

**Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario – Nursing Best Practice  
Guidelines Program  
Care Transitions  
March 2014**

## Guideline Search Strategy

### 1. Structured Website Search

A member of the RNAO guideline development team (project coordinator) searched an established list of websites for guidelines.

Guidelines were selected based on the following criteria:

- Focus on topic of transitions in care (terms include: care transitions, discharge planning, handovers, hospital to home and community and residential, group home, other transitional facilities such as mental health, rehabilitation, long-term care, transitions) which includes:
  - Assessment
  - Management
  - Client safety and transitions
  - Education or training requirements for nurses
  - Organizational and health-care system responsibilities or support for transitions
- Published no earlier than January, 2002
- Published in English, national and international in scope
- Accessible for retrieval

Websites Searched:

Abstracts for Cochrane Reviews  
 AHRQ: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality  
 AHFMR Health Technology Assessment Publications  
 Bandolier Journal  
 BC Office of Health Technology Assessment  
 British Columbia Council on Clinical Practice Guidelines  
 British Columbia Office of Health Technology Assessment  
 Canadian Cochrane Centre  
 Canadian Coordinating Office for Health Technology Assessment (CCOHTA)  
 Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI)  
 Canadian Medical Association Infobase: Clinical Practice Guidelines  
 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
 Centre for Evidence-Based Mental Health  
 Centre for Evidence-Based Pharmacotherapy  
 Centre for Reviews and Dissemination, York University

Clinical Evidence  
 Evidence-based On-Call  
 Guidelines Advisory Committee  
 Guidelines International Network  
 Health Services/Technology Assessment Texts (HSTAT)  
 Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement  
 Joanna Briggs Institute for Evidence Based Nursing & Midwifery (Australia)  
 Medic8  
 Monash University Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences  
 National Health Service (NHS) Centre for Reviews and Dissemination  
 National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE)  
 National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) & Health Technology  
 Assessment Program  
 New Zealand Guidelines Group  
 Nursing & Midwifery Practice Development Unit  
 Periodic Task Force on Preventive Health Care  
 Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario, Nursing Best Practice Guidelines  
 Royal College of General Practitioners  
 Royal College of Nursing  
 Royal College of Physicians London (RCPL)  
 Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN)  
 SUMSearch 2  
 The Physiotherapy Evidence Database (PEDro)  
 The Qualitative Report  
 The Sarah Cole Hirsh Institute for Best Nursing Practices Based on Evidence  
 TRIP Database  
 University of California, San Francisco  
 Virginia Henderson International Nursing Library

## 2. Hand Search:

RNAO expert panel members were asked to review personal libraries to identify and submit potentially relevant guidelines. Guidelines submitted for consideration by RNAO expert panel members were integrated into the retrieved list of guidelines if they had not been identified by the on-line guideline search and met the inclusion criteria.

## **Systematic Review Search Strategy**

Concurrent with the review of existing guidelines, a systematic review for recent literature relevant to the scope of the guideline was conducted by a health sciences librarian.

**Databases Searched:** Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health (CINAHL), Cochrane Controlled Trials (CT), Cochrane Systematic Reviews (SR), Database of Abstracts of Reviews of Effectiveness (DARE), Embase, ERIC, Medline and PsycINFO.

### **Inclusion Criteria:**

(Initial):

Guidelines were selected based on the following criteria:

- Focus on topic of transitions in care (terms include: care transitions, discharge planning, handovers, hospital to home and community and residential, group home, other transitional facilities such as mental health, rehabilitation, long-term care, transitions) which includes:
  - Assessment
  - Management
  - Client safety and transitions
  - Education or training requirements for nurses
  - Organizational and health-care system responsibilities or support for transitions
- Published no earlier than January, 2002
- Published in English, national and international in scope
- Accessible for retrieval
- Any age
- Any health setting or sector
- Interdisciplinary relevance
- Systematic reviews, RCTs, meta-analysis, higher quality qualitative and quantitative research studies.

(Subsequent\*):

- As per initial inclusion criteria with following exceptions:
  - Limited to meta-analysis, systematic reviews, integrative reviews, randomized controlled trials and qualitative evidence synthesis; and
  - Within the scope of nursing practice (registered nurses and registered practical nurses).

\*Note: Due to the volume of research based on the initial inclusion criteria and subsequent search inclusion criteria for study methodology was changed.

