



Holistic Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice

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OBJECTIVES

Theoretical

- Describe the scope of holistic nursing.
- Describe the standards of holistic nursing.
- Discuss the five core values of holistic nursing.

Clinical

- Integrate the principles of holistic nursing into practice.
- Identify how you implement the standards of holistic nursing in your practice.
- Discuss *Holistic Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice* with colleagues.

Personal

- Reflect on your worldview and how it is similar to or different from the philosophy of holism.
- Explore how the concepts of holistic nursing apply to your personal life.

This chapter is derived from the *Holistic Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice* (2007), C. Mariano, primary contributor. Printed with permission of the American Holistic Nurses Association (AHNA) and American Nurses Association (ANA).

DEFINITIONS*

Allopathic/conventional therapies: Medical, surgical, pharmacological, and invasive and noninvasive diagnostic procedures; those interventions most commonly used in allopathic, Western medicine.

Complementary/alternative modalities (CAM): A broad set of healthcare practices, therapies, and modalities that address the whole person—body, mind, emotion, spirit, and environment, not just signs and symptoms—and that can replace or may be used as complements to conventional Western medical, surgical, and pharmacological treatments.

Critical thinking: An active, purposeful, organized cognitive process involving creativity, reflection, problem solving, both rational and intuitive judgment, an attitude of inquiry, and a philosophical orientation toward thinking about thinking.

Cultural competence: The ability to deliver health care with knowledge of and sensitivity to cultural factors that influence the health behavior and the curing, healing, dying, and grieving processes of the person.

* Many of the definitions in this chapter were adapted from *Holistic Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice*, 2007 and from Dossey & Keegan, 2009, with permission.

Environment: The context of habitat within which all living systems participate and interact, including the physical body and its physical habitat along with the cultural, psychological, social, and historical influences; includes both the external physical space and the person's internal physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual experience.

Evidence-based practice: The process by which integrative healthcare practitioners make clinical decisions using the best integrative philosophy and theories, research evidence, clinical expertise, and patient preferences within the context of available resources.

Healing: A lifelong journey into wholeness, seeking harmony and balance in one's own life and in family, community, and global relations. Healing involves those physical, mental, social, and spiritual processes of recovery, repair, renewal, and transformation that increase wholeness and often (though not invariably) order and coherence. Healing is an emergent process of the whole system bringing together aspects of one's self and the body, mind, emotion, spirit, and environment at deeper levels of inner knowing, leading toward integration and balance, with each aspect having equal importance and value. Healing can lead to more complex levels of personal understanding and meaning and may be synchronous but not synonymous with curing.

Healing process: A continual journey of change and the evolving of one's self through life that is characterized by the awareness of patterns that support or that are challenges or barriers to health and healing and that may be done alone or in a healing community.

Healing relationships: The quality and characteristics of interactions between one who facilitates healing and the person in the process of healing. Characteristics of such interactions involve empathy, caring, love, warmth, trust, confidence, credibility, competence, honesty, courtesy, respect, sharing expectations, and good communication.

Healing system: A true healthcare system in which people can receive adequate, non-toxic, and noninvasive assistance in main-

taining wellness and healing for body, mind, emotion, and spirit, together with the most sophisticated, aggressive curing technologies available.

Health: An individually defined state or process in which the individual (nurse, client, family, group, or community) experiences a sense of well-being, harmony, and unity such that subjective experiences about health, health beliefs, and values are honored; a process of becoming an expanding consciousness.

Health promotion: Activities and preventive measures to promote health, increase well-being, and actualize the human potential of people, families, communities, society, and ecology; such activities and measures include immunizations, fitness and exercise programs, breast self-exam, appropriate nutrition, relaxation, stress management, social support, prayer, meditation, healing rituals, cultural practices, and promoting environmental health and safety.

Holistic communication: A free flow of verbal and nonverbal interchange between and among people and significant beings such as pets, nature, and God/Life Force/Absolute/Transcendent that explores meaning and ideas leading to mutual understanding and growth.

Holistic ethics: The basic underlying concept of the unity and integral wholeness of all people and of all nature, identified and pursued by finding unity and wholeness within the self and within humanity. In this framework, acts are not performed for the sake of law, precedent, or social norms, but rather from a desire to do good freely to witness, identify, and contribute to unity.

Holistic healing: A form of healing based on attention to all aspects of an individual—physical, mental, emotional, sexual, cultural, social, and spiritual.

Holistic nurse: A nurse who recognizes and integrates body-mind-emotion-spirit-environment principles and modalities in daily life and clinical practice, creates a caring healing space within herself or himself that allows the nurse to be an instrument

of healing, shares authenticity of unconditional presence that helps to remove the barriers to the healing process, facilitates another person's growth (body-mind-emotion-spirit-energetic-environment connections), and assists with recovery from illness or transition to peaceful death.

Holistic nursing practice process: An iterative and integrative process that involves six steps that can occur simultaneously: (1) assessing; (2) diagnosing or identifying patterns, challenges, needs, and health issues; (3) identifying outcomes; (4) planning care; (5) implementing the plan of care; and (6) evaluating.

Honor: An act or intention indicating the holding of self or another in high respect, esteem, and dignity, including valuing and accepting the humanity of people with regard for the decisions and wishes of another.

Human caring: The moral ideal of nursing in which the nurse brings one's whole self into a relationship with the whole self of the person being cared for to protect that person's vulnerability, preserve her or his humanity and dignity, and reinforce the meaning and experience of oneness and unity.

Human health experience: That totality of human experience including each person's subjective experience about health, health beliefs, values, sexual orientation, and personal preferences that encompasses health-wellness-disease-illness-death.

Illness: A subjective experience of symptoms and suffering to which the individual ascribes meaning and significance; not synonymous with disease; a shift in the homeodynamic balance of the person.

Intention: The conscious awareness of being in the present moment to help facilitate the healing process; a volitional act of love.

Interdisciplinary: Conversation or collaboration across disciplines where knowledge is shared that informs learning, practice, education, and research; it includes individuals, families, community members, and various disciplines.

Meaning: That which is signified, indicated, referred to, or understood. More specifi-

cally: Philosophical meaning is meaning that depends on the symbolic connections that are grasped by reason. Psychological meaning is meaning that depends on connections that are experienced through intuition or insight.

Patient-centered care: Care that is respectful of and responsive to individual patient preferences, needs, and values, and that ensures that patient values guide all clinical decisions. Patient-centered care encompasses identifying, respecting, and caring about patients' differences, values, preferences, and expressed needs; relieving pain and suffering; coordinating continuous care/listening to, clearly informing, communicating with, and educating patients; sharing decision making and management; and continuously advocating disease prevention, wellness, and promotion of healthy lifestyles, including a focus on population health.¹

Person: An individual, client, patient, family member, support person, or community member who has the opportunity to engage in interaction with a holistic nurse.

Person-centered care: The human caring process in which the holistic nurse gives full attention and intention to the whole self of a person, not merely the current presenting symptoms, illness, crisis, or tasks to be accomplished, and that also includes reinforcing the person's meaning and experience of oneness and unity; the condition of trust that is created in which holistic care can be given and received.

Presence: The essential state or core of healing; approaching an individual in a way that respects and honors her or his essence; relating in a way that reflects a quality of being with and in collaboration with rather than doing to; entering into a shared experience (or field of consciousness) that promotes healing potential and an experience of well-being.

Relationship-centered care: A process model of caregiving that is based in a vision of community where three types of relationships are identified: (1) patient-practitioner relationship, (2) community-practitioner relationship, and (3) practitioner-practitioner relationship.

Each of these interrelated relationships is essential within a reformed integrative healthcare delivery system in a hospital, clinic, community, or in the home. Each component involves a unique set of responsibilities and tasks that addresses the three areas of knowledge, values, and skills.²

Spirituality: The feelings, thoughts, experiences, and behaviors that arise from a search for meaning; that which is generally considered sacred or holy; usually, though not universally, considered to involve a sense of connection with an absolute, imminent, or transcendent spiritual force, however named, as well as the conviction that meaning, value, direction, and purpose are valid aspects of the individual and universe; the essence of being and relatedness that permeates all of life and is manifested in one's knowing, doing, and being; the interconnectedness with self, others, nature, and God/Life Force/Absolute/Transcendent; not necessarily synonymous with religion.

Transpersonal: A personal understanding that is based on one's experiences of temporarily transcending or moving beyond one's usual identification with the limited biological, historical, cultural, and personal self at the deepest and most profound levels of experience possible; that which transcends the limits and boundaries of individual ego identities and possibilities to include acknowledgment and appreciation of something greater. From this perspective the ordinary, biological, historical, cultural, and personal self is seen as an important, but only a partial, manifestation or expression of this much greater something that is one's deeper origin and destination.

