

Nurses Clinical Ladder

Personal and professional growth are valued, supported, and recognized at UAMS.

Upon hire, all UAMS nurses are placed on the clinical ladder based on years of experience, achievement of skills, and competencies. Advancement to the RN III level is an expectation of all UAMS nurses. Opportunities beyond RN III are optional and encouraged.

Objectives

- Encourage and support RN personal & professional development
- Create an environment that promotes nurse accountability, autonomy, and collaboration in the provision of patient care
- Define role and competence expectations within each practice level
- Develop and recognize excellence in nursing practice and leadership
- Support recruitment and retention of nurses

Professional Portfolios

- All UAMS nurses should have a professional portfolio. The portfolios provide information and evidence that facilitates the performance appraisal process while enabling each nurse to show case their professional practice.

Advancement Requirements

Practice Level	Advancement Requirements	Education Requirements
<p>RN New Grad</p> <p>Novice – Advanced Beginner</p> <p>0 – 12 Months</p>	<p>RN New Grad candidates must complete the following to advance to RN I level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Completion of one full year as a RN New Grad. ▪ Able to apply basic knowledge and skills to meet standards of care for the most common patients encountered in his/her specialty with minimal supervision. ▪ Successful completion of annual evaluation ▪ Successful completion of the required qualifiers as stated in the “Performance Appraisal Evidence Guide – Requirements to Advance from RN New Grad to RN I.” Note: Optional qualifiers are also available to achieve a score of 4 – Exceeding expectations. <p><i>NOTE: Promotion to RN I is expected to occur after the first full year from date of hire.</i></p>	<p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nurse Resident Workshop 1 ▪ Nurse Resident Workshop 2 ▪ Transition to Practice 1 ▪ Transition to Practice 2 ▪ Transition to Practice 3 ▪ Transition to Practice 4 <p><i>NOTE: RN’s not hired as residents are exempt from the Nurse Resident Workshops.</i></p>
<p>RN I</p> <p>Advanced Beginner</p> <p>12 – 24 Months</p>	<p>RN I nurses must complete the following to advance to the RN II level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Completes minimum of 2 years of nursing experience ▪ Participates as a full partner on the interdisciplinary care team with minimal supervision and incorporates feedback and mentoring from consultations with more experienced clinicians. ▪ Proactively and independently coordinates plan of care by applying knowledge from clinical experience for a variety of patient situations from common to complex. ▪ Begins to assume a leadership role and could function as a preceptor. ▪ Successful completion of annual evaluation, and competency process as outlined in the “Performance Appraisal Evidence Guide – Requirements to Advance from RN I to RN II.” Note: Optional qualifiers are also available to achieve a score of 4 – Exceeding expectations. <p><i>NOTE: Promotion to the RN II level is expected to occur within 6 months of the date eligible to be promoted.</i></p>	<p>Required only if Resource Nurse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TRAQ training <p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Graduate Degree in Nursing • National Certification (<i>Hourly Differential</i>)

