

North Country Hospital Nursing Practice Council Bylaws

Preamble

The primary goal for all nurses at NCH is to provide quality patient care in an environment where patients and families can heal. This responsibility can be accomplished through following our Nursing Philosophy.

The Nursing Practice Council makes recommendations and/or decisions about issues affecting nursing practice at NCH. The Council acts in accordance with the Nursing Philosophy and Mission Statement at NCH.

*Nursing Philosophy hyperlink: [Nursing Philosophy](#)

Article I

The name of the group is the Nursing Practice Council of North Country Hospital

Article II

The purpose of the Nursing Practice Council (NPC) is to empower and inspire nurses to establish parameters of nursing practice in support of the philosophy of nursing, to engage and empower nurses as a collaborative body to implement improvements to ensure high nursing standards, and deliver quality care.

The functions of the Nursing Practice Council include:

1. Develop, promote, and maintain activities that recognize and support Professional Nursing Practice.
 - a. Determine and periodically review the scope of practice for nursing services at NCH as regulated by the Vermont State Board of Nursing.
 - b. Evaluate and approve nursing practice +/- or changes that influence general or overall nursing practice.
 - c. New practice consideration may be formally presented to NPC prior to administration.
2. Review current ethical, legal, economic, and regulatory health issues that affect nursing practice and apply relevant issues to practice at NCH.
 - a. Monitor current issues and external regulatory standards in order to identify potential issues for the practice of nursing at NCH.
 - b. Assess impact of identified issues on the current practice environment.
 - c. Approve proposed practice changes that impact all nurses at NCH.

3. Identify and improve select nursing sensitive and patient centered outcome measures.
 - a. Identify and monitor outcome measures, which may include but are not limited to:
 - Outcomes of National Databank of Nursing Quality Indicators:
 - Falls
 - Skin Integrity
 - Pain Management Measures
 - Nosocomial Infection
 - Restraint Use
 - Medication Reconciliation
 - b. Identify opportunities for improvement in nursing practice.
 - c. Make recommendations for necessary changes in practice and collaborate with unit based Director to mobilize resources necessary to implement such changes.
 - d. Evaluate effectiveness of implemented strategies.

Article III – Membership

The membership of the Nursing Practice Council may include registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, and licensed nursing assistants employed at NCH. Others may be invited as deemed necessary. Nonmembers can participate on subcommittees.

Article IV – Meetings

Nursing Practice Council meetings will be held monthly. Special meetings of the Council may be called at the request of the Chairperson or any member of NPC. Attendance at Nursing Practice Council meetings is open to interested nursing staff. Non-member attendees (except alternates) have observer-only status, without voting privileges and with limited discussion privileges at the discretion of the Chairperson.

Article V – Structure and Governance

Section 1 – Membership Selection

The goal is to have nurse representatives from the units/clinics be selected by their peers or any volunteers. Members on the council will include unit council members from as many disciplines as possible. Any nurse can attend a meeting or bring ideas to the council. Administrative members serve in an advisory capacity without voting privileges.

Section 2 – Terms of Office

1. NPC members serve a term of two years. New members assume office July 1. All terms expire June 30 of the second year of office. If a member is unable to finish his/her full term, an alternate member from that service is selected to complete the regular member's term.
2. If an alternate serves for more than one year of the term, he/she will be considered to have completed one term.
3. A nurse may serve consecutive terms on the Council if he/she is re-selected or re-appointed by the staff on the unit.

Section 3 – Vacancies

1. Vacancies may occur due to resignation or failure to fulfill responsibilities.
2. When a vacancy occurs, the individual service will select or reappoint a representative, per section one and two above.
3. A member who is absent from NPC meetings more than two times a year without an alternate will be asked to reaffirm his/her commitment or be replaced as an NPC representative.

Section 4 – Voting Privileges

All NPC members and alternates (when the regular member is absent) are eligible to have one vote per unit, including the Administrative Liaison. The voting quorum is 50%.

Section 5 – Member Responsibilities

1. Serve as role models in projecting a positive view of nursing.
2. Represent the Council in other forums.
3. Serve as a resource to the constituents concerning practice issues.
4. Provide information to the Council from the constituency represented
5. Make decisions based on the best possible outcome in accordance with institutional missions, visions, and values.
6. Communicate the business of the Council, including the list of representatives, to represented services/groups on a regular basis.
7. Serve as an active participant on the Council in order to provide support for the Council's agenda.
8. Ensure continuity of representation at end of term of office.
9. Keep alternates informed of Council activities in order for the alternate to be able to complete the responsibility of the regular member.
10. Attend all meetings or get alternate to attend meeting.

Section 6 – Chairperson Responsibilities

1. Screen incoming requests and issues, develop Council meeting agendas, chair Council meetings and call for a vote if consensus is not reached.
2. Delegate Council assignments.
3. Counsel representatives who are not fulfilling their responsibilities.

4. Make decisions when necessary on behalf of the council and communicate decisions at the next scheduled meeting.
5. Initiate or approve emergency meetings.
6. Represent Council at other forums.
7. Review the Council's activities and adhere to the Council's purpose, plans, and goals.
8. Develop an annual report for NPC approval, if requested.
9. Orient new NPC members to their responsibilities.

Section 7 – Chair-elect Responsibilities

1. Perform duties and responsibilities of Chair in Chair's absence.
2. Assist Chair in planning, communicating and setting agenda, if requested.
3. Assume responsibilities of Chair if position is vacated.
4. Assume the position of Chairperson following completion of the incumbent Chairperson's term of office in July.

Section 8 – Provision for Bylaw Changes

1. A proposal to change the NPC bylaws can be placed on the agenda by any NPC member at any time and will be acted upon by NPC within the span of time of the next two meetings.
2. NPC will review the bylaws on a biennial basis or as deemed necessary.
3. Changes to the bylaws will be presented to the VP of Patient Care Services for approval.

Written and approved by: Members of NPC

Approved by:

Reviewed: 8/23/04

Revised: 8/23/04, 05/27/08, 02/03/11, 06/05/13, 01/28/15, 2/22/17