### **Exclusion Criteria:**

- Dissertations, research protocols, commentaries / letters to the editor,

narrative/descriptive papers, lab/pre-clinical studies, incidence/prevalence papers

- Unpublished (grey literature)

## Search Terms

Below are condensed search strategies used for each research question in MEDLINE. Comparable terms were used in all other databases searched.

Question 1: What are the most effective assessment and management strategies to ensure continuity of care and safe optimal client outcomes during care transitions?

Population	Intervention	Limits
Any patient, client, person, individual, consumer, family, caregiver undergoing care transition	Continuity of Patient Care/ Patient Transfer/ Patient Discharge/ Patient Readmission/ transition* adj care; service/discharg* adj2 plan*/ "Outcome and Process Assessment (Health Care)"/ Needs Assessment/ Risk Assessment/ Geriatric Assessment/ Nursing Assessment/ Social Adjustment/ "Patient Acceptance of Health Care"/ Patient Care/ Patient Care Planning/ Patient Care Management/ Patient Education as Topic/ Mass Screening/ Safety/Patient Safety/ Safety Management/ Quality Indicators, Health Care manag*; assess*; reassess* or re-assess*; screen*; evaluate*; measure*; monitor*.mp.	Humans, English Language and yr="2002-2012 Nursing Nurses Nursing Staff Nursing, Practical Nurse's Role Nurse-Patient Relations nurs*.mp. nurs*.jn. nu.fs.

Question 2. What safety and monitoring strategies should be considered to ensure continuity of care and safe optimal client outcomes during care transitions?

Population	Intervention	Limits
Any patient, client, person, individual, consumer, family caregiver undergoing care transition	Continuity of Patient Care/ Patient Transfer/ Patient Discharge/ Patient Readmission/ transition* adj care; service/discharg* adj2 plan*/ "Outcome and Process Assessment (Health Care)"/ Needs Assessment/ Risk Assessment/ Geriatric Assessment/ Nursing Assessment/ Social Adjustment/ "Patient Acceptance of Health Care"/ Patient Care/ Patient Care Planning/ Patient Care Management/ Patient Education as Topic/ Mass Screening/ Safety/Patient Safety/ Safety Management/ Quality Indicators, Health Care manag*; assess*; reassess* or re-assess*; screen*; evaluate*; measure*; monitor*.mp.	Humans, English Language and yr=" 2002-2012" Nursing Nurses Nursing Staff Nursing, Practical Nurse's Role Nurse-Patient Relations nurs*.mp. nurs*.jn. nu.fs.

Question 3: What educational supports do nurses and other health-care providers require to effectively assess and manage client care transitions?

Population	Intervention	Limits
Any patient, client, person, individual, consumer, family, caregiver undergoing care transition	Continuity of Patient Care"/ Patient Transfer/ Patient Discharge/ Patient Readmission/ transition* adj5 care;* adj5 service; discharg* adj2 plan*).mp./ Education/ Education, Professional/ Education, Continuing/ Education, Distance/ Curriculum/ Teaching/ Education Department, Hospital/ Inservice Training/ Preceptorship/ workshop /train*.mp./ profession* adj2 develop*/educat*.	English Language and yr="2002-2012" Students, Nursing Education, Nursing Education, Nursing Baccalaureate Education, Nursing, Diploma Programs Curriculum

Question 4. What organizational characteristics support nurses and other health-care providers to effectively assess and manage client care transitions?

population	Intervention	Limits
Any patient, client, person, individual, consumer, family, caregiver undergoing care transition	"Continuity of Patient Care"/ Patient Transfer/ Patient Discharge/ Patient Readmission/ transition* adj5 care; service; discharge; plan/ policy/ organizational policy/ Policy Making/ Health Education/ Consumer Health Information/ Patient Education as Topic/ Education, Public Health Professional/ Health Educators/ Decision Making/ Decision Making, Organizational/ Patient Satisfaction/ patient care management/ procedur*.mp.	English Language and yr=" 2002-2012" Nursing Nurses Nursing Staff Nursing, Practical Nurse's Role Nurse-Patient Relations nurs*.mp. nurs*.jn. nu.fs.

### Hand Search

RNAO expert panel members were asked to review personal libraries to identify key articles not found through the above search strategies. Articles identified by RNAO expert panel members were included in the search results if two nursing research associates independently determined the articles had not been identified by the literature search and met the inclusion criteria.