

PREFACE: The sections of the Clinical Ladder are separated into Nursing Standards based on the Scope and Standards of Practice set by the American Nurses Association (ANA, 2010). There are a total of Eight Nursing Standards included in the Clinical Ladder. Each Nursing Standard has many options to choose from. The Nursing Standard may be used multiple times (i.e. can choose several options from the same standard); however, each **option** may only be used once. Read each option carefully. All criteria listed in the option must be met in order to receive credit for the option. If the option references a form you **MUST USE THE FORM** to receive credit for the option. All fields of each form must be complete.

Official Fiscal Year starts September 1, 2019. Work from August 1, 2019-July 31, 2020 will be accepted for the 2020 Fiscal Year.

Deadline for completed packets: July 31, 2020. Packets MUST be turned in to the Ambulatory Services Administration Offices no later than 5pm on July 31, 2020.

Ambulatory Nursing Clinical Ladder Options (FY20)

Standard I. Transformational Leadership: The professional nurse demonstrates leadership in the professional practice setting and/or evaluates the quality and effectiveness of nursing practice.

(ANA Scope & Standards of Practice—Standard 12)

1. Active involvement/participation/membership in a clinic-based committee or task force. Committee/task force must meet a minimum of **four times** per year to qualify. At least six months of participation and 75% meeting attendance required. Use validation form and specific criteria as outlined on the form. Packet must include purpose, objectives, meeting minutes and attendance roster for each meeting. Provide a written summary of how and/or why this committee meets the standard. **USE FORM:** [Committee Participation Validation Form](#)
2. Active involvement/participation/membership in an Ambulatory Services **or** Health System committee/task force/Council. Committee/task force must meet a minimum of **four times** per year to qualify. At least 6 months of participation and 75% meeting attendance required. Use validation form and specific criteria as outlined on the form. Packet must include purpose, objectives, meeting minutes and attendance roster for each meeting. Provide a written summary of how and/or why this committee meets the standard. **USE FORM:** [Committee Participation Validation Form](#)
3. Active involvement/participation/membership in the Ambulatory Nurses Clinical Ladder Committee. Must attend 75% of Committee Meetings and provide two Informational Meetings to assist candidates in assigned District. **MUST** attend Packet Review Day for peer review and packet voting. Packet must include purpose, objectives, meeting minutes and attendance roster for each meeting. Provide a written summary of how and/or why this committee meets the standard. **USE FORM:** [ACL Committee Participation Validation Form](#)
4. Chair/Coordinator of a clinic or health system-based committee. Committee/task force must meet a minimum of **four times** per year to qualify. 75% meeting attendance required. (Note: serving as a chairperson for a committee and serving as a member in the same committee will not count as two options; however, it is acceptable to be a member of one committee and chairperson for a different committee.). Packet must include purpose, objectives, meeting minutes and attendance roster for each meeting. Provide a written summary of how and/or why this committee meets the standard. **USE FORM:** [Committee Participation Validation Form](#)

Standard I Options (continued)

5. Identify a problem or a process that needs improvement in your work area or clinic. Develop and implement a performance improvement data collection tool to aid in improving this issue. Data collection tool must be approved by Clinic Manager or Nurse Supervisor. Provide a written summary of how and/or why this data collection tool meets the standard for systematically evaluating quality and effectiveness of nursing practice. **USE FORM:** [Project or Presentation Approval Form](#) **Group work eligible***
6. Using the data collection tool for Option #5, compile a written analysis of the data collected, and create a proposal or provide a presentation at a clinic meeting to initiate change. Include a copy of the proposal or presentation materials including attendance roster. **Group work eligible***
7. Aspiring Leadership Program. Participating in the UT Southwestern Aspiring Leadership Program between August 1, 2019 and July 31, 2020. Please include proof of participation, summary of the project and how participating in the Aspiring Leadership Program affects your nursing practice and improves patient outcomes. For more information on the Aspiring Leadership Program [SEE RESOURCES PAGE](#)

Standard II. Professional Practice and Evaluation: The professional nurse evaluates their own nursing practice in relation to professional practice standards, relevant statutes, rules and regulations.

