

**Texas Board of Nursing  
Differentiated Essential Competencies (DECs)  
for Nursing Graduates (2021)**

**Nursing Education Program Webinar  
May 12, 2021**



# Welcome and Introductions

## Kristin Benton, DNP, RN



- Greetings from Education
- Overview of Webinar – The DEC's

Meaning and Purpose of the DEC's – Kristin Benton

Background – Beverly Skloss

Supplements in the DEC's – Gayle Varnell

Major Concepts Across the DEC's – Virginia Ayars

The DEC's Model – Gayle Varnell

Implementing the DEC's – Jan Hooper

# What are the DEC's?

- ***Differentiated*** – leveled by scope of practice based upon educational preparation
- ***Essential*** – expected outcomes for graduates of prelicensure nursing programs in Texas
- ***Competencies*** – nursing performance that integrates knowledge, skills, abilities, and judgment
  - ***Note: A competency is not a one-time achievement but a developing attribute.***

# The Purposes for the DEC's

The DEC's have implications for nursing education and nursing practice.

COMPETENCE




- The DEC's are not all-inclusive of competencies in nursing practice.
- The DEC's describe the expectations of Texas pre-licensure nursing graduates.

# The Role of the DEC's in Nursing Education

- Serve as a curriculum guide for benchmarking and evaluation
- Statewide standard to ensure graduates will enter practice with minimum essential competencies for safe practice
- Entry-level benchmark



# The Role of the DEC's in Program Approval

- Provides standards for monitoring existing nursing education programs for outcomes
  - Provides standards for approving new nursing education programs
  - Defines the basic underlying principles for all nursing curricula
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# The Role of the DEC's in Nursing Practice

- Serves as a guide for the development of employee orientation and internship programs
- Provides a guide for job descriptions & career ladders
- Describes entry-level competencies
- Defines scope of practice for levels of nursing education



# A History Lesson of the DEC's

## Beverly Skloss, MSN, RN

- The DEC's date back to 1993.
- They are based upon a legislative mandate.
- Board Staff and stakeholders collaborated in each rendition of the DEC's.
- The DEC's were posted for public comments.
- The Board of Nursing reviewed and approved the DEC's.

# Revisions of the DEC's

- 1993 First Edition: NEAC Competencies
- 2002 Second Edition: Differentiated Entry Level Competencies of Graduates of Texas Nursing Programs (DELCS)
- 2010 Third Edition: Differentiated Essential Competencies of Graduates of Texas Nursing Programs (DECs)



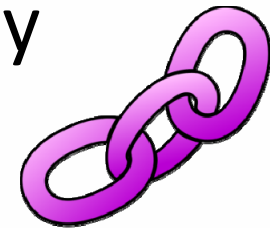
# Guiding Principles for Developing, Revising the DEC's

- Client-focused rather than institution-focused.
- List of tasks or skills would NOT be developed.
- Competencies would provide essential role responsibilities, knowledge, and clinical behaviors and judgments in broad terms.
- Programs would be able to develop and create curricula for their communities, level of education, and program outcomes.

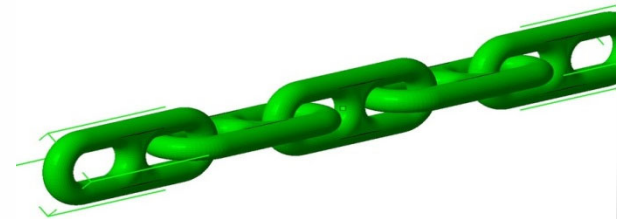


# Arrangement of the DECs

Core Competency → Knowledge Areas Required to Perform → Clinical Judgments and Behaviors expected to fulfill the core competency



For each educational preparation, there is a description of the scope of practice for LVNs, RNs, and BSN-prepared nurses.



# Framework: 4 Nursing Roles

- I. Member of the Profession
- II. Provider of Patient-Centered Care
- III. Patient Safety Advocate
- IV. Member of the Health Care Team



## An Underlying Statement in the 4 Roles

- I. I am a member of the nursing profession.
- II. I am here to care for you.
- III. My most important job is to advocate for your safety.
- IV. I am a member of the health care team providing your care.



# Structure for the DECs

25 Core Competencies



Sub Competencies



Knowledge

Clinical Judgments/Behaviors



# Documents Reviewed for Updates

- A wide literature search ensued for two years.
- A reference list included with the DEC's includes current: accreditation standards, Board rules and regulations, Board position statements and practice guidelines, research findings, professional standards, pertinent literature impacting nursing, and documents from health organizations.

# An Example of Using Current Literature in the DECIs: Integration of QSEN

- QSEN concepts of SAFETY, QUALITY, PATIENT-CENTERED CARE, EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE, TEAMWORK AND COLLABORATION, and INFORMATICS have been integrated into each nursing role at the appropriate competency level.



