



**AACN**  
healthy work  
environment  
ASSESSMENT

# Team Assessment Results

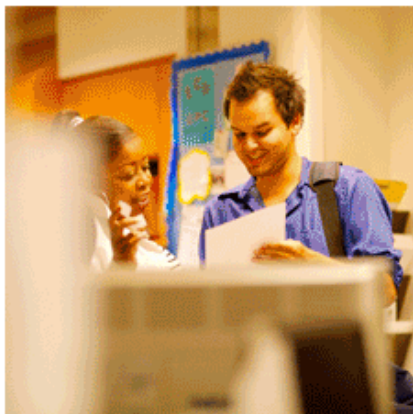
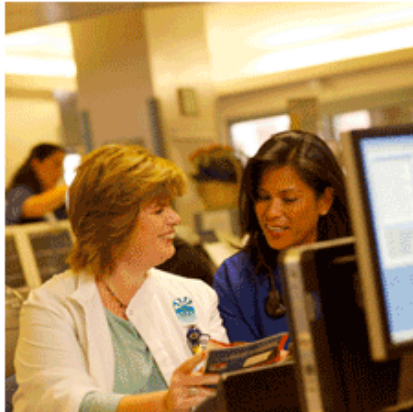
**OR - North East**

Valley Medical Center  
Aurora SampleCare

**Becky Hausen**

survey open date: 01-Aug-09

survey close date: 01-Aug-10



AMERICAN  
ASSOCIATION  
of CRITICAL-CARE  
NURSES



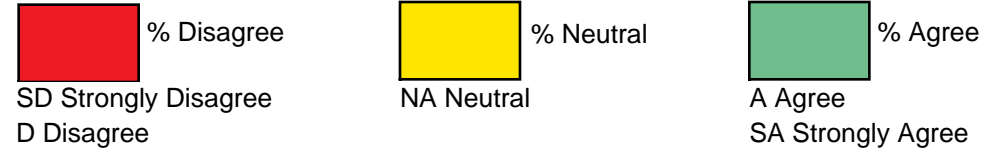
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# How to Read Your Feedback Report

## Standard Scores

### STANDARD 1: Skilled Communication

OR - North East



| Assessment Date | Responses | Score | SD | D | NA | A  | SA | Response Distribution   |
|-----------------|-----------|-------|----|---|----|----|----|---|
| 01-Aug-09       | 13        | 4.18  | 0  | 5 | 26 | 15 | 54 | <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <span style="color: red;">5%</span> <span style="color: yellow;">26%</span> <span style="color: green;">69%</span> </div> |

**Aggregate Score: 4.18**

### Individual Item Scores

1. Administrators, nurse managers, physicians, nurses and other staff maintain frequent communication to prevent each other from being surprised or caught off guard by decisions.

|           |    |   |   |    |    |   |    |  |
|-----------|----|---|---|----|----|---|----|--|
| 01-Aug-09 | 13 | 4 | 0 | 15 | 23 | 8 | 54 | <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <span style="color: red;">15%</span> <span style="color: yellow;">23%</span> <span style="color: green;">62%</span> </div> |
|-----------|----|---|---|----|----|---|----|--|

### Calculation Notes

**Score:** Represents the mean (average) score on a scale of 1 to 5.

**Percentages:** Rounding may produce percentage values that could differ slightly from 100%.

### Scoring Guidelines

Please use the following scale to interpret your team's scores for this assessment:

1.00 – 2.99 – Needs Improvement

3.00 – 3.99 – Good

4.00 – 5.00 – Excellent

## Summary Score

The mean score for the entire survey, including all six standards.  
Using the scoring guidelines provided below, evaluate the overall score for this assessment.

### OR - North East

| Assessment Date | Responses | Score | SD | D  | NA | A  | SA | Response Distribution |     |     |
|-----------------|-----------|-------|----|----|----|----|----|-----------------------|-----|-----|
| 01-Aug-09       | 13        | 3.2   | 12 | 16 | 30 | 21 | 21 | 28%                   | 30% | 42% |

### Scoring Guidelines

Please use the following scale to interpret your team's scores for this assessment:

1.00 – 2.99 – Needs Improvement

3.00 – 3.99 – Good

4.00 – 5.00 – Excellent

# Standard Scores

## STANDARD 1: Skilled Communication

Using the scoring guidelines provided with your assessment report, evaluate your team's score for this standard.

