

**Wisconsin Nurses Association  
2011 WNA Reference #2**

**Subject:** Care Coordination and Nursing's Role  
**Introduced by:** WNA Board of Directors  
**WNA Core Issue:** Appropriate Nurse Staffing and Patient Safety and Advocacy

**Summary:** The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) defines Care Coordination as *"deliberate organization of patient care activities between two or more participants (including the patient) involved in a patient's care to facilitate the appropriate delivery of health care services. Organizing care involves the marshalling of personnel and other resources needed to carry out all required patient care activities and is often managed by the exchange of information among participants responsible for different aspects of care"* (AHRQ, 2010).

According to the Communicable Disease Center (CDC), in 2008, the burden of chronic disease for Wisconsin - with those diseases that include heart disease, stroke, cancer, and diabetes – are among the most prevalent, costly, and preventable of all health problems. Heart disease accounted for 25% of deaths in Wisconsin in 2005, while stroke caused 6% of deaths. In 2007, 26% of adults in Wisconsin reported having high blood pressure (hypertension) and 35% of those screened reported having high blood cholesterol, which puts them at greater risk for developing heart disease and stroke. In 2005, diabetes was the sixth leading cause of death in the US. Likely to be underreported as a cause of death, the risk of death among people with diabetes is about twice that of people without diabetes of similar age. In 2005, 1,276 adults in Wisconsin died from diabetes mellitus. In 2007, 6% of adults in Wisconsin reported being diagnosed with non-pregnancy related diabetes. In 2005, 23% of all deaths in Wisconsin were due to cancer. The American Cancer Society estimates that 28,130 new cases of cancer were diagnosed in Wisconsin in 2007, including 3,090 new cases of colorectal cancer and 3,340 new cases of women's breast cancer. In 2007, 28% of adults in Wisconsin reported being diagnosed with arthritis. In 2007, 20% of adults and 21% of high school students in Wisconsin reported being current smokers. In 2007, 62% of adults in Wisconsin were overweight or obese and 14% of high schools students were overweight, based on self-reported height and weight. 82% of high school students and 76% of adults in Wisconsin consumed fewer than 5 fruits and vegetables per day. 45% of adults in Wisconsin were not engaged in sufficient moderate or vigorous physical activity.

To summarize US statistics:

- Chronic diseases cause 7 in 10 deaths each year in the United States.
- About 133 million Americans—nearly 1 in 2 adults—live with at least one chronic illness.
- More than 75% of health care costs are due to chronic conditions.
- Approximately one-fourth of persons living with a chronic illness experience significant limitations in daily activities.
- The percentage of U.S. children and adolescents with a chronic health condition has increased from 1.8% in the 1960s to more than 7% in 2004.

Although chronic diseases are more common among older adults, they affect people of all ages and are now recognized as a leading health concern of the nation. Growing evidence indicates that a comprehensive approach to prevention can save tremendous costs and needless suffering (2 CDC, 2008).

<http://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/resources/publications/aag/chronic.htm#aag>

Newer care coordination models demonstrate the important contributions nurses make to better health outcomes for individuals with one or more chronic diseases. Wisconsin businesses and state agencies have reported that they are interested in insurance reform that does not pay for "codes," but rather outcomes of care. The opportunity to demonstrate care coordination lead by professional nurses is becoming an emerging trend within primary and public health settings.

**Recommendations:** That the Wisconsin Nurses Association will...

1. Affirm care coordination as a fundamental component of general nursing practice.
2. Promote the leadership role of the RN in care coordination by raising awareness of the unique contributions nurses bring to the role.

**WNA Goals:**

WNA Goal 1: Collectively and collaboratively advocate for access to comprehensive quality health care services for all people.

WNA Goal 2: Assure that the registered nurse is an essential provider in all practice settings through education, research, workplace advocacy, legislation, and regulation.