

# Peer Review in Nursing

Attaining sustainable quality and safety outcomes through principled peer review practices.

## Contemporary Peer Review Principles

Six Contemporary Peer Review Principles	Supporting excerpts from the 1988 ANA <i>Peer Review Guidelines</i>
<p><b>1. A Peer is Someone of the Same Rank</b></p>	<p>Peer review implies that the nursing care delivered by a group of nurses or an individual nurse is evaluated by individuals of the same rank or standing according to established standards of practice.</p> <p>Peer reviewers are nurse colleagues with clinical competence similar to that of the nurse seeking peer review.</p> <p>The steps in the process of peer review are the same for all nurses and all settings.</p> <p>The key difference lies in identifying the purpose, the peer group, and the appropriate professionally defined standards upon which to base the review.</p>
<p><b>2. Peer Review is Practice Focused</b></p>	<p>Standards of nursing practice provide a means for measuring the quality of nursing care a client receives.</p> <p>Peer review in nursing is the process by which practicing registered nurses systematically assess, monitor, and make judgments about the quality of nursing care provided by peers as measured against professional standards of practice.</p> <p>Peer review activities are focused on the practice decisions of professional nurses to determine the appropriateness and timeliness of those decisions</p>
<p><b>3. Feedback is Timely, Routine and a Continuous Expectation</b></p>	<p>In every health care facility in which nurses practice and for each nurse in individual practice, provision for peer review should be an ongoing process.</p> <p>An organized program makes peer review timely and objective.</p>
<p><b>4. Peer Review Fosters a Continuous Learning Culture of Patient Safety and Best Practice</b></p>	<p>The goals of every agency providing nursing care should include peer review as one means of maintaining standards of nursing practice and upgrading nursing care.</p> <p>With respect to the individual, participation in the peer review process stimulates professional growth. Clinical knowledge and skills are updated.</p> <p>The purposes of peer review are to determine the strengths and weaknesses of nursing care, taking into consideration local and institutional resources and constraints; to provide evidence for use as the basis of recommendations for new or altered policies and procedures to improve nursing care; and to identify those areas where practice patterns indicate more knowledge is needed.</p> <p>Nurse reviewers need, or must strive to develop, the judicial temperament—the capacity and the willingness to make critical decisions on the basis of evidence.</p>
<p><b>5. Feedback is Not Anonymous</b></p>	<p>Feedback to the nurse under review is most effective when both verbal and written communication are combined.</p>
<p><b>6. Feedback incorporates the developmental stage of the nurse.</b></p>	<p>Individuals, institutions, and the nursing profession all derive benefit from an effective peer review program. With respect to the individual, participation in the peer review process stimulates professional growth. Clinical knowledge and skills are updated.</p> <p><small>*ANA (1988) <i>Peer Review Guidelines</i>. Kansas City, MO: Author</small></p>