Trauma Nursing Education

Description

“Trauma is the leading cause of death for Americans between the ages of 1 and 46 years, the third cause of death across all age groups.” Trauma injuries account for 30% of life years lost in the United States, more than cancer (16%) and heart disease (12%) combined. Projections indicate traumatic injury worldwide will be the fourth leading cause of disability-adjusted life years by 2030. Irrespective of one’s age, economic status, or race, injuries occur to almost everyone during their lifetime. Many survive their injuries and are confronted with physical, mental, and financial issues for the rest of their lives.

As far back as 1979, data showed that the implementation of an organized trauma system leads to a reduction in deaths of seriously injured patients. During the Korean and Vietnam wars, the public became aware the military systems of trauma care routinely saved lives. More recently, a multidisciplinary, coordinated, and systematic approach to patient care was shown to result in optimal trauma care outcomes.

Trauma nurses are an essential component of this systematic approach to optimal trauma care. In fact, “Trauma nursing occurs wherever nurses care for injured patients. It takes place throughout the continuum of care from the prehospital environment through resuscitation, surgery, recovery, rehabilitation, and return to the community.”

ENA Position

It is the position of the Emergency Nurses Association that:

1. The optimal care of trauma patients is best accomplished using a standardized and coordinated approach within an organized trauma system.

2. The knowledge and skills presented in the Trauma Nursing Core Course (TNCC) provide emergency nurses with a standardized approach to assessment and intervention for trauma patients in a trauma team system.

3. TNCC provides essential trauma nursing education and is the educational standard for emergency nurses caring for injured patients.

4. TNCC is a nationally and internationally recognized course of continuing education in trauma care developed by and for nurses.

5. The Emergency Nurses Association (ENA) facilitates trauma-related continuing education opportunities for emergency nurses providing care for trauma patients.

6. ENA’s Institute for Emergency Nursing Research (IENR) and Institute for Quality, Safety and Injury Prevention (IQSIP) pursue and translate injury prevention research into emergency nursing education and practice.

Background

Nursing is a professional discipline with a body of knowledge based on science and philosophy. Trauma nursing employs core knowledge derived from scientific sources and individual experience. Since 1986, the ENA’s Trauma Nursing Core Course (TNCC) has served as the standard of nursing practice for the nursing care of patients who have sustained injuries. It is a course written by nurses for nurses. The word “core” in TNCC has been interpreted by some to mean “basic,” the opposite of advanced. However, the intended (and authentic) definition of the word “core” is “essential,” “key,” and “foundational,” describing education that is based on the most current principles and standards of trauma care.
The TNCC 7th edition demonstrates ENA’s continued commitment to provide trauma education for emergency nurses. Its purposes are: to deliver the knowledge and psychomotor skills identified as key or central to trauma care; to assist nurses to refine skills; and to provide a firm foundation in trauma nursing skills using an integrated approach to trauma teamwork, communication, and collaboration. To promote that teamwork and align the TNCC with physician colleagues’ practice, the Advanced Trauma Life Support initial assessment elements have been blended into the framework of the TNCC primary and secondary surveys. The TNCC 7th edition promotes a solid knowledge base, critical thinking, and clinical decision-making, while increasing awareness of injury causes and prevention, the importance of teamwork, and the need for advocacy and respect for trauma patients.

For years, injuries were viewed as “accidents” that were inevitable. In reality, they constitute a major public health problem. A large body of epidemiological and clinical research demonstrates that injuries, unlike accidents, do not occur by chance. Like diseases, injuries follow a predictable pattern, thus making them preventable. The ENA IQSIP is dedicated to the goal of reducing injuries and their consequences for patients and the trauma team.

### Resources


### References

Position Statement

915 Lee Street, Des Plaines, IL 60016-6569 • 800.900.9659 • www.ena.org


Authors

Authored and Reviewed by the Position Statement Committee

Diane Gurney, MS, RN, CEN, FAEN, Chair
Katie Bush, MA, RN, CEN, SANE-A
Gordon Gillespie, PhD, RN, CEN, CPEN, CNE, PHCNS, FAEN
Robin Walsh, MS, BSN, RN
E. Marie Wilson, MPA, RN

ENA 2015 Board of Directors Liaison
Sally Snow, BSN, RN, CPEN, FAEN

ENA Staff Liaisons
Dale Wallerich, MBA, BSN, RN

Developed: 2015.

  Approved by the ENA Board of Directors: September 1993.
  Revised and Approved by the ENA Board of Directors: April 1995.
  Revised and Approved by the ENA Board of Directors: September 1997.
  Revised and Approved by the ENA Board of Directors: July 1999.
  Revised and Approved by the ENA Board of Directors: July 2001.
  Revised and Approved by the ENA Board of Directors: July 2010.
  Revised and Approved by the ENA Board of Directors: September, 2015.