Wellness: Integrated, congruent functioning aimed toward reaching one's highest potential.

■ SCOPE AND STANDARDS OF HOLISTIC NURSING PRACTICE

Extraordinary changes have occurred in health care and nursing during the past decade. During this time, holistic nurses recognized that not only

were they practicing a unique specialty within nursing, but that they needed to develop and publish standards of practice to document and define that specialty practice. Holistic nursing was officially recognized as a distinct specialty within the discipline of Nursing by the American Nurses Association (ANA) in November 2006. The current American Holistic Nurses Association (AHNA) *Holistic Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice* (2007) was written to inform holistic nurses, the nursing profession, students and faculty, other healthcare providers and disciplines, employers, third-party payers, legislators, and the public about the unique scope of knowledge and the standards of practice and professional performance of a holistic nurse.³ The current standards are an updated and substantive revision of previous standards disseminated through the AHNA.* See Appendix 2-1 for development of the original *Holistic Standards of Practice: Basic and Graduate*, and see Appendix 2-2 for select works of individuals and AHNA documents.

Function of the Scope of Practice Statement of Holistic Nursing

The scope of practice statement describes the who, what, where, when, why, and how of the practice of holistic nursing.^{3,4} The answers to these questions provide a picture of that specialty nursing practice, its boundaries, and its membership.

Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice, 2nd ed. (2010) applies to all professional registered nurses (RNs) engaged in practice, regardless of specialty, practice setting, or educational preparation.⁴ With the *Guide to the Code of Ethics for Nurses: Interpretation and Application*⁵ and *Nursing's Social Policy Statement: The Essence of the Profession*,⁶ it forms the foundation of practice for all registered nurses. The scope of holistic nursing practice is specific to this specialty, but it builds on the scope of practice expected of all registered nurses.

* To obtain a complete copy of *Holistic Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice* (2007), contact the American Holistic Nurses Association (AHNA), 323 N. San Francisco Street, Suite 201, Flagstaff, AZ 86001; 1-800-278-2462 or 1-928-526-2196; www.ahna.org or www.info@ahna.org.

Function of the Standards of Holistic Nursing

“The Standards of Professional Nursing Practice are authoritative statements of the duties that all registered nurses, regardless of role, population, or specialty, are expected to perform competently.”⁴

Standards reflect the values and priorities of the profession. Standards provide direction for professional nursing practice and a framework for evaluation of this practice. Written in measurable terms, these standards define the nursing profession’s accountability to the public and the outcomes for which registered nurses are responsible.³

The standards of holistic nursing practice are specific to this specialty but build on the standards of practice expected of all registered nurses.

The current *Holistic Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice* (2007) presents a differentiation between practice at the basic and advanced practice levels. The *Scope and Standards* are organized according to the criteria ANA uses in recognizing a nursing specialty area and build on nursing knowledge, skills, and competencies required for licensure.^{7,8} The *Holistic Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice* (2007) provides a blueprint for holistic practice, education, and research. The standards guide clinicians, educators, researchers, nurse managers, and administrators in professional activities, knowledge, and performance that are relevant to holistic nursing basic and advanced practice, education, research, and management. Because holistic nursing emphasizes that human experiences are subjectively described and that health and illness are determined by the view of the individual, the *Holistic Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice* (2007) are derived from values that are central to the specialty and are consistent with the philosophies and theories of holism.

Evolution of Holistic Nursing

Holism in health care is a philosophy that emanates directly from Florence Nightingale, who believed in care that focused on unity, wellness, and the interrelationship of human beings, events, and environment. Even Hippocrates, the

father of Western medicine, espoused a holistic orientation when he taught doctors to observe their patients’ life circumstances and emotional states. Socrates stated, “Curing the soul; that is the first thing.” In holism, symptoms are believed to be an expression of the body’s wisdom as it reacts to cure its own imbalance or disease.

The root of the word *heal* comes from the Greek word *halos* and the Anglo-Saxon word *healan*, which means “to be or to become whole.” The word *holy* also comes from the same source. Healing means “making whole”—or restoring balance and harmony. It is movement toward a sense of wholeness and completion. Healing, therefore, is the integration of the totality of the person in body, mind, emotion, spirit, and environment.

One of the driving forces behind the holistic nursing movement in the United States was the formation of the AHNA. In 1981, founder Charlotte McGuire and 75 founding members began the national organization in Houston, Texas. The national office is now located in Flagstaff, Arizona. The AHNA’s mission is to advance the philosophy and practices of holistic nursing and unite nurses in healing with a focus on holistic principles of health, preventive education, and the integration of allopathic and complementary caring and healing modalities to facilitate care of the whole person and significant others. From its inception in 1981, the AHNA has been the leader in developing and advancing holistic principles, practices, and guidelines. The association predicted that holistic principles, caring and healing, and the integration of complementary and alternative therapies would emerge into mainstream health care.

The AHNA, the definitive voice for holistic nursing, has as its vision “a world in which nursing nurtures wholeness and inspires peace and healing.” The mission of the AHNA is to advance holistic nursing through community building, advocacy, research, and education. It is committed to promoting wholeness and wellness in individuals, families, communities, nurses themselves, the nursing profession, and the environment. Through its various activities, AHNA provides vision, direction, and leadership in the advancement of holistic nursing; integrates the art and science of nursing in the profession; empowers holistic nursing through education,

research, and standards; encourages nurses to be models of wellness; honors individual excellence in the advancement of holistic nursing; and influences policy to change the healthcare system to a more humanistic orientation.

The goals and endeavors of AHNA have continued to map conceptual frameworks and the blueprint for holistic nursing practice, education, and research, which is the most complete way to conceptualize and practice professional nursing. Beginning in 1993, AHNA undertook an organization development process that included the following areas:

- Identifying the steps toward national certification in 1993–1994.
- Revising the 1990 Standards of Holistic Nursing Practice, completed in 1995.
- Completing a role delineation study, the Inventory of Professional Activities and Knowledge Statements of a Holistic Nurse (also known as the IPAKHN Survey) in 1997.
- Developing a national holistic nursing certification examination, completed in 1997.
- Completing major revisions of the 1995 Standards of Holistic Nursing Practice in 1999, with additional editorial changes in January 2000 and 2005.
- Developing a core curriculum for basic holistic nursing based on the basic standards (1997).
- Approving and adopting Standards of Advanced Holistic Nursing Practice for Graduate-Prepared Nurses (2002, revised 2005).
- Developing a core curriculum for advanced holistic nursing based on the advanced standards (2003). The American Holistic Nurses Certification Corporation (AHNCC) then developed the Certification Exam for Advanced Holistic Nursing Practice first offered in 2005.
- Revising both the basic and advanced Standards of Holistic Nursing Practice to meet ANA criteria for recognition of holistic nursing as a specialty (2006, 2007).

■ SCOPE OF HOLISTIC NURSING

Holistic nursing is defined as “all nursing practice that has healing the whole person as its goal.”⁹ Holistic nursing is a specialty practice that draws

on nursing knowledge, theories of nursing and wholeness, expertise and intuition to guide nurses in becoming therapeutic partners with people in strengthening human responses to facilitate the healing process and achieve wholeness. Holistic nursing focuses on protecting, promoting, and optimizing health and wellness; assisting healing; preventing illness and injury; alleviating suffering; and supporting people to find peace, comfort, harmony, and balance through the diagnosis and treatment of human response.

Holistic nursing care is healing oriented and centered on the relationship with the person in contrast to an orientation toward diseases and their cures. Holistic nursing emphasizes practices of self-care, intentionality, presence, mindfulness, and therapeutic use of self as pivotal for facilitation of healing and patterning of wellness in others. In some sense, all nursing practice can be comprehensive, that is, all nursing practice may have a biopsychosocial perspective. What makes holistic nursing practice a specialty is that there is a philosophy, a body of knowledge, and an advanced set of nursing skills applied to practice that recognize the totality of the human being and the interconnectedness of body, mind, emotion, spirit, energy, society, culture, relationships, context, and environment. Philosophically, holistic nursing is a worldview, a way of being in the world, not just a modality. This philosophy honors the unique humanness of all people regardless of who and what they are. Knowledge for holistic nursing practice derives not only from nursing, but from theories of wholeness, energy, and unity as well as from other healing systems and approaches. Holistic nurses incorporate both conventional nursing and complementary/alternative/integrative modalities (CAM) and interventions into practice.

