

American Thoracic Society

MEDICAL SECTION OF THE AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION

STANDARDS OF NURSING CARE FOR ADULT PATIENTS WITH PULMONARY DYSFUNCTION

THIS OFFICIAL STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN THORACIC SOCIETY WAS ADOPTED BY THE ATS BOARD OF DIRECTORS, MARCH 1989

Introduction

Nursing, as a profession, is responsible to society for its actions. Each profession has the responsibility to monitor the quality of its practitioners (1). The Section on Nursing of the American Thoracic Society has identified a need to establish standards for the care of adult patients with actual or potential pulmonary dysfunction. We believe these standards will provide guidelines to assist nurses in the clinical decision-making process and the evaluation of patient outcomes.

A **standard** is generally defined as an acknowledged measure for comparison of value, a norm, or a criterion. An acceptable level of care can be defined from the perspective of **structure**, which includes the physical, fiscal, and organizational characteristics of a health care agency or group of professionals; **process**, the nature and sequence of events in the delivery of health care; or **outcome**, the changes observed in the patient's health status that are achieved through services of health professionals.

The American Lung Association/American Thoracic Society has previously developed **structurestandards** (2) and **processstandards** (3). This document includes **process and outcome standards** for the nursing care of adult patients with actual or potential pulmonary dysfunction.

These standards are for use within the nursing process, which includes assessment, diagnosis, goal setting, intervention, and evaluation. Nursing assessment is the gathering and analysis of data that led to the identification of the nursing diagnosis and related factors. Major factors included in the nursing assessment are physical, psychosocial, cultural, economic, and environmental. The assessment guide developed for this project (table 1) focuses primarily on the gathering of data related to the respiratory system and the patient's response to interferences with normal function and self-management capacity. This information can be obtained from the patient, family members, and significant others as well as case records and other health profes-

als. The suggested guide for patient assessment (table 1) is comprehensive, including variation in acuity and severity. The selection of data may be determined by the nurse according to the acuity and severity of the individual patient.

Nursing diagnosis is a clinical judgement about an individual, family, or community, which is derived through a deliberative systematic process of data collection and analysis. It provides the basis for prescriptions for definitive therapy for which the nurse is accountable. It is expressed concisely and it includes the etiology of the condition when known (3). A nursing diagnosis has three components:

- (1) Defining characteristics -a cluster of signs and symptoms which determine the diagnosis.
- (2) Related factors or risk factors.
- (3) Statement of actual or potential health problems/nursing diagnostic labels.

Nursing diagnoses are complementary to medical diagnoses in guiding the development of a comprehensive plan of care for patients. Physicians infer the abnormalities in function and structure from signs and symptoms. Nurses infer from signs and symptoms the effects of these abnormalities on the patient's capacity for self management.

Goals, which are derived from nursing diagnoses, are developed to give direction to the selection of nursing interventions. Achievement of goals is evaluated by measurable outcome criteria with specific target dates.

Nurses provide interventions on the basis of the related factor(s) of the actual health problem or the risk factor(s) of the potential health problem. Priorities are established for actions that will result in the restoration of the patient to optimal levels of functioning. The selection of the most appropriate nursing intervention(s) for each patient will be based on the clinical judgement of the nurse and include the patient's preferences, abilities, and the environment in which the care is given.

Evaluation is a process through which the plan of action is validated. Outcome criteria are considered the most effective evaluative measures as they focus on whether or not the interventions selected and provided made a difference to the patient. The outcome criteria

for nursing interventions involving the use of medications and other medical therapy are presented in table 2, to avoid repetition in each standard.