<p>RN II</p> <p>Competent</p> <p>24 – 36 Months</p>	<p>RN II nurses must complete the following to advance to the RN III level or maintain RN III level if not advancing to RN IV or RN V:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Completes minimum of 3 years of nursing experience as a full partner on the interdisciplinary care team. ▪ Able to perceive situations as a whole and applies knowledge from clinical experience by critically analyzing findings for complex patients to improve practice and quality patient outcomes. ▪ Is recognized for knowledge and skills by their peers. ▪ Consistently assumes a developing leadership role. ▪ Has had the training and is capable of functioning in the role of charge nurse and/or preceptor. ▪ Demonstrates leadership characteristics - problem-solving, conflict resolution, motivating/inspiring team, positivity/role modeling ▪ Successful completion of annual evaluation, and competency process as outlined in the “Performance Appraisal Evidence Guide – Requirements to Advance from RN II to RNIII.” <p>NOTES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Promotion to the RN III level is expected to occur within 6 months of the date eligible to be promoted.</i> • RN is required to continue to complete the RN III requirements to maintain the RN III level if not advancing to RN IV level. 	<p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete all modules listed for RN I if never taken • Portfolio Education for the RN • Adult Learning Principles <p>Required only if Resource Nurse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TRAQ training <p>Optional: Presentation Essentials Online Course</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson 1: Introduction to Presentation Skills • Lesson 2: Designing Your Presentation • Lesson 3: Designing Your Slides • Lesson 4: Delivering Your Presentation <p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Graduate Degree in Nursing • National Certification (<i>Hourly Differential</i>) • Resource Nurse (<i>Compensation upon completion of 9-month project</i>)
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<p>RN III</p> <p>Proficient</p> <p>3 or Greater Years</p>	<p>RN III nurses must complete the following to advance to the RN IV level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Minimum of 4 years of nursing experience in the defined specialty ▪ Hold a current specialty certification for the area they are seeking a promotion. ▪ Currently have a BSN ▪ .5 FTE or greater UAMS employee ▪ Intuitive, comprehensive knowledge base as a foundation for clinical expertise. ▪ Self-directed, flexible and innovative in patient care and problem solving. ▪ Promotes critical thinking, cultivates mentoring relationships. ▪ Evaluates, recommends and implements practice changes based on evidence-based practice literature. ▪ Successful completion of annual evaluation, and competency process as outlined in the “Performance Appraisal Evidence Guide – Requirements to Advance from RN III to RN IV.” ▪ Successful initial and annual portfolio submissions reviewed by the RN IV/RN V Review Board. ▪ Must continually perform at a proficient level. ▪ Must have manager’s approval for promotion. ▪ Will receive hourly differential. ▪ Must select either a Clinical or Leadership path for training. <p>Clinical Expert (RN IV- CE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provides direct patient care on a daily basis and will assume progressing levels of responsibility related to standards development, staff training, and patient education around their clinical specialty. ✓ Maintaining this level depends on professional portfolio development, successful annual evaluation, and Manager/APP approval. <p>Management Track (RN IV- M)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ May serve as primary charge nurse. ✓ Assumes selected delegated unit management tasks and will begin development of skills necessary to move into CSM/management role. ✓ The number of Management Experts is related to the unit need and director approval. ✓ Maintaining this level depends on professional portfolio development, successful annual evaluation, and Manager/APP approval. 	<p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete all modules listed for RN I, RN II, and RN III if never taken
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	<p>NOTES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ RN IV / RN V's are not eligible to participate in the Resource Nurse program. ▪ RN's may not transfer to another area as an RN IV unless within the same specialty. This is to be determined and approved by the Center for Nursing Excellence. If the transfer is not within the same specialty, the RN will move back into the RN III position. ▪ RN IVs who receive a written disciplinary warning and/or do not continue to meet requirements will be demoted to RN III at that time. ▪ For program details please see C360 policy #NR.AD.1.41 RN IV / RN V Review 	
<p>RN IV (Renewing)</p> <p>Expert</p> <p>4 or Greater Years in Specialty</p>	<p>Renewing RN IV's must maintain the required qualifiers of a new RN IV as well as complete the designated number of qualifiers in each of the following categories per the "Performance Appraisal Evidence Guide – Requirements to Maintain RN IV (Renewal)."</p> <p>Category #1 – Professional/Clinical Development (Must complete at least 1 qualifier)</p> <p>Category #2 – Contribution to the Development of Others (Must complete at least 2 qualifiers)</p> <p>Category #3 – Leadership (Must complete at least 2 qualifiers)</p> <p>Category #4 – Performance Improvement, EBP, or Research – Must be pre-approved by the Center for Nursing Excellence (Must complete at least 1 qualifier)</p> <p>Category #5 – Community Activities (Must complete at least 1 qualifier)</p>	<p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Learning to Lead" (Live class – 8 hours) Must complete within 24 months after promotion date <p>NOTE: This course was previously known as "Leadership Essentials." If you have previously completed "Leadership Essentials," you do NOT need to take "Learning to Lead."</p>