OR - North East

| Assessment Date | Responses | Score | SD | D | NA | A  | SA | Response Distribution |
|-----------------|-----------|-------|----|---|----|----|----|-----------------------|
| 01-Aug-09       | 13        | 4.18  | 0  | 5 | 26 | 15 | 54 |                       |

**Aggregate Score: 4.18**

### Individual Item Scores

1. Administrators, nurse managers, physicians, nurses and other staff maintain frequent communication to prevent each other from being surprised or caught off guard by decisions.

|           |    |   |   |    |    |   |    |  |
|-----------|----|---|---|----|----|---|----|--|
| 01-Aug-09 | 13 | 4 | 0 | 15 | 23 | 8 | 54 |  |
|-----------|----|---|---|----|----|---|----|--|

6. Administrators, nurse managers, physicians, nurses, and other staff make sure their actions match their words—they "walk their talk."

|           |    |      |   |   |    |    |    |  |
|-----------|----|------|---|---|----|----|----|--|
| 01-Aug-09 | 13 | 4.23 | 0 | 0 | 31 | 15 | 54 |  |
|-----------|----|------|---|---|----|----|----|--|

14. Administrators, nurse managers, physicians, nurses, and other staff have zero-tolerance for disrespect and abuse. If they see or hear someone being disrespectful, they hold them accountable regardless of the person's role or position.

|           |    |      |   |   |    |    |    |  |
|-----------|----|------|---|---|----|----|----|--|
| 01-Aug-09 | 13 | 4.31 | 0 | 0 | 23 | 23 | 54 |  |
|-----------|----|------|---|---|----|----|----|--|

### Scoring Guidelines

Please use the following scale to interpret your team's scores for this assessment:

1.00 – 2.99 – Needs Improvement

3.00 – 3.99 – Good

4.00 – 5.00 – Excellent

### **STANDARD 1: Skilled Communication**

#### **Does your skilled communications score indicate opportunity for improvement?**

Ineffective communication compromises patient safety. Make skilled communication an important element of your programs to ensure patient safety. We recommend that you review the evidence below. In designing your team's development plan, consider the recommendations for getting started below.

#### **Is your skilled communication score good or excellent?**

Congratulations! There may still be some specific items where your team's score was noticeably lower. We recommend that you explore what might underlie those scores and engage the team in determining how best to address the challenge. Meeting the skilled communication standard is vital given increasing evidence that ineffective communication compromises patient safety.

#### **WHAT IS THE EVIDENCE?**

According to The Joint Commission, team communication breakdowns are a leading contributor to sentinel events, including medication errors. Due to growing evidence that disruptive and intimidating behavior endangers patients, contributes to higher costs, and drives turnover among healthcare professionals, The Joint Commission has issued a sentinel event alert. The alert addresses behaviors that undermine a culture of safety and calls for immediate action from healthcare organizations.

[Read More](#)

The Institute for Safe Medication Practices issued a Medication Safety Alert about the dangers of intimidating behaviors.

[Read more](#)

The Silence Kills study conducted by VitalSmarts and the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses found that the prevalent culture of poor communication and collaboration among health professionals relates significantly to continued medical errors and staff turnover. The study also found that inadequate support systems, skills, and personal accountability result in communication gaps that can bring harm to patients.

[Read more](#)

The Critical Care Nurses' Work Environments 2008 study found that about half of the 4,000 nurses surveyed agreed that nurses in their organization were equally proficient in communication and clinical skills.

[Read more](#)

#### **GETTING STARTED**

Understandably, there isn't a one-size-fits-all approach to implementing the skilled communication standard. Approach implementation in the way that you think will most benefit your organization. Here are steps that other organizations have taken for you to consider as you start designing your team's development plan.

### **Master the Healthy Work Environments Standards**

### **STANDARD 1: Skilled Communication**

Become well versed in the AACN Standards for Establishing and Sustaining Healthy Work Environments. If you haven't already, read the standards with your assessment scores in mind. Flag key areas on which to focus your effort.

[Download the standards](#)

#### **Focus on Standard 1 and Its Critical Elements**

Drill down into the skilled communication standard—its background, critical elements, references and suggested reading. Critical elements are the blueprint to guide your action steps and stimulate discussion. Some focus on an individual's responsibilities; others on what is required of the organization. Keep this distinction in mind when evaluating your team's strengths and weaknesses. Changing individuals' behavior may call for one set of interventions and changing an organization's behaviors will require a different set.