Five standards of nursing care were developed to illustrate the application and integration of the process and outcome standards in clinical practice. Specific process and outcome criteria were identified for selected nursing diagnoses found in the pulmonary patient population (tables 3 to 7). Neither the nursing interventions nor the outcome criteria are listed in order of priority. *It is expected that these standards of nursing care will be altered as research findings become available and will be applied to individual patients according to their specific situation and needs.*

Purposes of this Document

These standards are primarily intended to guide nurse generalists who care for patients with actual or potential pulmonary dysfunction, clinical nurse specialists, and nurse educators in the development of specialty content for pulmonary clinical nurse specialist programs. Furthermore, this document is intended to do the following:

- (1) Promote development of pulmonary nursing practice and peer review.
- (2) Standardize the assessment criteria for each pulmonary nursing diagnosis.
- (3) Standardize the goals and desired outcome criteria for each pulmonary nursing diagnosis.
- (4) Provide a selection of research-based interventions to improve the patient's pulmonary function and/or coping with pulmonary disease.
- (5) Stimulate nurses' participation in pulmonary program development, evaluation, and quality assurance.
- (6) Assist nurse administrators in the development of nurse performance evaluation tools.
- (7) Assist nurse administrators in the development of patient program evaluation tools.
- (8) Assist nurse researchers in their pursuit to describe, explain, and predict patient responses to pulmonary dysfunction across settings.

TABLE 1
ASSESSMENT GUIDE

TABLE 1
CONTINUED

I.	Symptom profile and self-management capacity	e. Socioeconomic factors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Social support system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Family (b) Significant others (c) Friends (d) Community resources (e) Government resources ii. Financial situation/health insurance iii. Employment/disability
A.	Pulmonary symptoms (consider onset, duration, and character of symptoms; precipitating, aggravating, and relieving factors of symptoms)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dyspnea 2. Cough 3. Sputum 4. Hemoptysis 5. Wheeze 6. Chest pain (e.g., pleuritic)
B.	Extrapulmonary symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Night sweats 2. Headaches on awakening 3. Weight changes 4. Fluid retention 5. Snoring; sleep disturbances; daytime drowsiness 6. Fatigue 7. Orthopnea, paroxysmal nocturnal/epiphora 8. Nasal stuffiness or discharge 9. Sinus problem
C.	Self-management capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Physical ability (note level of independence using 0 to 4 scale; 0 = independent, 4 = dependent) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Lower extremity (e.g., walking, stair climbing) b. Upper extremity (e.g., shampooing, meal preparation) c. Activities of daily living <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Toileting ii. Hygiene iii. Feeding iv. Dressing d. Activity pattern during a typical day e. Patient statement re: management of problems f. Sensory-perceptual factors (e.g., vision, hearing)
2.	Cognitive ability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Mental age b. Memory c. Judgment d. Knowledge about diagnosis and treatment of pulmonary problem or risk factors
3.	Psychosocial-cultural factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Self-concept <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Self-esteem ii. Body image b. Role(s), changes c. Value system (e.g., spiritual and health beliefs) d. Coping mechanisms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Displaced anger ii. Anxiety iii. Hostility iv. Dependency v. Withdrawal vi. Isolation vii. Avoidance viii. Non-compliance ix. Acceptance x. Denial
IV.	Physical examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. General observation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Appearance (e.g., condition of skin, body position) 2. Speech pattern and pacing 3. Mental status (e.g., alertness, memory, orientation to time, person, and place) 4. Assistive devices 5. Nasal flaring 6. Cyanosis of nail beds, mucous membranes 7. Clubbing 6. JVD 9. Peripheral edema (extremities, sacral, suborbital) B. Chest examination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inspection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Shoulders equal in height b. Sternum-convex, concave c. Thorax-AP diameter

(continued)