Through unconditional presence and intention, holistic nurses create environments conducive to healing, using techniques that promote empowerment, peace, comfort, and a subjective sense of harmony and well-being for the person. The holistic nurse acts in partnership with the individual or family in providing options and alternatives regarding health and treatment. Additionally, the holistic nurse assists the person to find meaning in the health and illness experience.

Holistic nursing focuses on simultaneously integrating as an iterative process all of these realms: a philosophy of being and living, using theories of nursing and wholeness with related knowledge and skills, focusing on the unity and totality of humans, incorporating healing approaches, creating healing environments, partnering with and empowering individuals, and assisting in the exploration of meaning in the care of people. In holistic nursing, the nurse is the facilitator of healing, honoring that the person heals him- or herself. The holistic nurse assists individuals in identifying themselves as the healer and accessing their own innate healing capacities.

The practice of holistic nursing requires nurses to integrate self-care and self-responsibility into their own lives and to serve as role models for others. Holistic nurses strive for an awareness of the interconnectedness of individuals to the human and global community. Thus, holistic nurses also attend to the health of the ecosystem.

Holistic nurses are instruments of healing and facilitators in the healing process. They honor the individual's subjective experience of health, health beliefs, and values. To become therapeutic partners with individuals, families, communities, and populations, holistic nurses draw on nursing knowledge, theories, research, expertise, intuition, and creativity incorporating the roles of clinician, educator, consultant, coach, partner, role model, and advocate. Holistic nursing

practice encourages peer review of professional practice in various clinical settings and provides care based on current professional standards, laws, and regulations that govern nursing practice. The major phenomena of concern to holistic nursing are listed in **Table 2-1**.

The Core Values of Holistic Nursing: Integrating and the Art and Science of Nursing

Holistic nursing emanates from five core values summarizing the ideals and principles of the specialty. These core values are listed here and then are discussed:

1. Philosophy, Theory, and Ethics
2. Holistic Caring Process
3. Holistic Communication, Therapeutic Environment, and Cultural Diversity
4. Holistic Education and Research
5. Holistic Nurse Self-Care

Core Value 1: Holistic Philosophy, Theory, and Ethics

Holistic nurses (HNs) recognize the human health experience as a complicated, dynamic relationship of health, illness, and wellness, and they value healing as the desired outcome of the practice of nursing. Their practice is based on scientific foundations (theory, research, evidence-based practice, critical thinking, reflection) and

TABLE 2-1 Phenomena of Concern to Holistic Nursing

- The caring–healing relationship
- The subjective experience of and meanings ascribed to health, illness, wellness, healing, birth, growth and development, and dying
- The cultural values and beliefs and folk practices of health, illness, and healing
- Spirituality in nursing care
- The evaluation of complementary/alternative modalities used in nursing practice
- Comprehensive health promotion and disease prevention
- Self-care processes
- Physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual comfort, discomfort, and pain
- Empowerment, decision making, and the ability to make informed choices
- Social and economic policies and their effects on the health of individuals, families, and communities
- Diverse and alternative healthcare systems and their relationships with access and quality of health care
- The environment and the prevention of disease

art (relationship, communication, creativity, presence, caring). Holistic nursing is grounded in nursing knowledge and skill and guided by nursing theory. Florence Nightingale's writings are often referenced as a significant precursor of the development of holistic nursing. Although each holistic nurse chooses which nursing theory to apply in any individual case, the nursing theories of Jean Watson (the Theory of Human Caring), Martha Rogers (the Science of Unitary Human Beings), Margaret Newman (Health as Expanding Consciousness), Madeleine Leininger (Theory of Cultural Care), Rosemarie Rizzo Parse (Theory of Human Becoming), Josephine Paterson and Loretta Zderad (Humanistic Nursing Theory), and Helen Erickson (Modeling and Role-Modeling) are most frequently used to support holistic nursing practice.

In addition to nursing theory, holistic nurses use other theories and perspectives of wholeness and healing to guide their practice. These scientific theories and philosophies present a worldview of connectedness. Examples include the following:

- Theories of Consciousness
- Energy Field Theory
- C. Pribram's Holographic Universe
- D. Bohm's Implicate/Explicate Order
- C. Pert's Psychoneuroimmunology
- K. Wilber's Integral Vision and Unified Field Theory of Consciousness
- Spirituality
- Alternative medical systems such as Traditional Oriental Medicine, Ayurveda, Native American, and indigenous healing
- Eastern contemplative orientations such as Zen Buddhism and Taoism

Holistic nurses further recognize and honor the ethic that the person is the authority on his or her own health experience. The holistic nurse is an "option giver" and helps the person develop an understanding of alternatives and implications of various health and treatment options. The holistic nurse first ascertains what the individual thinks or believes is happening to him/her, and then assists the person to identify what will help the situation. The assessment begins from where the individual is. The holistic nurse then discusses options, including the person's

choices across a continuum and the possible effects and implications of each. For instance, if a person diagnosed with cancer is experiencing nausea caused by chemotherapy, the individual and nurse may discuss the choices and effects of pharmacologic agents, imagery, homeopathic remedies, and so on, or a combination of these. The holistic nurse acts as partner and coprescriber versus sole prescriber. The relationship is a copiloting of the individual's health experience where the nurse respects the person's decision about his or her own health. It is a process of engagement versus compliance.

Client narratives, whether they arise from individuals, families, or communities, provide the context of the experiences and are used as an important focus in understanding the person's situation. Holistic nurses hold the belief that people, through their inherent capacities, heal themselves. Therefore, the holistic nurse is not the healer but the guide and facilitator of the individual's own healing.

In the belief that all things are connected, the holistic perspective espouses that an individual's actions have a ripple effect throughout humanity. Holism places the greatest worth on individuals' developing higher levels of human awareness. This, in turn, elevates the whole of humanity. Holistic nurses believe in the sacredness of one's self and of all nature. One's inner self and the collective greater self have stewardship not only over one's body, mind, and spirit but also the planet. Holistic nurses focus on the meaning and quality of life deriving from their own character and from their relationship to the universe rather than that imposed from without.

Holistic nurses hold to a professional ethic of caring and healing that seeks to preserve the wholeness and dignity of the self and others. They support human dignity by advocating and adhering to the Patient Bill of Rights,¹⁰ the ANA *Guide to the Code of Ethics for Nurses: Interpretation and Application*,⁵ and the AHNA Position Statement on Holistic Nursing Ethics.¹¹

Core Value 2: Caring Process

Holistic nurses provide care that recognizes the totality of the human being (the interconnectedness of body, mind, emotion, spirit, society, culture, relationships, context, and environment).

This is an integrated as well as comprehensive approach. Although physical symptoms are treated, holistic nurses also focus on how the individual cognitively perceives and emotionally deals with the illness; the illness's effect on the person's family, social relationships, and economic resources; the person's values and cultural and spiritual beliefs and preferences regarding treatment; and the meaning of this experience to the person's life. In addition, holistic nurses may also incorporate a number of modalities (e.g., cognitive restructuring, stress management, visualization, aromatherapy, therapeutic touch) with conventional nursing interventions. Holistic nurses focus on care interventions that promote healing, peace, comfort, and a subjective sense of well-being for the person.

The holistic caring process involves six often simultaneously occurring steps: assessment, diagnosis (pattern, problem, need identification), outcomes, therapeutic plan of care, implementation, and evaluation. Holistic nurses apply the holistic caring process in all settings with individuals and families across the life span, population groups, and communities.

Holistic nurses incorporate a variety of roles in their practice, including expert clinician and facilitator of healing; consultant, coach, and collaborator; educator and guide; administrator, leader, and change agent; researcher; and advocate. Holistic nurses strongly emphasize partnership with individuals throughout the entire decision-making process. Holistic assessments include not only physical, functional, psychosocial, mental, emotional, cultural, and sexual aspects, but also the spiritual, transpersonal, and energy field assessments of the whole person. Energy assessments are based on the concept that all beings are composed of energy. Congestion or stagnation of energy in any realm creates disharmony and disease. Spiritual assessments glean not only religious beliefs and practices but query a person's meaning and purpose in life and how these may have changed because of the present health experience. Spiritual assessments also include questions about an individual's sense of serenity and peace, what provides joy and fulfillment, and the source of strength and hope.

Holistic assessment data are interpreted into patterns, challenges, and needs from which mean-

ing and understanding of the health and disease experience can be mutually identified with the person. Holistic nurses first ask an individual, "What do you think is going on (happening) with you?" and then, "What do you think would help?" Another important responsibility of the holistic nurse is to help the person identify risk factors such as lifestyle, habits, beliefs and values, personal and family health history, and age-related conditions that influence health, and then to find and use opportunities to increase well-being. The focus is on the individual's goals, not the nurse's.