# QSEN in the DECAs – PN/VN Level

## Member of the Profession

Practice under legal scope for **VN**

Work under a **directed practice**

Provide care for **predictable health care needs**

Clients: Patients and their families

Commit to being a lifelong learner

## QUALITY

## Provider of Patient-Centered Care

Use clinical reasoning and judgment at **VN** level

Follow evidence-based policies

**Assist** with assessment (focused)

**Report** alterations to team

Consider cultural care

**Assist** in plans of care

**Implement** teaching plans

## PATIENT-CENTERED CARE

## EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE

## Patient Safety Advocate

Set goals to reduce patient risks

**Make assignments** considering patient safety

## SAFETY

## Member of the Health Care Team

Engage in communication and collaboration

**Participate** as an advocate

**Identify needs** for referrals

**Make assignments** and supervise

Utilize technology

## TEAMWORK & COLLABORATION

## INFORMATICS



# QSEN in the DECAs – ADN Level

## Member of the Profession

Practice under legal scope for **RN**

Make **independent nursing decisions**

Clients: Patients and their families

Commit to being a lifelong learner

## QUALITY



## Patient Safety Advocate

**Set goals and outcomes** to reduce patient risks

Make assignments considering patient safety

**Delegate** nursing care to others

## SAFETY

## Provider of Patient-Centered Care

Use clinical reasoning and judgment at **RN** level

Follow evidence-based practice

Make **comprehensive assessments**

**Analyze** assessment findings

Consider cultural care

**Design** nursing plans of care

**Develop, implement, evaluate** teaching plans

## PATIENT-CENTERED CARE

## EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE

## Member of the Health Care Team

Engage in communication and collaboration

Serve as **health care advocate**

Refer patients and families for **continuity of care**

Assign and **delegate based on patient, unit need**

Utilize technology

## TEAMWORK & COLLABORATION

## INFORMATICS

# QSEN in the DECAs – BSN Level

## Member of the Profession

Practice under legal scope for **RN**

**Make independent** nursing decisions

Clients: Patients, families, **populations,**  
**and communities**

Engage in **leadership** role/activities

Commit to being a lifelong learner

## QUALITY

## Patient Safety Advocate

**Set goals and outcomes** to reduce patient risks

Make assignments considering patient safety

Delegate nursing care to others

## SAFETY



## Provider of Patient-Centered Care

Use clinical reasoning and judgment at **RN** level

Follow evidence-based practice

Provide **comprehensive** patient care

Make **comprehensive assessments**

Consider cultural care

**Design** nursing plans of care

**Develop, implement, evaluate** teaching plans

Consider **at-risk populations**

**Utilize research findings**

## PATIENT-CENTERED CARE

## EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE

## Member of the Health Care Team

Engage in communication and collaboration

Serve as health care advocate inclusive of

**communities and populations**

Use **multiple referral** resources

Assign and delegate based on patient or

**organizational need**

Utilize technology

## TEAMWORK & COLLABORATION

## INFORMATICS



# The Search for New Concepts for the DECs

*Service Excellence* \* **Self-Care** \* *Just Culture*\*

**Spirituality** \* *Workplace Violence*\*

*Cybersecurity* \* *Global Health* \* *Civility*\*

**Community Readiness**\* **Nursing Peer Review**\*

*Pandemic* \* *Identity* \*

**Culture of Safety** \* **Social Justice** \*

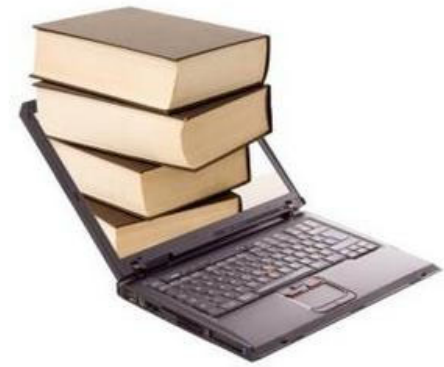
*Social Determinants of Health* \*

**Vulnerable Patients/Populations** \*

# Supplemental Documents in the DEC's

## Gayle Varnell, PhD, APRN, CPNP-PC

- Introduction
- Executive Summary
- Scopes of Practice for LVN, ADN, BSN
- Glossary
- References
- Work Group Members for DEC's



# Work Group Members for DEC's

- Texas Organization of Associate Degree Nursing
- Texas Association of Vocational Nurse Educators
- Texas Organization of Baccalaureate and Graduate Nursing Education
- Texas Organization for Nursing Leadership
- Texas Nurses Association
- Texas League for Nursing
- Licensed Vocational Nurses Association of Texas
- Texas School Nurses Organization
- Texas Hospital Association
- Texas Health Care Association



# Glossary

- Clinical Reasoning: The process by which nurses collect cues, process and analyze the information, come to an understanding of a patient problem or situation, weigh alternative actions, plan and implement interventions, evaluate outcomes, and reflect on and learn from the process (Griffits et al., 2017)
- Competency: An expected and measurable level of nursing performance that integrates knowledge, skills, abilities, and judgment, based on established scientific knowledge and expectations for nursing practice (ANA, 2015, p.86)

- Evidence-based Practice – a **conscientious**, problem-solving approach to clinical practice that incorporates the best evidence from well-designed studies, patient values and preferences, and a clinician’s expertise in making decisions that individualize a patient’s care (Stevens, 2013).