[Read more](#)

#### **Discuss the Standards**

Join forces with other team leaders to identify what their groups see as barriers to achieving skilled communication. Incorporate the standards into existing and new meetings. Existing meetings might include work teams, interdisciplinary patient safety teams, AACN Beacon Award for Critical Care Excellence and Magnet Recognition Program® teams, process improvement, and governance council meetings. New meetings will be those where you design and carry out your implementation plan to strengthen communication skills.

[Find Discussion Resources](#)

[Read more about the Beacon Award](#)

[Read more about the Magnet Recognition Program](#)

#### **VitalSmarts**

AACN's partner in offering you this healthy work environments assessment tool, is a corporate training company that helps teams and organizations improve performance through better communication and collaboration. Based on more than thirty years of research, their Crucial Conversations, Crucial Confrontations, and Influencer training programs have proven highly effective for healthcare organizations, making VitalSmarts an AACN recommended solution provider.

[Learn more](#)

#### **Host Learning Events**

Most people aren't born with skills to adeptly communicate when faced with high-stakes conflict. Education and professional development is vital for team members to acquire and strengthen their communication skills. Invite local, regional, and national experts to present learning sessions about skilled communication and the critical importance of healthy work environments.

[Find speakers in your region](#)

### **STANDARD 1: Skilled Communication**

## **Recommended Additional Resources**

### **Start or Join a Reading Club**

Many healthcare organizations already have active evidence-focused reading or journal clubs. You can also start your own. Use AACN-recommended books, articles, posters, and other resources about skilled communication to start a reading club or join an existing one.

[Find resources](#)

### **TeamSTEPPS**

TeamSTEPPS™ is an evidence-based teamwork system developed by the Department of Defense's Patient Safety Program in collaboration with the Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality to improve communication and teamwork skills among healthcare professionals. TeamSTEPPS is a source for free ready-to-use materials and a training curriculum to successfully integrate teamwork principles into all areas of a healthcare system.

[Learn more](#)

### **New Resources**

New resources are regularly added to the AACN Healthy Work Environments Web site.

[Visit the site](#)

# Standard Scores

## STANDARD 2: True Collaboration

Using the scoring guidelines provided with your assessment report, evaluate your team's score for this standard.

OR - North East

| Assessment Date | Responses | Score | SD | D  | NA | A  | SA | Response Distribution |     |     |
|-----------------|-----------|-------|----|----|----|----|----|-----------------------|-----|-----|
| 01-Aug-09       | 13        | 3.23  | 10 | 15 | 31 | 28 | 15 | 25%                   | 31% | 43% |

**Aggregate Score: 3.23**

### Individual Item Scores

2. Administrators, nurse managers, and physicians involve nurses and other staff to an appropriate degree when making important decisions.

|           |    |      |   |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |
|-----------|----|------|---|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|
| 01-Aug-09 | 13 | 3.15 | 8 | 31 | 15 | 31 | 15 | 39% | 15% | 46% |
|-----------|----|------|---|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|

10. Nurses and other staff feel able to influence the policies, procedures, and bureaucracy around them.

|           |    |      |    |   |    |    |   |     |     |     |
|-----------|----|------|----|---|----|----|---|-----|-----|-----|
| 01-Aug-09 | 13 | 3.15 | 15 | 8 | 31 | 39 | 8 | 23% | 31% | 47% |
|-----------|----|------|----|---|----|----|---|-----|-----|-----|

15. When administrators, nurse managers, and physicians speak with nurses and other staff, it's not one-way communication or order giving. Instead, they seek input and use it to shape decisions.

|           |    |      |   |   |    |    |    |     |     |     |
|-----------|----|------|---|---|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|
| 01-Aug-09 | 13 | 3.38 | 8 | 8 | 46 | 15 | 23 | 16% | 46% | 38% |
|-----------|----|------|---|---|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|

### Scoring Guidelines

Please use the following scale to interpret your team's scores for this assessment:

1.00 – 2.99 – Needs Improvement

3.00 – 3.99 – Good

4.00 – 5.00 – Excellent

### **STANDARD 2: True Collaboration**

#### **Does your true collaboration score indicate opportunity for improvement?**

Skilled communication is sincere, without the lip service that collaboration in healthcare is often given. Collaboration and communication are inextricably linked. Without them, healthy work environments are impossible to achieve and patient safety is compromised. Addressing barriers to collaboration is an important component of your patient safety improvement program.