Therapeutic plans of care respect the person's experience and the uniqueness of each healing journey. The same illness may have very different manifestations in different individuals. A major aspect of holistic nursing practice, in addition to competence, is intention. That is, the nurse intends for the wholeness, well-being, and highest good of the person in every encounter and intervention. This intention honors and reinforces the innate capacity of people to heal themselves. Therefore, holistic nurses respect that outcomes may not be those expected and may evolve differently based on the person's individual healing process and health choices. Holistic nurses endeavor to detach themselves from the outcomes. The nurse does not produce the outcomes; the individual's own healing process produces the outcomes, and the nurse facilitates this process. A significant focus of the holistic nurse is on guiding individuals and significant others to use their inner strength and resources through the course of healing.

Holistic nurses consistently provide appropriate and evidence-based information (including current knowledge, practice, and research) regarding the health condition and various treatments and therapies and their side effects. Holistic care always occurs within the scope and standards of practice of registered nursing and in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations.

Holistic nurses integrate complementary/alternative modalities (CAM) into clinical practice to treat people's physiologic, psychological, and spiritual needs. Doing so does not negate the validity of conventional medical therapies but serves to complement, broaden, and enrich the scope of nursing practice and to help individuals access their greatest healing potential. Holistic

nurses advocate for integration rather than separation. The National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine has categorized CAM approaches and these are identified in **Table 2-2**.

Therapies frequently incorporated in holistic nursing practice include the following inter-

ventions: meditation; relaxation therapy; breath work; music, art, and aroma therapies; energy-based touch therapies such as therapeutic touch, healing touch, and Reiki; acupressure; massage; guided imagery; hypnotherapy; animal-assisted therapy; biofeedback; prayer; reflexology; diet;

TABLE 2-2 Categories of Complementary/Alternative Modalities (CAM) Therapies

In the context of this chapter, these descriptive categories encompass generally, but not exhaustively, those therapies described as alternative or complementary.

Natural products. This area includes substances found in nature such as a variety of herbal medicines (also known as botanicals), vitamins, minerals, whole diet therapies, and other “natural products.” Many are sold over the counter as dietary supplements. (Some uses of dietary supplements—e.g., taking a multivitamin to meet minimum daily nutritional requirements or taking calcium to promote bone health—are not thought of as CAM.) CAM “natural products” also include probiotics—live microorganisms (usually bacteria) that are similar to microorganisms normally found in the human digestive tract and that may have beneficial effects. Probiotics are available in foods (e.g., yogurts) or as dietary supplements.

Mind–body medicine. Mind–body practices focus on the interactions among the brain, mind, body, and behavior, with the intent to use the mind to affect physical functioning and promote health. Many CAM practices embody this concept—in different ways. Some techniques that were considered CAM in the past have become mainstream (for example, patient support groups, psychotherapy, cognitive-behavioral therapy). Mind–body techniques include meditation, relaxation, imagery, hypnotherapy, yoga, biofeedback, and Tai Chi. Other therapies are autogenic training, spirituality, prayer, mental healing, and therapies that use creative outlets such as art, music, dance, or journaling. Acupuncture is considered to be a part of mind–body medicine, but it is also a component of energy medicine, manipulative and body-based practices, and traditional Chinese medicine.

Manipulative and body-based practices. Manipulative and body-based practices focus primarily on the structures and systems of the body, including the bones and joints, soft tissues, and circulatory and lymphatic systems. Two commonly used therapies fall within this category: spinal manipulation including Chiropractic or osteopathic manipulation, and massage.

Movement therapies. CAM also encompasses movement therapies—a broad range of Eastern and Western movement-based approaches used to promote physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being. Examples include Feldenkrais method, Alexander technique, Pilates, Roling Structural Integration, and Trager psychophysical integration.

Practices of traditional healers. Traditional healers use methods based on indigenous theories, beliefs, and experiences handed down from generation to generation. Examples include Native American healer/medicine man, African, Middle Eastern, Tibetan, Central and South American, and Curanderismo.

Energy therapies. Some CAM practices involve manipulation of various energy fields to affect health. Such fields may be characterized as veritable (measurable) or putative (yet to be measured). Practices based on veritable forms of energy include those involving electromagnetic fields (e.g., magnet therapy, light therapy, or alternating-current or direct-current fields). Practices based on putative energy fields (also called biofields) generally reflect the concept that human beings are infused with subtle forms of energy. Some forms of energy therapy manipulate biofields by applying pressure, such as acupressure and manipulating the body by placing the hands in or through these fields. Examples include Gong, Reiki, therapeutic touch, and healing touch.

Whole medical systems. Complete systems of theory and practice that have evolved over time in different cultures and apart from conventional or Western medicine, may be considered CAM. Examples of ancient whole medical systems include Ayurvedic medicine and Traditional Chinese medicine. More modern systems that have developed in the past few centuries include Homeopathy and Naturopathy.

Source: National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, National Institutes of Health (2011); <http://nccam.nih.gov>.

herbology; and homeopathy. Other interventions frequently employed in holistic nursing practice in addition to conventional nursing interventions include anxiety reduction and stress management, calming techniques, emotional support, exercise and nutrition promotion, smoking cessation, patient contracting, resiliency promotion, forgiveness facilitation, hope installation, presence, journaling, counseling, cognitive therapy, self-help, spiritual support, and environmental management.¹²

Because many of today's healthcare problems are stress related, holistic nurses empower individuals by teaching them techniques to reduce their stress. Many interventions used in holistic nursing elicit the relaxation response (e.g., breath work, meditation, relaxation, imagery, aromatherapy and essential oils, and diet). People can learn these therapies and use them without the intervention of a healthcare provider. This allows people to take an active role in the management of their own health care. Holistic nurses also can teach families and caregivers to use these techniques for loved ones who may be ill (e.g., simple foot or hand massage for older clients with dementia). In addition, individuals are taught how to evaluate their own responses to these modalities.

Holistic nurses prescribe as legally authorized. They instruct individuals regarding drug, herbal, and homeopathic regimens, and, just as important, they consult on the side effects and interactions between medications and herbs. They consult, collaborate, and refer, as necessary, to both conventional allopathic providers and to holistic practitioners. They provide information and counseling to people about alternative, complementary, integrative, and conventional healthcare practices. Very important, holistic nurses facilitate negotiation of services as they guide individuals and families between conventional Western medicine and alternative systems. Holistic nurses, in partnership with the individual and others, evaluate whether care is effective and whether changes in the meaning of the health experience occur for the individual.

Core Value 3: Holistic Communication, Therapeutic Environment, and Cultural Diversity

The holistic nurse's communication ensures that each individual experiences the presence of the nurse as authentic, caring, compassionate, and

sincere. This is more than offering therapeutic techniques such as responding, reflecting, summarizing, and so on. This is deep listening, or as some say "listening with the heart and not just the ears." It is done with conscious intention and without preconceptions, busy-ness, distractions, or analysis. It takes place in the "now" within an atmosphere of shared humanness—human being to human being. Through presence or "being within the moment," holistic nurses provide each person with an interpersonal encounter that the individual can experience as a connection with one who is giving undivided attention to his or her needs and concerns. Using unconditional positive regard, holistic nurses convey to the individual receiving care the belief in his or her worth and value as a human being, not solely as a recipient of medical and nursing interventions.

The holistic nurse recognizes the importance of context in understanding the person's health experience. Space and time are allowed for exploration. Each person's health encounter is truly seen as unique and may be contrary to conventional knowledge and treatments. Therefore, the holistic nurse must be comfortable with ambiguity, paradox, and uncertainty. This requires a perspective that the nurse is not "the expert" regarding another's health and illness experience but is actually a "learner."

Holistic nurses have a knowledge base of the use and meanings of symbolic language and use interventions such as imagery, creation of sacred space and personal rituals, dream exploration, and aesthetic therapies such as music, visual arts, and dance. They encourage and support others in the use of prayer, meditation, and other spiritual and symbolic practices for healing purposes.

A cornerstone of holistic nursing practice is assisting individuals to find meaning in their experience. Regardless of the person's condition, the meaning that individuals ascribe to their situation can influence their response to it. Holistic nurses attend to the subjective world of the individual. They consider meanings such as the person's concerns in relation to health and family economics, as well as deeper meanings related to the person's purpose in life. Regardless of the technology or treatment, holistic nurses address the human spirit as a major force in healing. Each person's perception of meaning is related to all factors in health-wellness-disease-illness.

Holistic nurses realize that suffering, illness, and disease are natural components of the human condition and have the potential to teach us about ourselves, our relationships, and our universe. Every experience is valued for its meaning and lesson.

