



POSITION STATEMENT

The Registered Nurse in the Imaging Setting

**Introduction and Justification for an Imaging Nursing Position**

The imaging nurse uses evidence-based practice to provide quality nursing care for patients in the imaging setting. The nurse is knowledgeable in meeting the physical, psychological, cultural, and educational needs of patients. The dynamic functions of the imaging nurse include the following:

1. Role Model in the Imaging Setting
  - A. Emphasizes personalized and individualized patient care
  - B. Demonstrates leadership and effective communication skills
  - C. Complies with the National Patient Safety Goals
  - D. Facilitates and fosters teamwork
  
2. Patient Advocate
  - A. Assists in preadmission and post procedure calls to patients to identify special needs or risks, provide needed information, and ensure patient understanding of preparation and follow-up
  - B. Prepares and evaluates patient teaching materials
  - C. Ensures that the patient's rights are respected and protected
  - D. Acts as a representative to institutional/divisional/departmental committees
  - E. Ensures that patient confidentiality and privacy is protected
  - F. Reviews the patient's understanding of the procedure and checks for informed consent
  - G. Assists in meeting communication needs of patients who are non-English speaking or who are sight/hearing/speech impaired
  - H. Facilitates development of tools and education to improve staff understanding of multicultural and diversity care
  - I. Assists in developing tools and education to provide care that is sensitive to developmental needs and problems across the lifespan.
  
3. Medication Safety in the Imaging Setting
  - A. Ensures safety in medication management through implementation of the medication reconciliation processes
  - B. Administers medications when required including agents for sedation/analgesia
  - B. Administers and monitors the effects of vasoactive medications and advanced cardiac life support (ACLS) medications during emergencies

- C. Acts as a resource for radiologists, radiological technologists, and others concerning drugs for pain control, drug interactions and side effects, anticoagulants, and those that require special teaching such as oral antihyperglycemic drugs (e.g., metformin and metformin derivatives, and others)
  - D. Maintains an active role in the development of policies and procedures for appropriate screening and patient preparation when patients receive contrast media, specifically in the development of renal protection programs and the prevention of nephrogenic systemic fibrosis
4. Expert in Therapeutic Environment
- A. Uses and role models recognized techniques in providing patient comfort and relaxation
  - B. Role models therapeutic practice of presence as outlined in nursing caring models
  - C. Acts as a resource in developing environmental adjustments to minimize stress and promote an optimal patient experience
5. Department Emergency and Rapid Response Team
- A. Recognizes emergencies and assumes leadership in dealing with emergencies
  - B. Coordinates effective handling of patient care emergencies arising from contrast media reactions, seizures, respiratory and cardiac emergencies, and other unexpected events
  - C. Works with allied health team and radiologists to promote rapid response in patient care emergencies
  - D. Maintains records for emergency drugs, equipment, and supplies
6. Monitoring of Critically Ill Patients Where Applicable
- A. Provides or assists in providing nursing care to critically ill patients in the imaging department
  - B. Actively participates in patient transfer of care upon arrival in the imaging department
  - C. Ensures continuity of care through effective transfer of care communication
7. Laboratory/ Clinical and Critical Test Results
- A. Reviews serum laboratory results, including, but not limited to, coagulopathy studies for levels prior to invasive procedures
  - B. Reviews serum laboratory results, including, but not limited to, serum creatinine and eGFR prior to iodinated contrast studies; ensures that appropriate pre-contrast regimen is implemented in cooperation with the radiologist
  - C. Reviews 12-lead EKG and/or cardiac rhythm strips, chest x-ray reports, and history and physical reports and orders for exams prior to procedures as required
  - D. Communicates abnormal or critical results to physician or designee

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8. Liaison/Resource Person
  - A. Provides open line of communication between the imaging department, patient care units, and patient care services
  - B. Serves on hospital and departmental/divisional committees
  - C. Meets routinely with hospital nursing staff to facilitate the exchange of ideas
  - D. Recommends and implements changes to improve nursing performance
  - E. Ensures continuity of patient care by participating in coordination of care among practitioners, including the use of organization-wide policies and procedures
  - F. Provides nursing and patient care perspective to department policies and procedures
  - G. Provides patients with the tools and follow up necessary to ensure safety at home following invasive procedures
  - H. Acts as a resource person and liaison with the radiologist in early reporting of problems following procedures and identification of treatment plan; thereby reducing unnecessary use of medical resources, such as ER visits
  - I. Works with nursing colleagues to develop and maintain orientation and training programs that reflect new and current therapies, interventions, and diagnostic studies, including skill labs, mock codes, and case studies
  
9. Documentation
  - A. Follows the Joint Commission (JC) guidelines for appropriate documentation
  - B. Assists other health professionals in documenting pertinent information on approved forms
  
10. Continuing Education
  - A. Participates in the multidisciplinary approach to patient care
  - B. Participates in educating other staff concerning functions of department and procedural preps as needed in orientation and skill labs
  - C. Shares technological advancements with hospital staff through orientation and continuing education
  - D. Participates in education of other imaging staff in areas that involve patient safety including contrast induced nephropathy (CIN), nephrogenic systemic fibrosis (NSF), contrast media reactions and extravasations, and infection control
  - E. Instrumental in implementing the National Patient Safety Goals pertinent to the imaging department.
  
11. Risk Management/Performance Improvement
  - A. Monitors the safety of patients with specialty equipment (e.g., arterial lines, hemodynamic monitoring , oxygen , pulse oximetry, capnography, , drainage tubes , tunneled catheters, implanted ports, patient controlled analgesia devices, intravenous fluids, hyperalimentation)

- B. Assesses, evaluates, and provides education for patient preparation, thereby
  - 1. Reducing repeat exams
  - 2. Minimizing radiation time
  - 3. Reducing length of stay
  - 4. Early identification and treatment plan for problems following procedures
- C. Evaluates standards of patient care and actively recommends areas for improvement
- D. Maintains aseptic technique during invasive procedures
- E. Identifies opportunities for quality performance improvement

12. Cost Containment

- A. Establishes the inventory of patient care supplies, thereby maintaining facility-approved levels
- B. Controls availability and administration of medications
- C. Actively involved with appropriate patient preparation and intraprocedural needs, avoiding unnecessary repeat exams, thus resulting in decreased expenses for personnel and other resources
- D. Assists in evaluating patient care products before purchase
- E. Participates in evaluation of patient care charges
- F. Identifies opportunities to streamline care, while maintaining safety and standards of care, thus contributing to cost containment

**Resources**

American Nurses Association & American Radiological Nurses Association. (2007). *Radiology nursing: Scope and standards of radiology nursing practice*. Silver Spring, MD: Authors.

Sasso, C. (Ed). (2008). *Core curriculum for radiologic & imaging nursing*. Pensacola, FL: American Radiological Nurses Association.

Author: Brenda Wickersham, MAV, RN, CRN

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Association for Radiologic & Imaging Nursing (ARIN) \*  
 7794 Grow Drive, Pensacola, FL 32514  
 Phone: 866-486-2762 or 850-474-7292 Fax: 850-484-8762  
[www.arinursing.org](http://www.arinursing.org)     [arin@dancyamc.com](mailto:arin@dancyamc.com)

\*formerly American Radiological Nurses Association (ARNA)