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 DECs

  Meaning and Purpose of the DECs – Kristin Benton
  Background – Beverly Skloss
  Supplements in the DECs – Gayle Varnell
  Major Concepts Across the DECs – Virginia Ayars
  The DECs Model – Gayle Varnell
  Implementing the DECs – Jan Hooper
What are the DECs?

• **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 DECs

The DECs have implications for nursing education and nursing practice.

• The DECs are not all-inclusive of competencies in nursing practice.
• The DECs describe the expectations of Texas pre-licensure nursing graduates.
The Role of the DECs 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 DECs 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
The Role of the DECs 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 DECs
Beverly Skloss, MSN, RN

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

• 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 DECs

• 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 DECs 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 DECs: 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 DECs – 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 DECs – 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**

**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**

**Patient Safety Advocate**
Set goals and outcomes to reduce patient risks
Make assignments considering patient safety
Delegate nursing care to others

**SAFETY**

**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 DECs – 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**

**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**

**Patient Safety Advocate**
- Set goals and outcomes to reduce patient risks
- Make assignments considering patient safety
- Delegate nursing care to others

**SAFETY**

**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 DECs
Gayle Varnell, PhD, APRN, CPNP-PC

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

• 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 DECs Model
Gayle Varnell, PhD, APRN, CPNP-PC

- Core = Safe, Competent Nurse
- Three educational preparations
- Four nursing roles
- QSEN concepts
- Concepts in the DECs
Implementing the DECs
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?
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.
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 -
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
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?