Holistic nurses have a particular obligation to create a therapeutic environment that values holism, caring, social support, and integration of conventional and CAM approaches to healing. They seek to create environments where individuals, both clients and staff, feel connected, supported, and respected. A particular perspective of holistic nursing is the nurse as the “healing environment” and “an instrument of healing.” Holistic nurses shape the physical environment (e.g., light, fresh air, pleasant sounds or quiet, neatness and order, healing smells, earth elements). And they provide a relationship-focused environment by creating sacred space through presence and intention where another can feel safe, can unfold, and can explore the dimensions of self in healing.

Culture, beliefs, and values are inherent components of a holistic approach. Concepts of health and healing are based in culture and often influence people’s actions to promote, maintain, and restore health. Culture also may provide an understanding of a person’s concept of illness or disease and appropriate treatment. Holistic nurses possess knowledge and understanding of numerous cultural traditions and healthcare practices from various racial, ethnic, and social backgrounds. However, holistic nurses honor the individual’s understanding and articulation of his or her own cultural values, beliefs, and health practices rather than relying on stereotypical cultural classifications and descriptions. The nurse then uses these understandings to provide culturally competent care that corresponds with the beliefs, values, traditions, and health practices of people. Holistic nurses ask individuals, “What do I need to know about you culturally in caring for you?”

Holistic healing is a collaborative approach. Holistic nurses take an active role in trying to remove the political and financial barriers to the inclusion of holistic care in the healthcare system. Of particular importance to holistic nurses is the human connection with the ecology.

Holistic nurses actively participate in building an ecosystem that sustains the well-being of all life. This includes raising the public’s consciousness about environmental issues and stressors that affect not only the health of people but the health of the planet.

Core Value 4: Holistic Education and Research

Holistic nurses possess an understanding of a wide range of norms and healthcare practices, beliefs, and values concerning individuals, families, groups, and communities from a variety of racial, ethnic, spiritual, and social backgrounds. This rich knowledge base reflects their formal academic and continuing education preparation. Their knowledge also includes a wide diversity of practices and modalities outside of conventional Western medicine. Because of this, holistic nurses have a significant impact on peoples’ understanding of healthcare options and alternatives, thus serving as both educators and advocates.

Additionally, holistic nurses provide much needed information to individuals on health promotion including such topics as healthy lifestyles, risk-reducing behaviors, preventive self-care, stress management, living with changes secondary to illness and treatment, and opportunities to enhance well-being.

Holistic nurses value all the ways of knowing and learning. They individualize learning and appreciate that science, intuition, introspection, creativity, aesthetics, and culture produce different bodies of knowledge and perspectives. They help others to know themselves and access their inner wisdom to enhance growth, wholeness, and well-being.

Holistic nurses often guide individuals and families in their healthcare decisions, especially regarding conventional allopathic and complementary/alternative practices. Therefore, holistic nurses must be knowledgeable about the best evidence available for both conventional and CAM therapies. In addition to developing evidence-based practice using research, practice guidelines, and expertise, holistic nurses strongly consider the person’s values and healthcare practices and beliefs in practice decisions.

Holistic nurses look at alternative philosophies of science and research methods that are

compatible with investigations of humanistic and holistic occurrences, that explore the context in which phenomena occur and the meaning of patterns that evolve, and that take into consideration the interactive nature of the body, mind, emotion, spirit, and environment.

Holistic nurses conduct and evaluate research in such diverse areas as follows:

- Outcome measures of holistic therapies such as therapeutic touch, prayer, and aromatherapy
- Instrument development to measure caring behaviors and dimensions; spirituality; self-transcendence; cultural competence, and so forth
- Client responses to holistic interventions in health and illness
- Explorations of clients' lived experiences with various health/illness phenomena
- Theory development in healing, caring, intentionality, cultural constructions, empowerment, and so forth

Further, research that advances the work of holistic nursing theories (Watson, Rogers, Newman, Parse, Erickson, and Leninger) helps to build the knowledge base of nursing and advance the nursing science of holism. The AHNA has incorporated an active research agenda by assisting and mentoring members in research endeavors, granting research awards, identifying and reporting on research that focuses on holistic healing phenomena and modalities, and applying research in practice.

Core Value 5: Holistic Nurse Self-Care

Self-care as well as personal awareness and continual focus on being an instrument of healing are significant requirements for holistic nurses. Holistic nurses value themselves and mobilize the necessary resources to care for themselves. They endeavor to integrate self-awareness, self-care, and self-healing into their lives by incorporating practices such as self-assessment, meditation, yoga, good nutrition, energy therapies, movement, art, support, and lifelong learning. Holistic nurses honor their unique patterns and the development of the body, the psychosocial and cultural self, the intellectual self, the energetic self, and the spiritual self. Nurses

cannot facilitate healing unless they are in the process of healing themselves. Through continuing education, practice, and self-work, holistic nurses develop the skills of authentic and deep self-reflection and introspection to understand themselves and their journey. It is seen as a life-long process.

Holistic nurses strive to achieve harmony and balance in their own lives and assist others to do the same. They create healing environments for themselves by attending to their own well-being, letting go of self-destructive behaviors and attitudes, and practicing centering and stress-reduction techniques. By doing this, holistic nurses serve as role models to others, be they clients, colleagues, or personal relations.

■ STANDARDS OF HOLISTIC NURSING PRACTICE

Overarching Philosophical Principles of Holistic Nursing

Holistic nurses express, contribute to, and promote an understanding of the following: a philosophy of nursing that values healing as the desired outcome; the human health experience as a complex, dynamic relationship of health, illness, disease, and wellness; the scientific foundations of nursing practice; and nursing as an art. Holistic nursing is based on the following overarching philosophical tenets that are embedded in every standard of practice. The following principles underlie holistic nursing:

Person

- There is unity, totality, and connectedness of everyone and everything (body, mind, emotion, spirit, sexuality, age, environment, society, culture, belief systems, relationships, and context).
- Human beings are unique and inherently good.
- People are able to find meaning and purpose in their own lives, experiences, and illnesses.
- All people have an innate power and capacity for self-healing. Health and illness are subjectively described and determined by the view of the individual. Therefore, the person is honored in all phases of his or her

healing process regardless of expectations or outcomes.

- Various people are the recipients of holistic nursing services: clients, patients, families, significant others, populations, or communities. They may be ill and within the healthcare delivery system or well, moving toward personal betterment to enhance well-being.

Healing and Health

- Health and illness are natural and a part of life, learning, and movement toward change and development.
- Health is seen as balance, integration, harmony, right relationship, and the betterment of well-being, not just the absence of disease. Healing can take place without cure. The focus is on health promotion, disease prevention, health restoration, and lifestyle patterns and habits as well as symptom relief.
- Illness is considered a teacher and an opportunity for self-awareness and growth as part of the life process. Symptoms are respected as messages.
- As active partners in the healing process, people are empowered when they take some control of their own lives, health, and well-being including personal choices and relationships.
- Treatment is a process that considers the root of the problem and does not merely treat the obvious signs and symptoms.

Practice

- Practice is a science using critical thinking, reflection, evidence, research, theory; practice is also an art requiring intuition, creativity, presence, and self-knowledge.
- The values and ethic of holism, caring, moral insight, dignity, integrity, competence, responsibility, accountability, and legality underline holistic nursing practice.
- There are various philosophies and paradigms of health, illness, and healing and approaches and models for the delivery of health care both in the United States and in other countries that need to be understood and utilized.

- Older adults represent the predominant population served by nurses.
- Public policy and the healthcare delivery system influence the health and well-being of society and professional nursing.

Nursing Roles

- The nurse is part of the healing environment using warmth, compassion, caring, authenticity, respect, trust, and relationship as instruments of healing in and of themselves.
- The holistic nurse uses conventional nursing interventions as well as holistic, complementary, alternative, and integrative modalities that enhance the body-mind-emotion-spirit connectedness to foster the healing, health, wholeness, and well-being of people.
- The holistic nurse collaborates and partners with all constituencies in the health process including the person receiving care and his or her family, significant others, community, colleagues, and individuals from other disciplines; this is all accomplished using principles and skills of cooperation, alliance, and respect and honoring the contributions of all.
- The holistic nurse participates in the change process to develop more caring cultures in which to practice and learn.
- The holistic nurse assists nurses to nurture and heal themselves.
- The holistic nurse participates in activities that contribute to the improvement of communities, the environment, and the betterment of public health.
- The holistic nurse acts as an advocate for the rights of and equitable distribution and access to health care for all persons, especially vulnerable populations.
- The holistic nurse honors the ecosystem and our relationship with and need to preserve it.

