patient care, health services, and policies;
• Promotes communication of information and advancement of the profession, as able, through writing, publishing and presentations for professional or lay audiences.

Standards of Practice References

ANA’s Recognition of a Nursing Specialty, Approval of a Specialty Scope of Practice Statement, and Acknowledgement of Specialty Nursing Standards of Practice, (ANAs process for recognition of a Nursing Specialty), September 2005 edition.


Legal Nurse Consulting Scope & Standards of Practice, American Association of Legal Nurse Consultants (AALNC), 2006. Nursesbooks.org (the publishing program of ANA).


1. The AANLC does not identify nurse life care planning as advanced practice nursing. Advanced practice for the Registered Nurse (R.N.) is established by each state’s Nurse Practice Act. Any nurse life care planner who is licensed as an advanced practice R.N. should refer to the ANA’s additional Measurement Criteria for the Advanced Practice Registered Nurse as well as the applicable state’s Nurse Practice Act.

2. Nurses who write life care plans as testifying experts are currently recognized by the ANA as practicing in a nursing specialty role under the nursing specialty of legal nurse consulting.

Adopted 2/19/08
Preamble

The Code of Professional Ethics and Conduct for the American Association of Nurse Life Care Planners is based upon the belief that all members have an ethical obligation to practice nurse life care planning with the utmost integrity, competency and accountability. This code of ethical conduct provides a guideline for the professional performance and behavior of nurse life care planners.

As nurse life care planners, we also recognize and support the code of ethics and conduct of the American Nurses Association.

Our goal is to assure the community we serve of our commitment to these codes by demonstrating that we abide by the following:

1. The Nurse Life Care Planner does not discriminate against any person based on age, gender, ethnic background, religion beliefs or practices, social or economic status, life-style choices, functional status, or nature of health or disability.

2. The Nurse Life Care Planner maintains professional nursing competency as well as competency in the practice of nurse life care planning.

The nurse life care planner maintains an active licensure in good standing as a Registered Nurse. The nurse life care planner recognizes and adheres to the Standards of Practice for Registered Nurses and the Standards of Practice for nurse life care planners.

3. The Nurse Life Care Planner incorporates high standards of professional conduct throughout the continuum of nurse life care planning services.

The nurse life care planner demonstrates essential attributes of honesty, integrity, responsibility, accountability, timeliness, and respect for human dignity. The nurse life care planner will not knowingly engage in unethical or unlawful activities, knowingly misrepresent his/her background or credentials or promote personal interests for personal gain.

4. The Nurse Life Care Planner safeguards the right to privacy of all individuals by maintaining confidentiality of information.

The nurse life care planner exercises responsibility, discretion, and respect in the handling and use of all protected or sensitive information and materials.

5. The Nurse Life Care Planner assumes responsibility and accountability for all actions, opinions, recommendations, and commitments.

While performing the role and associated duties of a nurse life care
planner, the nurse is accountable for his/her actions, opinions and decisions. The nurse life care planner will rely upon his/her specialized education, body of knowledge, level of competence, and experience when accepting and completing an assignment. Professional services are delivered in a competent, concise and timely manner.

6. The Nurse Life Care Planner provides professional services with objectivity.

The nurse life care planner demonstrates critical thinking in decisions, recommendations and professional opinions. All functions of the nurse life care planner are performed void of personal opinion, prejudice and conflict of interest as such may interfere with or influence objectivity, performance or outcome. The nurse life care planner demonstrates a concerted effort to maintain objectivity and identify sources of potential conflict of interest.

7. The Nurse Life Care Planner participates in the advancement of the profession through mentorship, collegiality, education, and ongoing knowledge development.

The nurse life care planner maintains active involvement in the formulation, review and revision of policies, guidelines and standards of practice in nursing and nurse life care planning. The nurse life care planner interconnects with peers and colleagues and disseminates materials and information designed to advance the practice of nursing and nurse life care planning.