<p>RN IV (To RN V)</p> <p>Expert</p> <p>4 or Greater Years in Specialty</p>	<p>RN IV nurses must complete the following to advance to the RN V level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Minimum of 4 years of nursing experience in the defined specialty ▪ .5 FTE or greater UAMS employee ▪ Holds a current specialty certification relevant to the area they are seeking a promotion. ▪ Master’s Degree within a nursing specialty. ▪ Completion of all required qualifiers on the “Performance Appraisal Evidence Guide – Requirements to Advance from RN III/RN IV to RN V (New Applicant).” ▪ Provides leadership and support within the Inpatient Nursing Council or Ambulatory Nursing Council for initiatives and strategic planning to improve patient outcomes at all levels of the organization. ▪ Intuitive, comprehensive knowledge base as a foundation for clinical expertise. ▪ Self-directed, flexible and innovative in patient care and problem solving. ▪ Promotes critical thinking, cultivates mentoring relationships. ▪ Evaluates, recommends and implements practice changes based on evidence-based practice literature. 	<p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete all modules listed for RN I, II, & III if never taken • Leadership Skills (live class – 8 hours) • If completing an evidence based practice or research project: CITI Course Human Subject Protection (online module) • If completing a performance improvement project: TRAQ training
<p>Renewing RN V</p> <p>Expert with Master Degree</p> <p>4 or Greater Years in Specialty</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To remain in RN V status, the RN must continue to complete all required qualifiers on the “Performance Appraisal Evidence Guide – Requirements to Maintain RN V (Renewing).” ▪ RN V’s may not transfer to another area as an RN V unless within the same specialty. If not, the RN V will move back into the RN III position. This is to be determined and approved by the Center for Nursing Excellence. ▪ RN V’s may not apply for a Resource Nurse role. ▪ RN V’s who receive a written disciplinary and/or don’t continue to meet requirements will be demoted to RN III at that time. 	
<p>Nationally Certified Nurse</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Optional for RN I, RN II and RN III ▪ Required for RN IV and RN V ▪ Hourly differential <p>NOTES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must maintain current certification and submit evidence as requested. Expiration of certification will result in loss of differential. • For full program information see C360 policy NR.AD.1.40 National Nursing Certification 	

<p>Resource Nurse</p> <p>(Optional for RN I through and RN III)</p>	<p>It is recommended units chose one resource nurse per each unit/clinic/area per group; this allows us to keep the groups small enough to be effective.</p> <p>2020 Resource Nurse Projects:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fall with Injuries 2. Workplace Violence 3. Patient Experience 4. C. diff 5. Burnout (Compassion Fatigue) <p>Achieving and maintaining this level depends on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No less than a .5 FTE and successful evaluation at an RN I or above level. ▪ Able to work independently on a project and involve other staff nurses in best practice. ▪ Focus toward the professional growth and promotion of quality care ▪ Must perform successful resource roles to achieve compensation. ▪ Expected to engage in the design and implementation of their groups' project in their respective area(s). ▪ Meet regularly with the CSM in their area to keep them informed. ▪ Expected to watch the TRAQ training videos online if they have not already done so and will be responsible for submitting the following documents specific to their area at the end of the rotation: 1) project charter, 2) stakeholder map, 3) action plan, 4) run chart, and 5) Resource Nurse checklist. ▪ Successful completion of all requirements of Resource Nurse Program and signed off by the CSM, Resource Nurse Facilitator and the Center for Nursing Excellence prior to compensation distributed. ▪ Compensation after successful completion of all requirements as designated in a 9-month rotation beginning in February. <p>NOTES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Resource Nurses who receive a written disciplinary during the program rotation will no longer be able to continue in the program and will not be compensated.</i> 	<p>Required:</p>
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Additional Information:

Clinical nurse progression in the Nurses Clinical ladder is expected to occur within 1 year of eligibility for RN I, RN II, and RN III. Promotions to an RNIV and RN V track are optional.

Promotions are based upon an individual employee's performance as measured by the Performance Evidence Appraisal Guides, professional portfolio development, experiential qualifications, and other factors.

There are no voluntary demotions for RN I through RN III levels. Failure to perform at the designated level will result in an action plan to address the deficiency. Failure to attain the appropriate position or maintain an acceptable level of performance after the action plan may result in demotion and/or progressive discipline up to and including termination. Voluntary demotions from RN IV and RN V may be considered and carried out with an appropriate decrease in salary and the approval of the CSM and Director.

RN IV's and RN V's failing to perform at an acceptable level, defaulting on requirements, qualifiers and/or certification commitments will be demoted to RN III status and receive a decrease in pay equal to the level of dollar amount received at the time of their promotion to RN IV and/or RN V.