TABLE 1
CONTINUED

d. Spine-kyphosis, scoliosis, kyphoscoliosis	
e. Chest wall movement	2. Pulmonary function tests
i. Symmetry	a. Spirometry
ii. Splinting	i. Low FEV ₁ /FVC ratio (airflow obstruction)
iii. Retraction	ii. Low FEV ₁ , low VC; normal FEV ₁ /FVC ratio (restrictive process)
iv. Use of accessory muscles	b. Lung volumes
f. Breathing pattern during rest, exercise, sleep rate, depth, rhythm, IE ratio, inspiration time, pursed lip breathing	i. Low TLC (restrictive process)
g. Synchrony of thoraco-abdominal motion	ii. Large RV (obstruction with air trapping)
2. Palpation	c. Mouth pressures (P _{max} , P _{E_{max}})
a. Tracheal alignment	i. Both low (neuromuscular disease, fixed or variable airflow obstruction)
b. Chest movement (symmetry, depth of excursion)	ii. Low PI ₁ , (airflow obstruction with hyperinflation)
c. Tactile fremitus	d. DLCO
d. Tenderness	i. Low DL _{CO} /TLC (pulmonary vascular disease, emphysema)
e. PMI	ii. Low DL _{CO} /TLC (restrictive process)
f. Nodes (cervical, axillary)	3. Electrolytes, creatinine, BUN
g. Crepitus	4. Sputum examinations
h. Liver (location, hepatogular reflex)	5. CXR/CT scan/MRI
3. Percussion	6. Hemoglobin/hematocrit
a. Thoraco-abdominal resonance	7. Carboxyhemoglobin
b. Thoracoabdominal organ borders	8. Ventilation/perfusion studies
c. Diaphragmatic excursion (distance, symmetry)	9. Exercise tests
4. Auscultation	10. Drug levels (theophylline, antibiotics)
a. Breath sounds	11. Sleep apnea studies
i. Normal	12. Electrocardiogram
(a) Vesicular	13. Respiratory Impedance Plethysmography (RIP)
(b) Bronchovesicular-over main bronchi	14. Skin tests
(c) Bronchial-over trachea	15. Respiratory Exchange Ratio, R value
ii. Abnormal	16. Caloric consumption and caloric need
(a) Absent or diminished	
(b) Bronchial or bronchovesicular sounds in abnormal location	
iii. Adventitious sounds	
(a) Type	
(1) crackle&ales (discontinuous)	A. Whenever the patient is receiving a prescribed medication (including O ₂) the patient is expected to be able
(2) rhonchi/gurgles (continuous)	to state the following for each medication:
(3) wheeze	1. Name (or other method of identification)
(4) pleural friction rub	2. Dosage
(5) inspiratory stridor	3. Method of administration
(b) Timing	4. Schedule (relationship to meals and activities of daily living)
(1) early or late inspiration	5. Purpose
(2) expiration	6. Side effect(s)
(3) changes with respiratory maneuvers (deep breath, cough)	7. Appropriate behavior if side effects occur
iv. Abnormal voice sounds	8. Consequences of improper use
(a) Bronchophony	9. Importance of refilling prescription before medication runs out
(b) Whispered pectoriloquy	B. Whenever the prescribed treatment requires the use of respiratory therapy equipment (including O ₂ systems), the patient should be able to demonstrate the appropriate use of the equipment by:
(c) Eosophony	1. Assembling equipment
v. Heart sounds	2. Performing treatment procedures
C. Laboratory data	3. Disassembling equipment used in treatment
1. Arterial blood gases (consider body position [sitting, supine], activity, F _{O₂})	4. Cleaning equipment
a. Oxygenation	5. Seeking assistance when equipment is not functioning properly
b. Ventilation	
c. Acid-base status	

TABLE 2
OUTCOME CRITERIA FOR MEDICATIONS AND OTHER MEDICAL THERAPY

Definition of abbreviations: IgG=immunoglobulin G; HIV = human immunodeficiency virus; IVD = jugular-venous distention; AP = arterial-pulmonary; IE = inspiratory/expiratory; PMI = point of maximal impulse; TLC = total lung capacity; RV = residual volume; PI₁ = maximal inspiratory pressure; P_{E_{max}} = maximal expiratory pressure; DLCO = diffusing capacity.