#### **Is your true collaboration score good or excellent?**

Congratulations! There may still be some specific items where your team's score was noticeably lower. We recommend that you explore what might underlie those scores and engage the team in determining how to best address the challenge. Meeting the true collaboration standard is vital given the increasing evidence that without it patient safety is compromised.

#### **WHAT IS THE EVIDENCE?**

Extensive evidence shows the negative impact of poor collaboration on a wide range of measurable indicators including cost, patient and family satisfaction, patient safety and outcomes, professional staff satisfaction, and nurse retention.

[Read more](#)

The Critical Care Nurses' Work Environments 2008 study reported just over half of the nurses surveyed agreed that nurses in their organization were relentless in pursuing and fostering true collaboration.

[Read more](#)

Nurses are attracted to and stay in work environments where nurses and physicians respect each others' knowledge and competence, and where there is mutual concern that quality patient care will be provided. Faced with a workforce shortage that continues to worsen, healthcare organizations will only retain excellent professionals when they create and sustain healthy work environments.

[Read more](#)

American Organization of Nurse Executives, Healthy Work Environments, Volume 2: Striving for Excellence

[Read more](#)

VitalSmarts and American Association of Critical-Care Nurses, Silence Kills: The Seven Crucial Conversations for Healthcare

[Read more](#)

#### **GETTING STARTED**

True collaboration is not an event. It is a process that requires continuous attention and nurturing. Understandably, there isn't a one-size-fits-all approach to implementing the standard. Approach implementation in the way that you think will most benefit your organization. Here are steps that other organizations have taken for you to consider as you start designing your team's development plan.

#### **Master the Healthy Work Environment Standards**

Become well-versed in the AACN Standards for Establishing and Sustaining Healthy Work Environments. If you haven't already, read the standards with your assessment scores in mind. Flag key areas on which to focus your effort.

### **STANDARD 2: True Collaboration**

[Download the standards](#)

#### **Focus on Standard 2 and Its Critical Elements**

Drill down into the true collaboration standard—its background, critical elements, references and suggested reading. Critical elements are the blueprint to guide your action steps and stimulate discussion. Some focus on an individual's responsibilities; others on what is required of the organization. Keep this distinction in mind when evaluating your team's strengths and weaknesses. Changing individuals' behaviors may call for one set of interventions and changing an organization's behaviors will require a different set.

[Read more](#)

#### **Discuss the Standards**

Join forces with other team leaders to identify what their groups see as barriers to achieving true collaboration. Incorporate the standards into existing and new meetings. Existing meetings might include work teams, interdisciplinary patient safety teams, AACN Beacon Award for Critical Care Excellence and Magnet Recognition Program® teams, process improvement, and governance council meetings. New meetings will be those where you design and carry out your implementation plan to strengthen collaboration skills

[Find Discussion Resources](#)

[Read more about the Beacon Award](#)

[Read more about the Magnet Recognition Program](#)

#### **VitalSmarts**

AACN's partner in offering you this healthy work environments assessment tool, is a corporate training company that helps teams and organizations improve performance through better communication and collaboration. Based on more than thirty years of research, their Crucial Conversations, Crucial Confrontations, and Influencer training programs have proven highly effective for healthcare organizations, making VitalSmarts an AACN recommended solution provider.

[Learn more](#)

#### **Host Learning Events**

True collaboration is challenging in any environment. But achieving this standard in the high-pressure world of healthcare is especially difficult and requires continuous focused attention. Providing education and professional development in the skills underlying collaboration—especially communication and effective decision making—is critical to achieving this standard. Developing an education and training program will help your team learn new skills and advance existing skills.

[Find speakers in your region](#)

#### **AACN recommends these learning materials and consultation sources:**

[Creighton University, Werner Institute for Negotiation and Dispute Resolution](#)

[Dharma Consulting and Eric Klein](#)

[Suzanne Gordon](#)

[Reina Trust Building Institute](#)

### **STANDARD 2: True Collaboration**

## **Recommended Additional Resources**

### **Start or Join a Reading Club**

Many healthcare organizations already have active evidence-focused reading or journal clubs. You can also start your own. Use AACN-recommended books, articles, posters, and other resources about true collaboration to start a reading club or join an existing one.