Self-Care

- Holistic nurses' self-reflection and self-assessment, self-care, healing, and personal development are necessary for service to others and for growth/change in their own

well-being and for understanding of their personal journey.

- Holistic nurses value themselves and their calling to holistic nursing as a life purpose.

Holistic nursing practice is guided by the holistic caring process, whether used with individuals, families, population groups, or communities. This process involves assessment, diagnosis, outcome identification, planning, implementation, and evaluation. It encompasses all significant actions taken in providing culturally competent, ethical, respectful, compassionate, and relevant holistic nursing care to all persons.

The Standards of Holistic Nursing Practice*

There are 15 standards in the *Holistic Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice* (2007), 6 for practice and 9 for professional performance.³ Each standard addresses measurement criteria (competencies) for both the registered nurse and the advanced practice registered nurse. Included here are only one or two examples of measurement criteria because each standard has numerous measurement criteria.

Standard 1. ASSESSMENT: *The holistic nurse collects comprehensive data pertinent to the person's health or situation.*

The holistic registered nurse:

1. Collects comprehensive data including but not limited to physical, functional, psychosocial, emotional, mental, sexual, cultural, age-related, environmental, spiritual, transpersonal, and energy field assessments in a systematic and ongoing process while honoring the uniqueness of the person.
2. Identifies areas such as the person's health and cultural practices, values, beliefs, preferences, meanings of health, illness, lifestyle patterns, family issues, and risk behaviors and context.

* The complete and comprehensive statement of standards of holistic nursing practice are contained in *Holistic Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice* (2007), which can be obtained from the American Holistic Nurses Association (AHNA), 323 N. San Francisco Street, Suite 201, Flagstaff, AZ 86001; 1-800-278-2462 or 1-928-526-2196; www.ahna.org or info@ahna.org.

The holistic advanced practice registered nurse:

1. Initiates and interprets diagnostic procedures relevant to the person's current status.
2. Explores the meanings of the symbolic language expressing itself in areas such as dreams, images, symbols, sensations, or prayers that are a part of the individual's health experience.

Standard 2. DIAGNOSIS OR HEALTH ISSUES: *The holistic nurse analyzes the assessment data to determine the diagnosis or issues expressed as actual or potential patterns/problems/needs that are related to health, wellness, disease, or illness.*

The holistic registered nurse:

1. Derives the diagnosis or health issues based on holistic assessment data.
2. Assists the person to explore the meaning of the health/disease experience.

The holistic advanced practice registered nurse:

1. Utilizes complex data and information obtained during interview, examination, and diagnostic procedures in making the diagnosis.

Standard 3. OUTCOMES IDENTIFICATION: *The holistic registered nurse identifies outcomes for a plan individualized to the person or the situation. The holistic nurse values the evolution and the process of healing as it unfolds. This implies that specific unfolding outcomes may not be evident immediately because of the non-linear nature of the healing process so that both expected, anticipated, and evolving outcomes are considered.*

The holistic registered nurse:

1. Defines outcomes in terms of the person: the individual's values, beliefs, and preferences; age; spiritual practices; ethical considerations; environment; or situation. Consideration is given to associated risks, benefits and costs, and current scientific evidence.
2. Partners with the person to identify realistic goals based on the person's present and potential capabilities and quality of life.

The holistic advanced practice registered nurse:

1. Identifies outcomes that incorporate patient satisfaction, the person's understanding and meanings in their unique patterns and processes, quality of life, cost and clinical effectiveness, and continuity and consistency among providers.

Standard 4. PLANNING: *The holistic registered nurse develops a plan that identifies strategies and alternatives to attain outcomes.*

The holistic registered nurse:

1. Develops in partnership with the person an individualized plan considering the person's characteristics or situation including, but not limited to, values, beliefs, spiritual and health practices, preferences, choices, age and cultural appropriateness, and environmental sensitivity.
2. Develops the plan in conjunction with the person, family, and others, as appropriate.
3. Establishes practice settings and safe space and time for both the nurse and person, family, and significant others to explore suggested potential and alternative options.

The holistic advanced practice registered nurse:

1. Identifies assessments, diagnostic strategies, and therapeutic interventions within the plan, including therapeutic effects and side effects that reflect current evidence, data, research, literature, expert clinical knowledge, and the person's experiences.
2. Uses linguistic and symbolic language including but not limited to word associations, dreams, storytelling, and journals to explore possibilities and options with individuals.

Standard 5. IMPLEMENTATION: *The holistic registered nurse implements in partnership with the person the identified plan.*

The holistic registered nurse:

1. Partners with the person, family, significant others, and caregivers to implement the plan in a safe and timely manner while honoring the person's choices and unique healing journey.

The holistic advanced practice registered nurse:

1. Facilitates utilization of systems and community resources to implement the plan.
2. Incorporates new knowledge and strategies to initiate change in nursing care practices if desired outcomes are not achieved.

Standard 5A. COORDINATION OF CARE: *The holistic registered nurse coordinates care delivery.*

The holistic registered nurse:

1. Coordinates implementation of the plan.

The holistic advanced practice registered nurse:

1. Provides leadership in the coordination of multidisciplinary health care for integrated delivery of services.

Standard 5B. HEALTH TEACHING AND HEALTH PROMOTION: *The holistic registered nurse employs strategies to promote holistic health, wellness, and a safe environment.*

The holistic registered nurse:

1. Provides health teaching to individuals, families, and significant others or caregivers that enhances the mind-body and emotion-spirit connection.
2. Uses health promotion and health teaching methods appropriate to the situation and the individual's values, beliefs, health practices, age, learning needs, readiness and ability to learn, language preference, spirituality, culture, and socioeconomic status.
3. Assists others to access their own inner wisdom that may provide opportunities to enhance and support growth, development, and wholeness.

The holistic advanced practice registered nurse:

1. Synthesizes empirical evidence on risk behaviors, decision making about life choices, learning theories, behavioral change theories, motivational theories, epidemiology, and other related theories and frameworks when designing holistic health information and education.

Standard 5C. CONSULTATION: *The holistic advanced practice registered nurse provides consultation to influence the identified plan, enhance the abilities of others, and effect change.*

The holistic advanced practice registered nurse:

1. Facilitates the effectiveness of a consultation by involving all stakeholders including the individual in decision making and negotiating role responsibilities.

Standard 5D. PRESCRIPTIVE AUTHORITY AND TREATMENT: *The holistic advanced practice registered nurse uses prescriptive authority, procedures, referrals, treatments, and therapies in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations.*

The holistic advanced practice registered nurse:

1. Prescribes treatments, therapies, and procedures based on evidence, research, current knowledge, and practice considering the person's holistic healthcare needs and choices.
2. Uses advanced knowledge of pharmacology, psychoneuroimmunology, nutritional supplements, herbal and homeopathic remedies, and a variety of complementary and alternative therapies in prescribing.
3. Evaluates therapeutic and potential adverse effects of pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic treatments including but not limited to drug, herbal, and homeopathic regimens as well as their side effects and interactions.

Standard 6. EVALUATION: *The holistic registered nurse evaluates progress toward attainment of outcomes while recognizing and honoring the continuing holistic nature of the healing process.*

The holistic registered nurse:

1. Conducts a holistic, systematic, ongoing, and criterion-based evaluation of the outcomes in relation to the structures and processes prescribed by the plan and the indicated timeline.

2. Evaluates in partnership with the person the effectiveness of the planned strategies in relation to the person's responses and the attainment of the expected and unfolding outcomes.

The holistic advanced practice registered nurse:

1. Uses the results of the evaluation analyses to make or recommend process or structural changes, including policy and procedure or protocol documentation, as appropriate to improve holistic care.

Standard 7. QUALITY OF PRACTICE: *The holistic registered nurse systematically enhances the quality and effectiveness of holistic nursing practice.*

The holistic registered nurse:

1. Participates in quality improvement activities for holistic nursing practice.

The holistic advanced practice registered nurse:

1. Evaluates the practice environment and quality of holistic nursing care rendered in relation to existing evidence and feedback from individuals and significant others, identifying opportunities for the generation and use of research.

Standard 8. EDUCATION: *The holistic registered nurse attains knowledge and competency that reflects current nursing practice.*

The holistic registered nurse:

1. Seeks experiences and formal and independent learning activities to maintain and develop clinical and professional skills and knowledge and personal growth to provide holistic care.

The holistic advanced practice registered nurse:

1. Uses current healthcare research findings and other evidence to expand clinical knowledge, enhance role performance, and increase knowledge of professional issues and changes in national standards for practice and trends in holistic care.