TABLE 3
STANDARD OF NURSING CARE

Nursing diagnosis: Ineffective airway clearance	Defining characteristics: A state in which there is inability to clear the airways and evidence of retained secretions	
Related factors:		
Difficulty expiratory spatum		
Presence of abnormal breath sounds (rhonchi/gurgles)		
Cough-ineffective or absent		
Infection in airways		
Decreased level of consciousness		
Decreased airway humidity		
Presence of an artificial airway		
Thoracic and/or abdominal neuromuscular dysfunction		
Pain		
Environmental irritants leading to hypersecretion and/or decreased mucociliary transport		
Expiratory airflow obstruction		
	Goal	
Interventions (Process Criteria)	To establish airway clearance	
Facilitate deep breathing	Evaluation (Outcome Criteria) (rhonchi/gurgles)	
Encourage cough	Absence of abnormal breath sounds	
Teach alternative cough techniques (e.g., quad, huff)	Effective cough is present	
Position to facilitate cough	Expectorates sputum easily	
Assure euvoolemia	Patient or significant other is able to perform airway clearance modalities	
Provide bronchial drainage treatments (positioning, percussion and vibration)		
Perform tracheobronchial suctioning		
Schedule analgesia to facilitate airway clearance treatments		
Coordinate inhaled bronchodilator administration to facilitate clearance		
Administer antibiotics and teach patient about self-administration		
Minimize exposure to environmental irritants and/or pathogenic organisms		
Stabilize artificial airway		
Teach airway clearance modalities to patient and/or family		
Promote smoking cessation		
Teach signs and symptoms of infection and ineffective airway clearance		
Position to prevent pulmonary aspiration		
Humidify inspired air when upper airway is bypassed		

TABLE 4
STANDARD OF NURSING CARE

Nursing diagnosis: Impaired breathing pattern	Definition: A state in which there is an abnormality in the rate, depth, timing, or rhythm of inspiration, expiration, or both	
Defining characteristics		
Respiratory rate: < 11 or > 24 breaths/min		
Depth of breathing: decreased (if measured, $V_T < 200 \text{ ml at rest}$) increased (if measured, $V_T > 550 \text{ ml at rest}$)		
Timing, ratio of inspiration and expiration: If measurement available: inspiratory time < 1.2 or > 2.4 s fractional inspiratory time < .36 or > .47		
Observation: $I:E < 1:2, 1:3$, or > 1:1		
Irregular breathing rhythm: (e.g., apnea, frequent sighs, use of accessory muscles of breathing inappropriate to level of activity, asynchronous thoracoabdominal motion)		
Related factors:		
Neuromuscular impairment		
Pain		
Musculoskeletal impairment		
Anxiety		
CNS depression		
Respiratory muscle fatigue/failure		
Increased work of breathing		
Obstruction to airflow (inspiratory or expiratory)		
Weaning attempt		
	Goal	
Interventions (Process Criteria)	To normalize breathing pattern and reduce work of breathing	
Initiate respiratory muscle training, if appropriate	Evaluation (Outcome Criteria)	
Provide comfort measures (e.g., positioning, analgesics)	Respiratory rate, depth, timing within normal limits	
Initiate energy conservation techniques	Respiratory rhythm within normal limits for age	
Provide mechanical support	Synchronous thoracoabdominal movement	
Provide relaxation training (e.g., biofeedback, progressive muscle relaxation, imagery)	Use of accessory muscles appropriate to activity level	
Use airway clearance techniques (see Infective Airway Clearance)		
Monitor upper airway patency, correct jaw and tongue position as appropriate		

Definition of abbreviations: V_T = tidal volume, $I:E$ = inspiratory/expiratory ratio; CNS = central nervous system.