(ANA Scope & Standards of Practice—Standard 14)

1. Identify an issue or error related to nursing practice in your clinic and provide a written project plan to prevent reoccurrence of that issue. Must include the following information in the project plan: *Purpose/Objective, Project Overview, Goal(s), Benefit(s) of Change(s), Evaluation of Project and Outcomes.* **USE FORM:** [Project Plan Template](#) **Group work Eligible***

Standard III. Professional Education and Structural Empowerment: The professional nurse acquires and maintains current knowledge and competency in nursing practices.

(ANA Scope & Standards of Practice—Standards 8 & 13)

1. National Certification. May be used at any level, but is required for levels III and IV. [SEE RESOURCES PAGE](#) for additional information about National Certifications.
2. Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) Certification. Provide copy of current certification.
3. Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS) Certification; **or** Pediatric Advanced Emergency Assessment, Recognition & Stabilization (PEARS). Provide a copy of current certification.
4. ONS/ONCC Chemotherapy/Biotherapy Certificate Course or Fundamentals of Chemotherapy/Biotherapy Administration Certificate. Provide a copy of current certificate(s).

Note the following information: A certificate course is different from a National Certification. A certificate course is “a non-degree granting program that provides instruction and training around a narrow set of knowledge, skills, and

Standard III Options (continued).

competencies associated with completion of a process, provision of a service, or fulfillment of continuing education requirements. Certificates indicate attainment of knowledge, something which cannot be provided without first establishing that level of knowledge” (ONS, 2014). “Achieving nursing certification provides nurses with the ability to increase their professional growth, career satisfaction, salary potential, credibility and competency” (Nursezone, 2014). [SEE RESOURCES PAGE](#) for additional information about professional certificates.

5. Certificate Course Radiation Oncology;

Note the following information: A certificate course is different from a National Certification. A certificate course is “a non-degree granting program that provides instruction and training around a narrow set of knowledge, skills, and competencies associated with completion of a process, provision of a service, or fulfillment of continuing education requirements. Certificates indicate attainment of knowledge, something which cannot be provided without first establishing that level of knowledge” (ONS, 2014). “Achieving nursing certification provides nurses with the ability to increase their professional growth, career satisfaction, salary potential, credibility and competency” (Nursezone, 2014). [SEE RESOURCES PAGE](#) for additional information about professional certificates.

6. Second National Certification.

7. Cross train and actively work in different areas of an outpatient clinic that have separate and distinct clinical specialty areas. Example: Able to function in all Dermatology specialty areas including Dermatologic Surgery, Phototherapy, Cosmetic Dermatology, General Dermatology, etc. Must provide documentation of prior approval and final approval from the Clinic Manager or Nurse Supervisor regarding verification of competency to work in other clinic areas, and a brief summary on tasks/duties in each area. **USE FORM:** [Clinic Cross Training Validation Form](#)
8. Active in local professional organization as evidenced by attending at least 75% of local meetings. Organization must meet a minimum of four times. Validation of attendance required. Provide a written summary of how and/or why this organization meets the standard and how it applies to your nursing practice. **USE FORM:** [Local Chapter Meeting Attendance Validation Form](#)
9. Active in state or national professional organization as evidenced by attending at least one state/national meeting. Note this option may only be used as **one choice** even if attending state or national meetings. Validation of attendance required. Provide a written summary of how and/or why this organization meets the standard and how it applies to your nursing practice.
10. Participation in professional organization as an **officer** at the local, state, or national level. Documentation or validation is required. Provide a written summary of how and/or why this organization or committee meets the standard and how it applies to your nursing practice.
11. Active Committee Member of a professional organization at the state, or national level. Documentation or validation is required. Provide a written summary of how and/or why this committee membership meets the standard and how it applies to your nursing practice.
12. Attend **12 clock hours** of Conferences or Symposia in any specialties between August 1, 2019 and July 31, 2020. (Ex: Leukemia and Lymphoma Society Lone Star conference). **Prior approval is required for all non UTSW Sponsored Conferences and Symposia.** Certificate, brochure and/or proof of attendance required. Provide a

Standard III Options (continued)

written summary of how and/or why the symposium meets the standard and how it applies to your nursing practice. [SEE RESOURCES PAGE](#) for additional information about symposia.