[Find resources](#)

### **TeamSTEPPS**

TeamSTEPPS™ is an evidence-based teamwork system developed by the Department of Defense's Patient Safety Program in collaboration with the Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality to improve communication and teamwork skills among healthcare professionals. TeamSTEPPS is a source for free ready-to-use materials and a training curriculum to successfully integrate teamwork principles into all areas of a healthcare system.

[Learn more](#)

### **New Resources**

New resources are regularly added to the AACN Healthy Work Environments Web site.

[Visit the site](#)

# Standard Scores

## STANDARD 3: Effective Decision Making

Using the scoring guidelines provided with your assessment report, evaluate your team's score for this standard.

OR - North East

| Assessment Date | Responses | Score | SD | D  | NA | A  | SA | Response Distribution |     |     |
|-----------------|-----------|-------|----|----|----|----|----|-----------------------|-----|-----|
| 01-Aug-09       | 13        | 2.87  | 18 | 21 | 31 | 18 | 13 | 39%                   | 31% | 31% |

**Aggregate Score: 2.87**

### Individual Item Scores

7. Administrators, nurse managers, physicians, nurses, and other staff are consistent in their use of data-driven, logical decision-making processes to make sure their decisions are the highest quality.

|           |    |      |    |    |    |   |   |     |     |     |
|-----------|----|------|----|----|----|---|---|-----|-----|-----|
| 01-Aug-09 | 13 | 2.46 | 23 | 31 | 31 | 8 | 8 | 54% | 31% | 16% |
|-----------|----|------|----|----|----|---|---|-----|-----|-----|

11. The right departments, professions, and groups are involved in important decisions.

|           |    |      |    |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |
|-----------|----|------|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|
| 01-Aug-09 | 13 | 2.85 | 23 | 15 | 31 | 15 | 15 | 38% | 31% | 30% |
|-----------|----|------|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|

16. Administrators, nurse managers, physicians, nurses, and other staff are careful to consider the patient's and family's perspectives whenever they are making important decisions.

|           |    |      |   |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |
|-----------|----|------|---|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|
| 01-Aug-09 | 13 | 3.31 | 8 | 15 | 31 | 31 | 15 | 23% | 31% | 46% |
|-----------|----|------|---|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|

### Scoring Guidelines

Please use the following scale to interpret your team's scores for this assessment:

1.00 – 2.99 – Needs Improvement

3.00 – 3.99 – Good

4.00 – 5.00 – Excellent

### **STANDARD 3: Effective Decision Making**

#### **Does your effective decision making score indicate opportunity for improvement?**

Increasing evidence indicates that ineffective decision making diminishes nurse satisfaction and retention while compromising patient safety and patient/family satisfaction. Consider the recommendations below as you develop a plan to improve your team's effectiveness in making and implementing decisions. Addressing barriers to effective decision making is an important component of your patient safety and process improvement programs.

#### **Is your effective decision making score good or excellent?**

Congratulations! There may still be some specific items where your team's score was noticeably lower. We recommend that you explore what might underlie those scores and engage the team in determining how best to address the challenge. Meeting the effective decision making standard is vital given the increasing evidence that ineffective decision making diminishes nurse satisfaction and retention while compromising patient safety and patient/family satisfaction.

#### **WHAT IS THE EVIDENCE?**

The Institute of Medicine points to a historical lack of interprofessional cooperation as a cultural barrier to safety in hospitals.

[Read more](#)

In the Critical Care Nurses' Work Environments 2008 Study, more than six out of ten nurses agreed that nurses in their organization were valued and committed partners in making policy, directing and evaluating clinical care, and leading organizational operations. Nearly seven out of ten agreed that RNs have opportunities to influence decisions that affect the quality of patients' care.

[Read more](#)

As the single constant professional presence with hospitalized patients, nurses uniquely gather, filter, interpret, and transform patient and system data into the meaningful information needed to diagnose, treat, and deliver patient care. Nurses' data management role is a vital component of the entire healthcare team's decision making activities. A Robert Wood Johnson Foundation study reports that failure to incorporate the experienced perspective of nurses in clinical and operational decisions may result in costly errors, jeopardize patient safety and threaten the financial viability of healthcare organizations.

