

Care Team Assistant Role Profile

Role Summary:

Care Team Assistants (CTA) are members of the collaborative care team in the acute care in-patient unit and contribute to the provision of high quality, safe, compassionate and efficient care to meet the needs of patients and families.

They contribute to a positive patient experience and improved care outcomes. The CTA has the primary task of providing assistance to regulated health care professionals in the delivery of care to patients. As members of the collaborative care team and within his/her defined role (scope of employment) and educational preparation, the CTA is responsible for supporting patients' Activities of Daily Living (ADL) and Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADL).

Care Team Assistants contribute to the delivery of patient care by providing direct, hands-on care *under the direction and supervision of regulated professionals*. The CTA role does not substitute for a regulated health care professional.

Assignment of duties to CTA is determined by the care coordinator or other regulated health care professional(s) based on the needs of the patient and/or unit and an assessment of the required skill mix to fulfill those needs. Patient acuity and complexity will influence the assignment of duties to CTA. Regulated professionals are responsible and accountable for ensuring that the CTA has the skills and knowledge required to perform the assigned duties. CTA are responsible and accountable for accepting assigned tasks they are competent to perform and communicating when they do not feel competent to complete the assigned task.

Key Responsibilities:

I. COMPETENT PRACTICE

The CTA exercises *judgment* in *observing, planning, , implementing, documenting and reporting* the care she/he is competent, educated and authorized to provide to the patient. This care is provided within the context of the CTA's scope of employment and educational preparation.

1. Collect data as assigned to support patient assessment.
2. Continuously monitor patients' general condition and well-being, while responding to unmet needs as appropriate. Monitoring includes being the constant eyes in the room; observation; and understanding when it is appropriate to report to regulated health professional.
3. As a part of the collaborative care team, contribute to the development of the patient-specific, holistic plan of care.
4. Assist in the implementation of the care plan. *The duties and responsibilities may include, but not be limited to:*
 - Provide assistance with ADL, such as grooming and personal hygiene, dressing/undressing, eating/fluids, toileting/elimination, etc.

- Provide assistance with IADL, such as preparing the patient for meals, using the phone, social/recreation/leisure events, identify supports, etc.
- Application of non-medicated creams/ointments and hydrating/lubricating eye drops
- Application of medicated creams/ointments as delegated activity.
- Provide assistance with implementing the health care plan or therapeutic treatment, such as:
 - Recording vital signs and intake/output readings, such as O₂, and reporting the results to the regulated health care professional;
 - Maintaining and improving skin integrity (i.e. reinforce dressings)
 - Participating in specimen collection (i.e. urine, feces);
 - Providing delegated tasks under the supervision of RN or LPN in some situations (e.g., simple dressing change, clean wounds, application of compression stocking, enemas, apply creams, massage, halo care, hot/cold pack application); and
 - Facilitating/reinforcing patient teaching to respond to the patient's needs.
- Participate in discharge planning and facilitate the patient's readiness for discharge.

5. CTA may also provide assistance with ADL, IADL, or other interventions that are outside of his/her educational preparation through *delegation*.

Delegation is the decision and process to transfer an intervention that is outside the training/preparation of the CTA, from a regulated health care professional who has the authority to perform that intervention to a CTA who has received the necessary additional education and who has been deemed competent. When the designated aspects of patient care are delegated to a CTA, the regulated health care professional determines the degree of *supervision* required and must be available to provide it. The amount of supervision required and provided will depend upon the complexity of the care that is required and the proficiency of the CTA providing it. The degree of supervision required must be established by the regulated health care professional who is delegating the intervention. Delegated interventions must be defined/approved by the employer. Delegation involves the transferring of responsibility for the performance of the intervention, recognizing the accountability for the outcome is shared by the CTA, the regulated health care professional and the employer. (For an overview of employer and regulated health care professional accountabilities, please see the Appendix of this role description.)

6. Communication:

- Communicate clearly and professionally.
- Establish and maintain an individualized approach to communication that respects the patient's unique needs.
- Respect confidentiality and legislated requirements while communicating information.
- Report data collected and observations made in the process of assisting the regulated health care professional in the delivery of care.
- Communicate/report pertinent information and/or observations to the regulated health care professional.
- Participate in collaborative team discussions.

7. Patient Education:

- Reinforce patient and family teaching according to established guidelines and the plan of care.

8. Manage the patient environment by promoting a restful/comforting environment.

9. within his/her defined role (scope of employment) and educational preparation, assess and support the patient's ADL and IADL.
10. Advocate for the patient.
11. Assist with mobility/transferring, such as:
 - a. ambulation;
 - b. range of motion exercise;
 - c. turning and positioning in bed/chair; and
 - d. transferring the client with or without the use of a mechanical lift.