13. Active participant on an Ambulatory Building Rapid Response Team (RRT). Must have the RRT coordinator validate that you participated in 75% (minimum of 6) of RRT meetings and respond to all events as indicated. (Participation for 6 months is required) **USE FORM:** [Rapid Response Team Validation Form](#)
14. **Must be an active member of the rapid response team for this option. Complete 2 out of the 3 following options.** 1). Implement 1 Mock RRT scenario for clinic readiness to an ambulatory clinic. 2). Implement 1 Mock RRT scenario in a scheduled Rapid Response Team meeting. 3). Provide Rapid Response team in-service to an ambulatory group or clinic. Must provide information on which group/clinic the information is being presented (information cannot be presented twice to the same group/clinic). **The presentation has already been created by the Clinical Education Team and you must contact Ambulatory clinical nurse educator for in-service material and approval prior to presentation. This specific presentation can only be used for this option. Scenarios must be approved by Ambulatory education team .** Packets must include a copy of the scenario, RRT documentation form and a brief summary of the event including evaluation of outcome. If presenting the in-service, packet must include sign-in sheet for meeting and meeting agenda. **USE FORMS:** RRT [Documentation Sheet](#) and [RRT Mock Scenario](#) [SEE RESOURCES PAGE](#) for additional information about RRT.
15. Advancement of education towards a higher healthcare related degree (examples: RN to BSN or MSN, LVN to RN, MHA, MPH, MBA, etc). Must provide documentation of current enrollment or course completion/transcript between August 1, 2019 and July 31, 2020. This does not apply to pre-requisite courses.

Standard IV. The professional nurse interacts with and contributes to the professional development of peers and other healthcare providers.

(ANA Scope & Standards of Practice—Standards 8, 12, 13 & 14)

1. Post three current journal articles relevant to your practice or specialty (must be published within the past five years). **Please add date of the article on the sign-in sheet.** Articles must be posted for **30 days** with a sign-in sheet attached. Provide a brief written summary for each article of how this information can or will be integrated into your nursing practice. Submit a copy of the article, the sign-in sheet, and your summary in your completed packet. **USE FORM:** [Sign-In Sheet for Posted Articles](#)
2. Serve as a primary preceptor/mentor for newly hired nurses, non-professional caregivers, nursing students or MOA students in your clinic. Nurse Supervisor **or** Clinic Manager to validate. Note this is a **formal preceptor/mentor role** for newly hired employees or for students enrolled in an official program assigned to your clinic. (i.e. TCU students assigned to the Cancer Center through their university) Packet must include examples of training materials, skills checklist or summary of training. **USE FORM:** [Preceptor Tracking Tool](#)
3. Devise or update a nursing orientation tool or clinic resource book for your clinic. **Must be pre-approved by your Nurse Supervisor or Clinic Manager.** Resource book information or tool updates must be outside of required work duties (i.e. yearly updates of “standing medical orders” would not meet the criteria for this standard as it is a job requirement). Final approval prior to packet submission also required from your Nurse Supervisor or Clinic Manager for validation of changes or updates. Resource book must display current dates (i.e. last reviewed on [mm/dd/year] or last updated [mm/dd/year] etc.). Packet must include a copy of the orientation tool or resource book. **USE FORM:** [Project/Presentation Approval Form](#). **Group work eligible***

Standard IV Options (continued)