[Read more](#)

Effective decision making is a critical element of healthcare excellence programs like the AACN Beacon Award for Critical Care Excellence and the Magnet Recognition Program®.

[Read more about the Beacon Award Magnet Recognition Program](#)

#### **GETTING STARTED**

Nurses who do not have control over their practice become dissatisfied and are at risk for leaving an organization. Healthcare organizations that attract and retain nurses have successfully implemented professional care models in which nurses have the responsibility and related authority for patient care. Alongside are formal operational structures that support autonomous nursing practice.

#### **Master the Healthy Work Environments Standards**

Become well-versed in the AACN Standards for Establishing and Sustaining Healthy Work Environments. If you haven't already, read the standards with your assessment scores in mind. Flag key areas on which to focus your effort.

### **STANDARD 3: Effective Decision Making**

[Download the standards](#)

#### **Focus on Standard 3 and Its Critical Elements**

Drill down into the effective decision making standard—its background, critical elements, references, and suggested reading. Critical elements are the blueprint to guide your action steps and stimulate discussion. Some focus on an individual's responsibilities; others on what is required of the organization. Keep this distinction in mind when evaluating your team's strengths and weaknesses. Changing individuals' behaviors may call for one set of interventions and changing an organization's behaviors will require a different set.

[Read more](#)

#### **Discuss the Standards**

Join forces with other team leaders to identify what their groups see as barriers to effective decision making. Incorporate the standards into existing and new meetings. Existing meetings might include work teams, interdisciplinary patient safety teams, AACN Beacon Award for Critical Care Excellence and Magnet Recognition Program® teams, process improvement, and governance council meetings. New meetings will be those where you design and carry out your implementation plan to strengthen decision making skills.

[Find Discussion Resources](#)

[Read more about the Beacon Award](#)

[Read more about the Magnet Recognition Program](#)

#### **VitalSmarts**

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[Learn more](#)

#### **Host Learning Events**

Providing education and professional development in the skills underlying effective decision making—namely, mutual goal setting, negotiation, facilitation, conflict management, systems thinking and performance improvement—is essential to achieving this standard. Developing an education and training program will help your team learn new skills and advance existing ones.

[Find speakers in your region](#)

#### **AACN also recommends these learning materials and consultation sources:**

[AACN Bookstore – Search on "decision"](#)

[Creighton University, Werner Institute for Negotiation and Dispute Resolution](#)

[Dharma Consulting and Eric Klein](#)

[Suzanne Gordon](#)

[Reina Trust Building Institute](#)

### **STANDARD 3: Effective Decision Making**

## **Recommended Additional Resources**

### **Start or Join a Reading Club**

Many healthcare organizations already have active evidence-focused reading or journal clubs. You can also start your own. Use AACN-recommended books, articles, posters, and other resources about effective decision making to start a reading club or join an existing one.

[Find resources](#)

### **TeamSTEPPS**

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[Learn more](#)

### **New Resources**

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[Visit the site](#)

# Standard Scores

## STANDARD 4: Appropriate Staffing

Using the scoring guidelines provided with your assessment report, evaluate your team's score for this standard.

OR - North East

| Assessment Date | Responses | Score | SD | D  | NA | A  | SA | Response Distribution |     |     |
|-----------------|-----------|-------|----|----|----|----|----|-----------------------|-----|-----|
| 01-Aug-09       | 13        | 2.87  | 18 | 21 | 31 | 18 | 13 | 39%                   | 31% | 31% |

**Aggregate Score: 2.87**

### Individual Item Scores

|  |    |      |    |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |
|--|----|------|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|
| 3. Administrators and nurse managers work with nurses and other staff to make sure there are enough staff to maintain patient safety.                              |    |      |    |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |
| 01-Aug-09  | 13 | 2.46 | 23 | 31 | 31 | 8  | 8  | 54% | 31% | 16% |
| 8. Administrators and nurse managers make sure there is the right mix of nurses and other staff to ensure optimal outcomes.  |    |      |    |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |
| 01-Aug-09  | 13 | 2.85 | 23 | 15 | 31 | 15 | 15 | 38% | 31% | 30% |
| 12. Support services are provided at a level that allows nurses and other staff to spend their time on the priorities and requirements of patient and family care. |    |      |    |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |
| 01-Aug-09  | 13 | 3.31 | 8  | 15 | 31 | 31 | 15 | 23% | 31% | 46% |