# New Concepts

- Civility
- Delegation
- Global Health
- Just Culture
- Nursing Peer Review
- Predictable Health Care Needs
- Social Determinants of Health
- Service Excellence
- Vulnerable Patients/Populations



# Major Concepts in the Four Roles

Virginia D. Ayars, EdD, MS, RN, CNE

## I. Member of the Profession

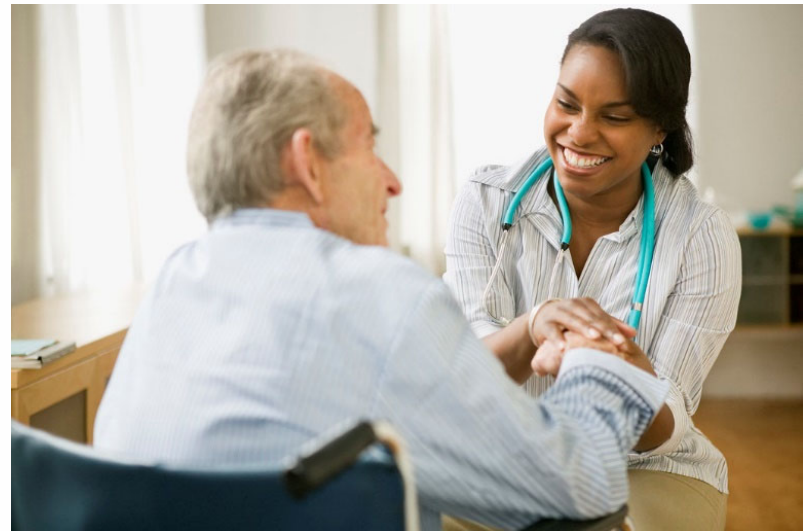
- Scope of practice
- Accountability
- Professionalism
- Personal Professional Growth



# Major Concepts in the Four Roles

## II. Provider of Patient-Centered Care

- Clinical reasoning and decision-making
- Patient assessment
- Analysis of patient assessment
- Goals for plan of care



# Major Concepts in the Four Roles

## II. Provider of Patient-Centered Care (contd.)

- Safe and competent nursing care
- Evaluation of patient responses
- Patient teaching
- Coordination of care



# Major Concepts in the Four Roles

## III. Patient Safety Advocate

- Regulations
- Quality and Safety
- Reduction of Patient Risk
- Seeking Instruction
- Mandatory Reporting
- Delegation/Assignment



# Major Concepts in the Four Roles

## IV. Member of the Health Care Team

- Communication and Collaboration
- Advocacy
- Continuity of Care
- Use of Technology
- Delegation/Assignment
- Supervision
- Global Health - **NEW**



# The DEC's Model

Gayle Varnell, PhD, APRN, CPNP-PC

- Core = Safe, Competent Nurse
- Three educational preparations
- Four nursing roles
- QSEN concepts
- Concepts in the DEC's



# Texas Board of Nursing

## Differentiated Essential Competencies (DECs) Model




Date created: January 21, 2021




# Implementing the DEC's

Janice Hooper, PhD, RN, FRE, CNE, FAAN, ANEF

- Find the major concepts in the curriculum
  - Review the competencies associated with the concepts
  - Are the knowledge areas included in the curriculum?
  - Do students have opportunities to learn and demonstrate the sub-competencies?
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# Ideas for Applying the DECs to Your Program

- Match the competencies to Level I, II, III.
  - Review the core competencies and identify where each fits into the curriculum.
  - Identify which competencies will be demonstrated in the clinical area.
  - Discuss sub-competencies in pre- or post-conferences in relationship to hands-on care.
  - Make sure new concepts are included.
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# Major Concepts in the Four Roles

Virginia D. Ayars, EdD, MS, RN

## 1. Member of the Profession

Scope of practice

Accountability

Professionalism

Professional Growth



# Accountability

B. Assume responsibility and **accountability** for the quality of nursing care provided to patients and their families.

Knowledge: BON and other standards -

Legal – Continuing competence – Evaluation of self and others – Policies & Procedures –

Professional behavior – **Service Excellence** –


Professional boundaries – Quality improvement

# Clinical Judgments and Behaviors (what you do with what you know)

- Practice according to laws, regulations
- Provide care at appropriate level
- Evaluate care given by team
- Advocate for standards
- Practice: caring, nonjudgmental, nonbiased
- Provide culturally sensitive care
- Use performance to improve practice



# Clinical Judgments and Behaviors (contd.)

- Evaluate learning needs of self and others
  - Apply management skills to implement quality
  - Assume accountability for practice
  - Promote accountability through involvement
  - Implement evidence-based practice
  - Follow policies, procedures
  - Question orders
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# Clinical Judgments and Behaviors (contd.)

- Use nursing judgment to prevent harm
- Demonstrate professional characteristics that display a commitment to nursing care and to recognize and meet patient needs.
- Maintain professional boundaries.
- Uphold professional behavior
- Collaborate with interdisciplinary team

# Thank you

Questions?