4. BLS Instructor: Teach BLS classes; must be taught in the UTSW Health System. **Minimum of four classes per fiscal year.** **USE FORM:** [BLS Instructor Validation Form](#)
5. ACLS Instructor: Teach ACLS classes; must be taught in the UTSW Health System. **Minimum of four classes per fiscal year.** **USE FORM:** [ACLS Instructor Validation Form](#)
6. Teach/Assist with Annual Skills Lab, Skills Check-Off, or Elsevier (SCC) for a defined group of clinicians. Includes Verbal instruction and/or skill demonstration/check-off during annual skills lab or during nursing orientation. Example: Completing skills check off for accessing implanted ports to Radiology Residents. Packet must include a sign in sheet and written summary including; participation date, title of skill, preparation for teaching, content taught, and how this will affect your clinical practice. **USE FORM:** [Skills Lab Validation Form](#)
7. Present a clinic-based in-service on the topic of Leadership, Teamwork, or Multidisciplinary Collaboration. Presentation must be at least 20 minutes in length and should include an action plan on how to incorporate strategies for leadership, teamwork and/or multidisciplinary collaboration into current practice in your clinic. In-service information must be completed or updated during FY20. Must submit objectives, outline, content, reference page, sign-in sheet and written confirmation that the information was presented (Staff meeting agenda or email conversation). References must be provided in APA format. **SEE RESOURCES PAGE** for additional information about APA format.
8. Present a clinic-based in-service on the topic of your choice. Presentation must be at least 20 minutes in length and must be completed or updated during FY20. Must submit objectives, outline, content, reference page, sign-in sheet, and written confirmation that the information was presented (staff meeting agenda or email conversation). References must be provided in APA format. **SEE RESOURCES PAGE** for additional information about APA format.
9. Present an In-service for **another** clinic or group (i.e. RRT). May present the same In-service as Option #7 or #8 however, please note that the in-service should be presented to **another** clinic, not another pod within your clinic. Presentation must be at least 20 minutes in length. Must submit objectives, outline, content, reference page, sign-in sheet and written confirmation that the information was presented (staff meeting agenda or email conversation). References must be provided in APA format. **SEE RESOURCES PAGE** for additional information about APA format.
10. Actively participate in an Ambulatory Services Journal Club. Complete all of the following: Attend a minimum of six Ambulatory Services Nurses' Journal Club meetings. **SEE RESOURCES PAGE** for additional information about journal club dates, locations, and presentation sign-up instructions. Must present two Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) nursing research articles. Articles must be current (i.e. published within the past five years). You must submit your articles to clinical nurse educator a week prior to the date you signed up to present at journal club. If approved you can use the same articles you posted from Standard IV option 1. Your final packet must include a copy of the two articles, a brief written summary of each article, and documentation of relevance to your nursing practice. **USE FORM:** [Journal Club Validation Form](#). For additional assistance on how to locate an Evidence-Based Practice Article, see [Evidenced Based Practice Tip Sheet](#) located on the **RESOURCES PAGE**. For additional information about presenting an article, see the [Guidelines for Presenting at Journal Club Tip Sheet](#) located on the **RESOURCES PAGE**.
11. Speak and/or present at a national conference. Provide conference brochure showing your name as one of the presenters. Must submit objectives, outline, content, reference page, and presentation materials (i.e copy of PowerPoint or handouts).

Standard IV Options (continued)

12. Speak and/or present at a state conference. Provide conference brochure showing your name as one of the presenters. Must submit objectives, outline, content, reference page, and presentation materials (i.e copy of PowerPoint or handouts).
 13. Submit an abstract to a national organization. Must submit a copy of the abstract with the packet. This option may be used even if the abstract is not accepted. **Group work eligible.***
 14. Present a poster at a national or state conference. Must complete and submit the following: poster acceptance letter; copy of or picture of the poster (word document or PDF file is acceptable). **Group work eligible***
 15. Coordinate or actively participate in a University sponsored Continuing Education Program (example Paul Peters Urology Symposium or Chemotherapy for non-oncology nurses). Must complete and submit the following: program/conference brochure or documentation of your active involvement such as being on the program committee, speaker, etc. (simply attending the event will not meet this standard option). **Group work eligible*.**
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Standard V. The professional nurse acts as a patient advocate and makes decisions in an ethical manner according to the American Nurses Association (ANA) Code of Ethics for Nurses.

(ANA Scope & Standards of Practice—Standards 1 &7)

1. Volunteer in **eight hours** of nursing-related community service, Medical Reserve Corp, Red Cross Disaster Readiness projects, or other service initiative community projects which requires volunteer nursing services (may be local, national or international) and that are not associated with your job requirements. Completed hours may be from one project or multiple projects; hours do not need to be consecutive. (**Note:** Running/walking in an event, set up, tear down, training programs for volunteer activity and/or on-call/standby hours are **not** nurse-related community service acts.). Validation from event sponsor(s) required. Must provide a written summary of your participation and how/why this event meets the standard. **USE FORM:** [Volunteer Hours Validation Form](#) **SEE RESOURCES PAGE** for additional information about volunteering.
 2. Organize and conduct a health related community project. Final packet must include the following documentation: brochure/flyer and sign in sheet or written confirmation for participation. Provide a written summary of your participation and how/why this event meets the standard. **Group work eligible*.**
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Standard VI. The professional nurse collaborates with the healthcare consumer, family, multidisciplinary team, and others.

