

**American Association of Neuroscience Nurses (AANN)  
POSITION STATEMENT  
BEST PRACTICES**

**BACKGROUND**

Neuroscience nursing practice is based on sound principles of nursing science and research as well as being derived from the fields of neuroanatomy, neurophysiology, pharmacology, nutrition, rehabilitation, biologic science, behavioral and social sciences, and learning theories. Neuroscience nurses apply knowledge, theory, and research from these other fields to care for their clients in various roles and settings. Neuroscience nursing is a unique area within the nursing discipline that specializes in the care of individuals with alterations as a result of nervous system dysfunction (AANN, 2001). The American Association of Neuroscience Nurses (AANN) is committed to the advancement of neuroscience nursing as a specialty through the development and support of nurses promoting excellence in patient care. The AANN accomplishes this mission through strategic planning that focuses on membership, professional development, collaboration, educational activities, as well as the generation and utilization of research.

**INTENT**

The intent of this document is to state the position of the AANN on best neuroscience nursing practice and provide future directions. The focus of this statement is on NURSING practice.

**RATIONALE**

Nursing practice is based on the following:

1. theoretical and practical knowledge (the art of nursing);
2. scientific findings concerning interventions (the science of nursing); and,
3. human responses to actual and potential health problems.

Nurses have a professional obligation to society to provide care that is constantly reviewed, researched, and validated.

Nursing's Agenda for the Future advocated by the American Nurses Association (ANA, 2002) in collaboration with other national nursing groups promotes the unification of nursing organizations to advance the best practices possible.

**PROBLEM STATEMENT**

AANN supports the definition of evidence-based nursing practice as an integration of the best evidence available, nursing expertise, and the values and preferences of the individuals, families, and communities who are served (STTI, 2003).

AANN supports a definition of best neuroscience nursing practice as broad terminology that describes a process of infusing nursing practice with research-based knowledge. Best practices uses care concepts, interventions and techniques that are grounded in research and known to promote higher quality of care (John Hartford Center for Geriatric Nursing Excellence, 2001). Furthermore best practices are seen as a continuum extending from promising initiatives to the application of evidenced-based knowledge.

The scope of best neuroscience nursing practice is acknowledged as encompassing case reports, clinical trials (randomized, controlled; controlled without randomization), benchmarking, experimental studies, meta-analyses, integrated research reviews, guidelines, and professional organization standards.

## **METHODS**

A literature review of Medline and CINAHL databases from January 1994 to January 2004 was conducted taking into account various concepts used to describe best practice. Common terms included best practice, evidenced-based practice, research utilization, evidence-based medicine, evidence-based nursing, and clinical practice guideline. Various Websites were explored including those from professional associations and centered at university/hospital settings.

## **SUMMARY**

The American Association of Neuroscience Nurses supports the following:

1. The use of all knowledge and technology available at any given time to provide best neuroscience nursing practice
2. Use the continuum of neuroscience nursing best practices to guide education programs and research activities

## **REFERENCES**

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