



Triage RN Competency Checklist

Education

- Comprehensive Triage Curriculum
- HIPPA & EMTALA for triage nurses course (USA)
- Using Acuity Scale specific course (CTAS, ESI, or other)

Resources

- Read Triage Policies and Procedures
- Have on hand access to specific Acuity Scale authored literature for reference aid
- Have on hand specific acuity scale quick reference aids
- Read and have immediate access to Advanced Triage Protocols
- Read and have access to Policy on Violence
- Read and have access to Policy on Suspected Victims of Intimate Partner Violence
- Read and have access to Policy on Victims of Sexual Assault
- Read and have access to Policy on Suspected Victims of Elder Abuse
- Read and have access to Policy on Suspected Victims of Child Maltreatment
- Read and have access to Policy on Horizontal Violence/Workplace Bullying

Demonstration of Competency

Triage RN competency is classified by three levels reflective of five stages identified by P. Benner (footnote): Novice/Advanced Beginner, Competent/Proficient, and Expert

Competency Level: Novice/Advanced Beginner

- The novice/advanced beginner triage RN does not function independently in the triage role. The novice/advanced beginner triage RN will demonstrate mastery of the following skills: Demonstrates clear understanding of EMTALA and HIPAA requirements.
- Obtains appropriate symptom driven chief complaints
- Determines and documents acuity level using specific triage acuity scale. Utilizes the nursing process for all patients including nursing diagnosis, assessment, plan, implementation, and evaluation.
- Initiates common nurse practice intervention/standards on presenting patients with corresponding documentation (*including ice, elevation, immobilization of musculoskeletal complaints with CMS and distal pulse checks to ensure neurovascular integrity is appropriate*).



Competency Level: Competent/Proficient

The competent/proficient triage nurse functions independently in the triage area. In addition to mastery of the novice/advanced beginner competencies, the competent/proficient triage RN will:

- Consistently apply Principles of Triage.
- Perform and document the Rapid Triage Assessment on arriving patients (*Identifying and facilitating placement of patients who meet Immediate Bedding Criteria*).
- Verbalize and appropriately consider the three Immediate Bedding Criteria
 - Obviously ill or injured (or nurse is able to quickly and confidently determine accurate disposition),*
 - Open bed (available or able to obtain),*
 - Available care provider (considering acuity of patient load).*
- Perform and document a comprehensive triage assessment (*if Immediate Bedding Criteria not met*).
- Demonstrate ability to prioritize patients.
- Determine and document patient disposition.
- Implement “any open bed policy” appropriately.
- Initiate dual triage per department guidelines.
- Complete triage documentation accurately, capture essentials of triage assessment with pertinent positives and pertinent negatives.
- Reassess patients in waiting areas according to acuity scale objectives and/or reassessment policy (*Nursing practice reflects department policy*).
- Demonstrate understanding of rationale for considering “worst-case scenario” on every patient.
- Initiate appropriate nursing interventions and/or diagnostics (*by Advanced Triage Protocols according to hospital policy and standards*).
- Initiate appropriate Advanced Triage Protocols according to hospital policy and standards.
- Participate in peer review.
- Participate in triage chart audits.

Competency Level: Expert

In addition to mastery of the proficient/competent competencies, the expert triage RN will:

- Participate in Triage Core Group.
- Participate in *developing and/or maintaining* triage competency standards including:
 - Education and mentoring
 - ENA standards
 - Peer review
 - Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) via chart audits
- Complete Triage Core Group Peer Evaluations as defined by core triage group guidelines.
- Collaborate with physicians on developing new or reviewing existing protocols.
- Train technicians and assistants in eliciting appropriate (symptom-driven) chief complaints.



- Coordinate obtaining and/or creating and distributing waiting room literature (*e.g. Waiting Room Brochure*).
- Create a triage equipment list.
- Develop preceptor program and competency for new triage nurses.
- Assist with 5-level triage acuity scale training.
- Orient nurses to the triage area.
- Serve as a triage mentor/resource for nurses assigned to triage role.
- Serve as a triage mentor/resource for ancillary staff assigned to triage area.
- Participate in triage redesign and process improvement projects.