(ANA Scope & Standards of Practice—Standard 13)

1. Develop and implement a patient/family teaching tool in your clinic. **Must be approved by your Nurse Supervisor or Clinic Manager.** Packet must include a copy of the tool, the date the article was created and a written summary describing how it is used in your clinic. **USE FORM:** [Presentation/Project Approval Form](#) **Group work eligible*.**

Standard VI Options (continued)

2. Develop a patient satisfaction initiative related to improving a trend affecting multiple patients. Define the problem **and** the solution implemented. Documentation must follow the principles of the nursing process (ADPIE): Assess the issue; define the issue; develop an action plan to resolve the issue; interventions; evaluation of the outcome(s). **USE FORM:** [Presentation/Project Approval Form](#) **Group work eligible*.**
3. Attend at least four UTSW sponsored educational opportunities a year. Examples: Grand Rounds in any specialty, Presidential Lecture Series, Nursing Grand Rounds, Breast Conferences, Ethics Grand Rounds and Tumor Boards. Provide a written summary for each event on how it applies to your nursing practice. Validation required. **USE FORM:** [Grand Rounds Validation](#). **SEE RESOURCES PAGE** for additional information about events at UTSW including Grand Rounds.
4. Develop or actively participate in a patient support group. Provide documentation of your participation as a coordinator, leader, or speaker.
5. Provide documentation of your current standing as a Certified Interpreter to assist with medical interpretation for non-English speaking patients, English as a Second Language, or Hearing Impaired patients in need of sign language.
6. Partner with others to affect change and produce positive outcomes through the sharing of knowledge by giving a presentation as a guest speaker at a community event (i.e. school career day,). Must address the following key points in the presentation: educate others about the role of a nurse; promote a positive image of nursing; and provide appropriate resources. Must submit objectives, reference page, and presentation materials (i.e. copy of PowerPoint or handouts). Final packet must also include a written summary of how this presentation meets the standard and how it applies to the improvement of nursing practice and/or professional nursing. **Group work eligible*.**
7. Plan and implement **four** team building exercises to be completed during staff meetings or other scheduled times. Activities should engage in teamwork and team-building process to create a work environment that promotes cooperation, respect and trust. Focus activities on communication, trust, diversity or any topic that will directly benefit and improve processes and/or morale in the clinic. Must provide the following for each activity: a list of attendees; a written summary of the activity and how/why the activity meets the standard; and an evaluation of the outcome. **USE FORM:** [Team-Building Template](#). **Group work eligible*.**
8. Develop a Bulletin Board on Performance Improvement related to Teamwork and/or Collaboration of the multidisciplinary team in your clinic. Must highlight what teamwork/multidisciplinary collaboration means in your clinic, and how the approach and interventions can translate to other clinics. "An 'intervention' to facilitate teamwork can be "a service, activity, method, process, tool, approach, or strategy which is applied within a healthcare setting to foster teamwork (CHSRF, 2006). Bulletin Board information **must be pre-approved by your Nurse Supervisor or Clinic Manager.** Sources must be referenced in APA format. Bulletin Board must be posted in your clinic for a minimum of 30 days with a sign-in sheet. Final packet must include a picture or copy of the project, sign-in sheet, and a brief written summary of how this presentation meets the standard. **USE FORM:** [Presentation/Project Approval Form](#). **Group work eligible***

9. Create a project plan focused on outcomes and decisions related to patient care/delivery of services which improves communication and collaboration with healthcare consumers, families, the multidisciplinary team, and others. Must include the following information in the project plan: *Purpose/Objective, Project Overview, Goal(s), Benefit(s) of Change(s), Evaluation of Project and Outcomes*. **USE FORM:** [Project Plan Template](#). **Group work eligible***
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Standard VII. The professional nurse integrates evidence and research findings into their nursing practice.

