

Orientating an IEN

Providing orientation to an IEN varies from how we orientate a Canadian-educated nurse. Typically, this will be the IENs' first experience in a Canadian hospital and the learning curve can be quite steep compared to a Canadian graduate nurse who has completed clinicals/preceptorships within Canadian hospitals. Because of this, IENs are given an additional **180** hours of orientation on top of regular unit orientation.

This toolkit includes information for you to review and to help with a successful orientation. The LPN/RN scope of practice can be quite different across the world. Therefore, the toolkit includes:

- 'Skills list' outlining the basic expected RN and LPN competencies for a Canadian nurse. IENs are encouraged to review the respective competencies with their mentor to identify any new skills the IEN is unfamiliar with.
- Checklist to help with learning opportunities. It is a bit dated. The assigned educator may choose to use an alternative source.
- 'Progress Report' to assist in identifying strengths and areas requiring improvement.
 - The mentor and mentee should fill this out after each set to ensure both are in agreement of next steps.
 - This is a helpful tool to use to assist with communication during the orientation stage.

Tips for Orientating IENs

- Mentors and IEN mentees are encouraged to meet to discuss how they prefer to receive feedback. Giving and receiving constructive feedback is often an area of concern with mentors.
 - Some cultures are ashamed to admit they do not know something. Asking questions can be seen as a sign of disrespect.
 - Try asking why and avoid using 'yes or no' questions. Getting the IEN to talk through tasks, medications, lab results etc. to try to obtain information is a better approach.

For example, if a patient's stats are low. Ask them 'What would you do'. Raise head of bed, deep breath & cough, check for PRN puffers, page RT etc. If they answer with 'call the doctor', try to prompt them on what else we can do as nurses before calling a doctor. By prompting them or asking them to talk through what they are doing will give us a better idea if they are understanding or not. It may take time for them to adjust to this type of thinking especially if they came from a nursing background where the physician is always present, and the nurse strictly follows physician orders. This process will promote the critical thinking competency expected of Canadian nurses.

- Review the Resource Manual for Nurses Mentoring IENs for more valuable information, including how to provide an IEN constructive feedback.
- Review skills list and discuss with the IEN any skills they have not done, for example:
 - Suture/staple removal - this is often a physician function in other countries.
 - Catheterization of the opposite sex - maybe new to the IEN depending on culture.
- Print the checklist to review learning opportunities with the IEN.
- Use the progress report template to document progress after each set of orientation.
- The IEN and the orientating nurse need to complete it. Afterwards have a discussion with the IEN, the manager to discuss and to make a plan for the next set of orientation.