TABLE 5
STANDARD OF NURSING CARE

Nursing diagnosis: Impaired gas exchange: hypercapnia Definition: A state in which the CO ₂ pressure in arterial blood is greater than normal, with or without acidemia . Defining characteristics:	Paco₂ > 45 mm Hg Headache on awakening Related factors: Alveolar hypoventilation Low ventilation/perfusion ratio Primary metabolic alkalosis	Goal To re-establish usual compensated baseline Paco ₂ .	Interventions (Process Criteria) Stimulate breathing effort as necessary (in conditions such as post-anesthesia use of narcotics, hypnotics, or tranquilizers) Monitor vital capacity, P _{1max} in neuromuscular weakness Assist with ventilatory support measures (e.g., mechanical ventilation) Teach potential hazard of excessive levels of inspired O ₂ to patients with blunted CO ₂ drive to breathe Teach signs, symptoms, and consequences of hypercapnia Teach avoidance of CNS depressants Monitor acid-base status of primary metabolic alkalosis and consult with physician about its causes and treatment	Evaluation (Outcome Criteria) Paco ₂ 40 mm Hg or patient's usual compensated baseline value Arterial pH is stable or within clinically acceptable range Demonstrates correct technique(s) to normalize Paco ₂ (e.g., secretion clearance and bronchodilator therapies) Recognizes and reports signs and symptoms of hypercapnia Reports absence or decreased incidence of headache upon awakening	Interventions (Process Criteria) Teach and encourage deep breathing and/or use of incentive spirometer Teach and encourage pursed-lip breathing Position patient so that the most normal area(s) of lung is dependent Implement airway clearance techniques Counsel patient about management of hypoxemia associated with air travel and/or increased altitude Advise avoidance of respiratory depressants Assist with ventilatory support measures (e.g., mechanical ventilation, incentive spirometry) Teach symptoms and potential consequences of hypoxemia Teach self-management of ventilatory support equipment Teach and monitor proper placement of supplementary oxygen devices (e.g., nasal cannula) (Select 0, supply systems and devices (nasal cannulas, mask, etc.) that are appropriate to patient's activities of daily living (rest, sleep, exercise, etc.)	Evaluation (Outcome Criteria) Paco ₂ returns to normal range for that person Patient demonstrates a reduction in tachycardia and confusion Patient states that fatigue is reduced Patient demonstrates correct use of modalities and methods that support improved oxygenation
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Definition of abbreviations: P_{1max} = maximal inspiratory pressure; CNS = central nervous system.

TABLE 6
STANDARD OF NURSING CARE

Nursing diagnosis: Impaired gas exchange: hypoxemia Definition: A state in which the O ₂ pressure in arterial blood is lower than the age-adjusted normal range at a given altitude Defining characteristics:	All ABG values measured on room air at sea level: Acute hypoxemia: PaO ₂ < 60 mm Hg or SaO ₂ < 90% at rest Chronic hypoxemia: PaO ₂ ≤ 55 mm Hg or SaO ₂ ≤ 88% at rest or during sleep PaO ₂ < 60 mm Hg or SaO ₂ < 90% during exercise Confusion Tachycardia Fatigue	Goal To normalize arterial oxygenation	Interventions (Process Criteria) Related factors: Alveolar hypoventilation Intrapulmonary shunting Low ventilation/perfusion ratio Diffusion impairment Decreased ambient O ₂ (gas mixture error) Decreased barometric pressure (high altitude)	Evaluation (Outcome Criteria) PaO ₂ returns to normal range for that person Patient demonstrates a reduction in tachycardia and confusion Patient states that fatigue is reduced Patient demonstrates correct use of modalities and methods that support improved oxygenation
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Definition of abbreviation: ABG = arterial blood gases.

TABLE 7
STANDARD OF NURSING CARE

Nursing diagnosis: Altered comfort: dyspnea

Definition: A state in which there is an unpleasant sensation associated with breathing

Defining characteristics:

Unpleasant breathing sensation (shortness of breath, breathlessness)

Gasping, trunckated speech patterns

Abnormal use of accessory muscles at rest

Related factors:

Increased airways resistance (bronchospasm and/or retained secretions)

Increased activity level/exercise

Psychologic stress provoking and worsening dyspnea (anxiety, depression, fear)

Noxious environmental stimuli

Air trapping/hyperinflation (increased FRC)

Decreased lung compliance (pulmonary edema)

Decreased chest wall compliance (musculoskeletal abnormalities)

Goal

To improve comfort by reduction/elimination of dyspnea

Interventions (Process Criteria)

Administer and/or teach effective use of drugs

and equipment (e.g., bronchodilators, diuretics, antibiotics, analgesics, mood elevators)

Schedule rest and activity periods

Provide relaxation training (e.g., biofeedback, imagery, progressive muscle relaxation)

Provide psychomotor distraction techniques to desensitize dyspnea (e.g., progressive exercise with coaching)

Help patient to assume position of comfort (e.g., tripod position, elevated backrest, support upper extremities to fix shoulder girdle)

Remove or limit noxious environmental stimuli
Teach/encourage pursed lip breathing

Evaluation (Outcome Criteria)

Diminished sensation of unpleasant breathing

Use of accessory muscles appropriate to activity level

Completes sentence without stopping for breath

(9) Assist nurse researchers in their ongoing evaluation of interventions and development of new interventions to optimize patient functional ability and self-care management.

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