Standard 9. PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE EVALUATION: *The holistic registered nurse evaluates one's own nursing practice in relation to professional practice standards and guidelines, relevant statutes, rules, and regulations. The holistic registered nurse's practice reflects the application of knowledge of current practice standards, guidelines, statutes, rules, and regulations.*

The holistic registered nurse:

1. Reflects on one's practice and how one's own personal, cultural, and spiritual beliefs; experiences; biases; education; and values can affect care given to individuals, families, and communities.
2. Engages in self-evaluation of practice on a regular basis, identifying areas of strength, as well as areas in which professional development and personal growth would be beneficial.

The holistic advanced practice registered nurse:

1. Engages in a formal process, seeking feedback regarding one's own practice from individuals receiving care, peers, professional colleagues, and others.

Standard 10. COLLEGIALITY: *The holistic registered nurse interacts with and contributes to the professional development of peers and colleagues.*

The holistic registered nurse:

1. Shares knowledge and skills with peers and colleagues as evidenced by such activities as patient care conferences or presentations at formal or informal meetings.
2. Promotes work environments conducive to support, understanding, respect, health, healing, caring, wholeness, and harmony.

The holistic advanced practice registered nurse:

1. Models expert holistic nursing practice to interdisciplinary team members and healthcare consumers.

Standard 11. COLLABORATION: *The holistic registered nurse collaborates with the person, family, and others in the conduct of holistic nursing practice.*

The holistic registered nurse:

1. Communicates with the person, family, significant others, caregivers, and interdisciplinary healthcare providers regarding the person's care and the holistic nurse's role in the provision of that care.

The holistic advanced practice registered nurse:

1. Facilitates the negotiation of holistic, complementary, integrative, and conventional healthcare services for continuity of care and program planning.

Standard 12. ETHICS: *The holistic registered nurse integrates ethical provisions in all areas of practice.*

The holistic registered nurse:

1. Uses the Guide to the *Code of Ethics for Nurses: Interpretation and Application*⁵ and *AHNA Position Statement on Holistic Nursing Ethics* to guide practice and articulate the moral foundation of holistic nursing.
2. Advocates for the rights of vulnerable, repressed, or underserved populations.

The holistic advanced practice registered nurse:

1. Actively contributes to creating an ecosystem that supports well-being for all life.

Standard 13. RESEARCH: *The holistic registered nurse integrates research into practice.*

The holistic registered nurse:

1. Utilizes the best available evidence, including theories and research findings, to guide practice decisions.
2. Actively and ethically participates in research activities related to holistic health at various levels appropriate to the holistic nurse's level of education and position.

The holistic advanced practice registered nurse:

1. Contributes to nursing knowledge by conducting or synthesizing research that discovers, examines, and evaluates knowledge, theories, philosophies, context, criteria, and creative approaches to improve holistic healthcare practice.

2. Formally disseminates research findings through activities such as presentations, publications, consultations, and journal clubs for a variety of audiences including nursing, other disciplines, and the public to improve holistic care and further develop the foundation and practice of holistic nursing.

Standard 14. RESOURCE UTILIZATION: *The holistic registered nurse considers factors related to safety, effectiveness, cost, and impact on practice in the planning and delivery of nursing services.*

The holistic registered nurse:

1. Assists the person, family, and significant others or caregivers as appropriate in identifying and securing appropriate and available services to address health-related needs.
2. Identifies discriminatory healthcare practices as they affect the person and engages in effective nondiscriminatory practices.

The holistic advanced practice registered nurse:

1. Utilizes organizational and community resources to formulate multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary plans of care.

Standard 15. LEADERSHIP: *The holistic registered nurse provides leadership in the professional practice setting and the profession.*

The holistic registered nurse:

1. Displays the ability to define a clear vision, associated goals, and a plan to implement and measure progress toward holistic health care.
2. Promotes advancement of the profession through participation in professional organizations and by focusing on strategies that bring unity and healing to the nursing profession.

The holistic advanced practice registered nurse:

1. Works to influence decision-making bodies to improve holistic, integrated care.
2. Articulates the ideas underpinning holistic nursing philosophy, places these

ideas in a historical, philosophical, and scientific context while projecting future trends in thinking.

■ EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION AND CERTIFICATION FOR HOLISTIC NURSING PRACTICE

Holistic nurses are registered nurses who are educationally prepared for practice from an approved school of nursing and are licensed to practice in their individual state, commonwealth, or territory. The holistic registered nurse's experience, education, knowledge, and abilities establish the level of competence. The *Holistic Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice* (2007) identifies the scope of practice of holistic nursing and the specific standards and associated measurement criteria of holistic nurses at both the basic and advanced levels.³ Regardless of the level of practice, all holistic nurses integrate the previously identified five core values.

A registered nurse may prepare for the specialty of holistic nursing in a variety of ways. Educational offerings range from associate degree, baccalaureate and graduate courses and programs, to continuing education programs with extensive contact hours.

Basic Practice Level

The education of all nursing students preparing for registered nurse (RN) licensure includes basic content on physiological, psychological, emotional, and some spiritual processes with populations across the life span and conventional nursing care practices within each of these domains. Additionally, basic nursing education incorporates experiences in a variety of clinical and practice settings from acute care to community. However, the educational focus is most frequently on specialties often emanating from the biomedical disease model and cure orientation. In holistic nursing, the individual across the life span is viewed in context as an integrated totality of body, mind, emotion, environment, society, energy, and spirit, with the emphasis on wholeness, well-being, health promotion, and healing using both conventional and complementary/alternative practices. Because of the lack of intentional focus on integration, unity, and healing,

the educational exposure of most nursing students is not adequate preparation for assuming the specialty role of a holistic nurse.

A number of schools of nursing are beginning to incorporate holistic nursing content at the undergraduate level, whether it be as discrete courses such as therapeutic touch, relaxation, aromatherapy, and so on, or integrated in courses such as nursing therapeutics.

Advanced Practice Level

As with the basic level, there are a variety of ways through both academic and professional development that registered nurses can acquire the additional specialized knowledge and skills that prepare them for practice as an advanced practice holistic nurse. These nurses are expected to hold a master's or doctoral degree and demonstrate a greater depth and scope of knowledge, a greater integration of information, increased complexity of skills and interventions, and notable role autonomy. They provide leadership in practice, teaching, research, consultation, advocacy, and policy formation in advancing holistic nursing to improve the holistic health of people. Several schools of nursing that offer graduate programs in holistic nursing have a stable or growing number of applicants. Current advanced practice nurses are increasingly gaining specialized knowledge preparing them as holistic nurses through postmaster's programs, continuing education offerings in holistic nursing care, and certificate programs throughout the country that focus on specific modalities and on the essence of holism.

Continuing Education for Basic and Advanced Practice Levels

The AHNA is a provider and approver of continuing education and is recognized by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC). Continuing educational programs, workshops, and lectures in holistic nursing and CAM have been popular nationwide, with AHNA or other bodies granting continuing education units.

The AHNA endorses certificate programs in specific areas. These include Integrative Healing, Reflexology, Imagery, Aromatherapy, Healing Touch, Spirituality, Craniosacral Therapy, Holistic Stress Management, Integrative Healing

Arts, Coaching and Whole Health Education. It also approves continuing education offerings in holistic nursing as well as giving the AHNA home study course, Foundation of Holistic Nursing. Other programs in distinct therapies such as acupuncture, Reiki, Homeopathy, massage, imagery, healing arts, holistic health, Chinese Oriental Medicine, nutrition, Ayurveda, therapeutic touch, healing touch, herbology, Chiropractic, and so on, are given nationally as degrees, certificates, or continuing education programs by centers, specialty organizations, or schools.

Certification

Competency mechanisms for evaluating holistic nursing practice as a specialty exist through a national certification/recertification process overseen by the American Holistic Nurses Certification Corporation (AHNCC). The AHNCC certifies at the *basic level* (HN-BC), which requires a diploma or associate degree in nursing; HNB-BC, which requires a baccalaureate degree in nursing; and the *advanced practice level* (AHN-BC), which requires a graduate degree in nursing. Further, the AHNCC provides endorsement for schools of nursing meeting the specifications put forth in the *Holistic Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice* (2007).³ Additionally, holistic nurses often are certified in specific CAM modalities such as imagery, Reiki, aromatherapy, healing touch, biofeedback, and Reflexology.