(ANA Scope & Standards of Practice—Standard 9)

1. Identify **ONE** topic and write a literature review for use in staff education. Provide a critical analysis of at least three articles published within the last five years. Specify a target population, identify the topic and related articles, and compile the results. Conclusion must include how current clinical practice is supported or should be changed. Packet must include copies of ALL articles used. Literature review, including coversheet and reference page must be done in APA format. **SEE RESOURCES PAGE** for additional information about APA format, step-by-step approach to writing a literature review, and The Writers Handbook on review of literature writing. For additional assistance on how to locate an Evidence-Based Practice Article, [See Evidence-Based Practice Tip Sheet](#) located on the **RESOURCES PAGE**.
 2. Provide a written plan of action to alter an identified current policy/practice that should be changed based on your literature review from option #1.
 3. Develop a research proposal including problem identification purpose and hypothesis. Research must not be associated with your job requirements. Define the problem, provide background information, discuss the purpose and generate a hypothesis.
 4. Serve as a research co-investigator (separate and distinct from work responsibilities and *not* associated with your job requirements). Requires involvement above and beyond data collection. Outline the proposal, your involvement in the research, IRB validation, and the study conclusion (if study complete).
 5. Author a published article or book chapter. Must be published during current Clinical Ladder Fiscal Year. Provide copy of publication.
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Standard VIII. The professional nurse considers factors related to safety, effectiveness, and cost when planning and delivering patient care.

(ANA Scope & Standards of Practice—Standards 3, 4, 5b, & 6)

1. Coordinate a Work Safety or Cost Containment Committee related to patient care in your clinic. **Must be approved by Clinic Manager or Nurse Supervisor.** Must complete and submit the following: provide a written summary defining the purpose of the committee and how it affects safety, cost, planning and delivery of patient care. Final packet must include documentation including meeting dates, minutes and attendees. Committee must meet a minimum of **four times** per year to qualify. 75% meeting attendance required. **USE FORM:** [Presentation/Project Approval Form](#).

2. Identify a cost saving opportunity for your clinic's patients and lead an initiative to evaluate options. Implement at least one option identified. This option should affect a process and not be an intervention for a single patient. **USE FORM:** [Project Plan Template](#).

Example: You have patients who are scheduled for costly office tests, procedures, or infusions with limited time slots set aside on each schedule. Patients tend to show up sick or with certain symptoms that would cancel the test. The result is lost department revenue for a costly procedure, delays for patients and providers, a different patient could have been moved up rather than wasted procedure time, and the patient has to make another trip. An initiative could have been implemented to provide pre-procedure patient education including reportable signs and symptoms or calls to the patients 24-48 hours prior to their procedure to triage for symptoms and interventions. This is a cost saving initiative for expensive testing or procedures, a process was implemented to reduce last minute cancellations or no shows, and most importantly interventions were put in place for the patient or referral to PCP.

3. Serve as a representative on an ambulatory or health system patient safety initiative or cost planning committee. Safety Initiative/committee/task force must meet a minimum of **four times** per year to qualify. 75% meeting attendance required. Validation from coordinator or chairperson required.

*Group work consists of two clinical ladder participants. If more than two people are working on the project and want to receive credit, the participants must submit the project and the number working on it for committee approval. **USE FORM:** [Group Validation Form](#)

New Option Proposal:

Nurses have the opportunity to propose a new option that is not currently listed in the Ambulatory Nursing Clinical Ladder. The proposed option must fulfill one of the eight Nursing Standards outlined in the Ambulatory Nursing Clinical Ladder Options for FY20, which are based on the Scope and Standards of Practice set by the American Nurses Association (ANA, 2010). Submit the Option Proposal Form to the Clinical Ladder Review Committee for approval prior to utilizing the new option. Option Proposal Form with approval signature(s) must be included in your final packet. **USE FORM:** [Option Proposal Form](#)

All Option Proposals must be submitted to the Ambulatory Clinical Ladder at AmbulatoryClinicalLadder@UTSouthwestern.edu for review by July 3, 2020.

Reminder: The official fiscal year starts September 1, 2019. Packets are due by July 31, 2020.