II. PATIENT SAFETY

1. Provide patient-centered care.
2. Provide safe, competent, and ethical care.
3. Support, protect, and safeguard the patients' rights and interests.
4. Carry out interventions according to an established care plan.
5. Demonstrate a patient-focused philosophy of care.
6. Recognize and report any change in patient circumstance that pose a potential or actual threat to the patient's health, safety, security and well-being.

III. ACCOUNTABLE PRACTICE

1. Know what aspects of patient care they are able to perform, those they are not able to perform and when to seek guidance/direction.
2. Follow employer's policies, procedures and related protocols/guidelines.
3. Document/report the care provided in keeping with the employer's policies.
4. Understands his/her own values and attitudes and their effect on establishing successful patient/caregiver relationships.
5. Demonstrates an ability to learn about the implication of each patient's disease, disorder, condition or personal circumstance and to adapt as appropriate to effectively implement the care plan.

IV. WORKLIFE AND RELATIONSHIPS

1. Work as a member of the health care team by respecting and acknowledging the roles of all those within the health care system to contribute to safe, competent, and ethical care.
2. Promotes a positive work environment by:
 - Respecting other's opinions, judgements and abilities
 - Using proper channels of communication
 - Managing conflict effectively
 - Demonstrating flexibility and reliability
3. Participates actively in meetings and attends assigned committees, as able, and carries out assigned responsibilities.
4. Identifies system (e.g. environmental/unit) limitations and offers recommendations for change.
5. Appears professionally attired with proper identification at all times

ACCOUNTABILITIES

Care Team Assistants are responsible for the safe performance of interventions, for knowing what procedures they can perform, and for not performing assigned or delegated

interventions until they have received authorization from the employer(s) and the necessary training to perform the intervention safely.

CTA must practice within their educational preparation, *scope of employment* and according to the employer's policies and procedures.

The regulated health care professional determines the degree of *supervision* required and must be available to provide it. The amount of supervision required and provided will depend upon the complexity of the care that is required and the competence of the CTA providing it. The degree of supervision required must be established by the regulated health care professional who is assigning an intervention.

EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION:

Graduate of the Continuing Care Assistant Program

Appendix to CTA Role Profile: Employer and Regulated Health Care Professional Accountabilities

Responsibilities of the Employer

It is the employer's responsibility to create and support an environment that enables and maximizes the contribution of all members of the collaborative care team. Poochikian-Sarkassian et al. (2008) suggest that "interprofessional practice promotes discussion among team members about the elements necessary to develop a common vision and goal where professionals are motivated to work together and create an environment that promotes improved patient care"(p.10)¹. To achieve this, the employer must:

- Choose staff that share the value of the collaborative care team;
- Ensure educational opportunities and support to help staff develop team work skills;
- Establish and maintain quality control measures to ensure team effectiveness; and
- Develop policies and protocols to reinforce integration/implementation of the new role descriptions and team work.

Additionally, because the AP is unregulated, the employer has the responsibility to:

- Ensure adequate education, training, and assessment of the competence of CTA;
- Ensure educational opportunities and support to help regulated health care professionals develop the skills of delegation and supervision of CTA;
- Ensure adequate supervision of CTA; and
- Establish and maintain quality control measures to ensure competent care:
 - Approve the interventions to be delegated to CTA by:
 - establishing written policies and procedures on delegation, including who the delegator is, workers to whom the tasks can be delegated, the process for delegation, and guidelines for care; and
 - prohibiting delegation when no suitably qualified CTA is available.

Responsibilities of the Regulated Health Care Professional

When working with the CTA as part of the collaborative care team, the regulated health care professional has the responsibility to:

- Know the work approved for delegation by the employer and the circumstances under which work may be delegated.
- Make an appropriate decision to delegate using the following criteria:
 - Employer's policies;
 - Patient needs;
 - Complexity of health problems;
 - CTA job description and knowledge base;
 - Knowledge and demonstrated competency to perform the delegated intervention; and
 - Predictability of the anticipated outcome and specific risk factors.

- Provide supervision to the CTA.
- Evaluate client care by monitoring client outcomes.

¹ Poochikian-Sarkissian, S., Hunter, J., Tully, S., Lazar, N.M., Sabo, K., & Cursio, C. (2008, Spring). Developing an innovative care delivery model: Interprofessional practice teams. *Healthcare Management Forum*, 6-11.

Delegation by a regulated health professional must be done in accordance with the profession's delegation guidelines.