■ SETTINGS FOR HOLISTIC NURSING PRACTICE

Holistic nurses practice in numerous settings, including but not limited to private practitioner offices; ambulatory, acute, long-term, and home care settings; complementary care centers; women's health centers; hospice and palliative care; psychiatric mental health facilities; schools; rehabilitation centers; community nursing organizations; student and employee health centers; managed care organizations; independent self-employed practice; correctional facilities; professional nursing and healthcare organizations; administration; staff development; and universities and colleges. There are increasing numbers of holistic nurses who hold leadership roles as clinicians, educators, authors, and researchers

in university-based schools of nursing, practice environments, nursing, and other professional organizations. Holistic nursing practice also occurs when there is a request for consultation or when holistic nurses advocate for care that promotes health and prevents disease, illness, or disability for individuals, communities, or the environment. A holistic nurse may choose not to work in a critical care setting but provide consultation regarding self-care or stress management to nurses practicing in that area. Or holistic nurses may practice in preoperative and recovery rooms instituting a “Prepare for Surgery” program for individuals who are going to have surgery that teaches them meditation and positive affirmation techniques for both before and after surgery while incorporating a homeopathic regimen for trauma and cell healing. Employment or voluntary participation of holistic nurses also can influence civic activities and the regulatory and legislative arenas at the local, state, national, or international levels.

Because holistic nursing focuses on wellness, wholeness, and development of the whole person, holistic nurses also practice in health enhancement settings such as spas, gyms, and wellness centers. With all populations and in any setting, nurses can empower patients/clients/families by teaching them self-care practices for a healthier lifestyle. Because holistic nursing is a worldview, a way of being in the world, and not just a modality, holistic nurses can practice in any setting and with individuals throughout the life span. As the public increasingly requests holistic and CAM services, there will be a greater need for holistic nurses in a wider array of settings. Holistic nursing takes place wherever healing occurs.¹³

■ CONCLUSION

The specialty practice of holistic nursing is generally not well understood. Therefore, each holistic nurse must educate other nurses, healthcare providers and disciplines, and the public about the role, value, and benefits of holistic nursing, whether it be in direct practice, education, management, or research. Holistic nurses articulate the ideas underpinning the holistic paradigm and the philosophy of the caring-healing

relationship. Jean Watson reminds us that society and the public are searching for something deeper in terms of realizing self-care, self-knowledge, and self-healing potentials. Nurses need to acknowledge the human aspects of practice—attending to people and their experience rather than just focusing on the medical orientation and disease. She concludes that “nurses have a covenant with the public to sustain caring. It is our collective responsibility to transform caring practices into the framework that identifies and gives distinction to nursing as a profession.”¹⁴ The *Holistic Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice* (2007) is a means through which holistic nurses are educating the profession and others about the values, principles, and practice requirements of the specialty.³

Directions for

FUTURE RESEARCH

1. Explore research modalities and approaches that are congruent with the holistic paradigm.
2. Examine how the standards of holistic nursing practice are being implemented in nursing settings.

Nurse Healer

REFLECTIONS

After reading this chapter, the holistic nurse will be able to answer or to begin a process of answering the following questions:

- What attributes do I have that reflect the core values of holistic nursing?
- What contributions can I make as a holistic nurse to the wholeness and betterment of humankind?

NOTES

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Development of the Original Holistic Nursing Standards of Practice: Basic and Advanced

BASIC STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT

The American Holistic Nurses Association (AHNA) first developed *Standards of Holistic Nursing Practice* in 1990; these were subsequently revised in 1995. Between 1994 and 1997, the AHNA conducted a 3-year role delineation study, the Inventory of Professional Activities and Knowledge of a Holistic Nurse (IPAKHN survey). In this practice analysis study the activities and knowledge basic to current holistic nursing practice were determined through administration of a structured inventory to a representative sample of holistic nurses.

This 3-year endeavor was successfully completed by a four-member AHNA task force and reviewed by the AHNA leadership council, select AHNA members, and other recognized holistic nurse members and nonmembers representing the diversity of holistic nurse representation from practice, education, research, and administration. An extensive five-step process was used to revise the 1995 AHNA *Standards of Holistic Nursing Practice* and to delineate core values.

Step 1: Literature Review, Inventory of Professional Activities and Knowledge of a Holistic Nurse (IPAKHN) Survey Data Analysis, and Expert Reviews

Step 2: Review Process

Following the first step, the AHNA Standards of Practice Task Force incorporated the suggestions and additional data from the literature review

and the IPAKHN survey analysis that reflected the most recent holistic nursing professional activities, knowledge, and caring-healing modalities. Based on this review and the additional comments, deletions, modifications, and recommendations by expert nurses, six areas were further refined and developed including five core values.

Step 3: AHNA Standards of Practice Advisory Committee

Following the second step, the revised AHNA standards of practice were next sent to the 24-member advisory committee, who gave additional comments, modifications, and recommendations. Five subsequent revision rounds by the AHNA task force occurred until consensus was achieved, and then the standards were sent back to the advisory committee for additional comments, modifications, and recommendations, which were incorporated.

Step 4: AHNA Standards of Practice Review Committee

Next, the revised AHNA standards of practice were sent to the 24-member review committee, who gave additional comments, deletions, modifications, and recommendations, which were incorporated.

Step 5: AHNA Standards of Practice Leadership Council

In the fifth step of the standards development process, the final draft of the *Standards of Holistic*

Nursing Practice was submitted to the AHNA leadership council. After discussion, a final vote of approval accepted the *Standards of Holistic Nursing Practice*. These were then presented at the business meeting of the annual AHNA conference in June 1999 in Scottsdale, Arizona. The AHNA standards received a vote of approval by the AHNA membership. Minor editorial changes were approved by the AHNA leadership council in January 2000, with additional minor revisions in 2004 and 2005.*

■ ADVANCED STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT

In response to the growing number of graduate programs with a holistic nursing focus, the AHNA leadership council appointed a nine-member task force in January 2000 to develop standards for advanced practice. From that time until later autumn 2001, the task force worked to develop standards for advanced holistic nursing practice. The final draft was completed and accepted for submission to the council by the task force members in September 2001.

The task force used the core values as the foundation for developing the advanced practice standards. Regardless of the type of practice of the holistic nurse, these values should serve as the philosophical underpinning for practice. The *Essentials of Master's Education for Advanced Practice Nursing* (1996), published by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, and ANA's *Scope and Standards of Advanced Practice Registered Nursing Practice* (1996) served as additional guides for the scope of practice that should be addressed by the standards because these documents are employed in the development of graduate nursing curricula.

The AHNA conducted an advanced practice standards review process similar to that used to create the basic practice standards. In addition to the task force, leaders in the field of holistic nursing and nursing education were asked to review the draft standards to establish content validity. The first draft was completed and circulated to task force members for review and comment in Spring 2000. The comments were then used to prepare the second draft for the task

force to review. A decision was made that the standards for advanced practice would apply to those nurses with a graduate degree even though there are nurses in practice with an expanded scope created not by graduate education but by certifications in particular specialties. These certifications were created before graduate education became the entry level for advanced practice. It was felt that the basic standards more than adequately address the scope of practice for all except graduate practice, and the need was to have standards to address holistic nursing practice by graduate-prepared nurses that would guide in the development of curricula for graduate education in holistic nursing.

The third draft was completed during the summer of 2000 and then circulated in the autumn to task force members. The fourth draft was prepared from the feedback of task force members and circulated to the responding and corresponding committees for review and comment. Comments on the fourth draft were received throughout the spring and summer of 2001. In September, these comments were collated into a final draft. This draft was reviewed and accepted for submission to the leadership council. The *Standards of Advanced Holistic Nursing Practice for Graduate-Prepared Nurses* were approved and adopted by the AHNA leadership council in January 2002, followed by a minor revision in 2005.

■ HOLISTIC NURSING: SCOPE AND STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

During the interval from 2004 until 2006 the original *Standards of Holistic Nursing Practice* (advanced and basic) were substantively revised to incorporate language and content required by ANA to support the application for formal recognition of holistic nursing as a nursing specialty. The leadership council of the AHNA reviewed and approved the preliminary draft statement of the standards in June 2005, and then the draft *Holistic Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice* in March 2006. The *Holistic Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice* was approved by the ANA in November 2006. Holistic nursing was recognized as an official specialty within Nursing by the American Nurses Association that same month. The *Holistic Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice* was published jointly by AHNA and ANA in 2007.

* Adapted from N. C. Frisch et al., *AHNA Standards of Holistic Nursing Practice with Guidelines for Caring and Healing* (Gaithersburg, MD: Aspen, 2000).



Select Works of Individuals and AHNA Documents

The foundation of *Holistic Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice* (2007) is based on the works of a number of individuals and from AHNA documents, including the following:

American Holistic Nurses Association, *AHNA Standards of Holistic Nursing Practice* (Flagstaff, AZ: AHNA, 2004).

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