### Scoring Guidelines

Please use the following scale to interpret your team's scores for this assessment:

- 1.00 – 2.99 – Needs Improvement
- 3.00 – 3.99 – Good
- 4.00 – 5.00 – Excellent

### **STANDARD 4: Appropriate Staffing**

#### **Does your appropriate staffing score indicate opportunity for improvement?**

Solid evidence confirms that inappropriate staffing compromises patient safety. Inappropriate staffing is also a significant dissatisfier for nurses. Consider the recommendations below as you develop a plan to improve your team's effectiveness in appropriate staffing. Addressing barriers to appropriate staffing is important for successful patient safety and process improvement programs and meeting staff retention goals.

#### **Is your appropriate staffing score good or excellent?**

Congratulations! There may still be some specific items where your team's score was noticeably lower. We recommend that you explore what might underlie those scores and engage the team in determining how best to address the challenge. Meeting the appropriate staffing standard is vital given the compelling evidence that inappropriate staffing compromises patient safety and is a significant nurse dissatisfier.

#### **WHAT IS THE EVIDENCE?**

Extensive evidence shows the negative impact of inappropriate staffing on patient safety and on nurse satisfaction. Landmark studies show the relationship between staffing and patient outcomes.

[Read more](#)

Drs. Linda Aiken, Sean Clarke and colleagues at the University of Pennsylvania found that the likelihood of death or serious complications after surgery increases when fewer nurses are assigned to care for patients. They also reported that nurses are more likely to experience burnout and job dissatisfaction in hospitals with higher patient-to-nurse ratios.

[Read more](#)

Federal regulations enacted in 2007 will discontinue Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement to hospitals for care that is attributable to common and preventable complications. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and The George Washington University Medical Center described those unreimbursable complications as nursing-sensitive outcomes. They call for a continued investment in nursing quality given the negative impact on hospital finances and nurses' essential role in avoiding these complications.

[Read more](#)

The Critical Care Nurses' Work Environments 2008 study reported just over half of the nurses surveyed agreed that staffing in their organization ensures an effective match between patients' needs and nurses' competencies. Only four in ten nurses reported having formal organizational processes to evaluate the effect of staffing decisions on patient and system outcomes.

[Read more](#)

#### **GETTING STARTED**

Achieving appropriate staffing is a complex process of responding to patients' evolving care needs with nurses who have the right skills and competencies. Although it is vital to patient safety that healthcare organizations achieve this standard, there is no easy formula for determining appropriate staffing. The condition of high acuity and critically ill patients fluctuates so dramatically that appropriate staffing requires more than fixed nurse-to-patient ratios. Here are some steps that other organizations have taken in reconsidering their approach to staffing.

### **STANDARD 4: Appropriate Staffing**

#### **Master the Healthy Work Environment Standards**

Become well-versed in the AACN Standards for Establishing and Sustaining Healthy Work Environments. If you haven't already, read the standards with your assessment scores in mind. Flag key areas on which to focus your effort.

[Download the standards](#)

#### **Focus on Standard 4 and Its Critical Elements**

Drill down into the standard for appropriate staffing—its background, critical elements, references, and suggested reading. Critical elements are the blueprint to guide your action steps and stimulate discussion. Some focus on an individual's responsibilities; others on what is required of the organization. Keep this distinction in mind when evaluating your team's strengths and weaknesses. Changing individuals' behaviors may call for one set of interventions and changing an organization's behaviors will require a different set.

[Read more](#)

#### **Discuss the Standards**

Join forces with other team leaders to identify what their groups see as barriers to appropriate staffing. Incorporate the standards into existing and new meetings. Existing meetings might include work teams, interdisciplinary patient safety teams, AACN Beacon Award for Critical Care Excellence and Magnet Recognition Program® teams, process improvement, and governance council meetings. New meetings will be those where you design and carry out your implementation plan to strengthen appropriate staffing skills.

[Find Discussion Resources](#)

[Read more about the Beacon Award](#)

[Read more about the Magnet Recognition Program](#)

#### **Host Learning Events**

Providing education and professional development in the skills underlying appropriate staffing—namely, mutual goal setting, negotiation, facilitation, conflict management, systems thinking and performance improvement—is essential to achieving this standard. Developing an education and training program will help your team learn new skills and advance existing ones.

[Find speakers in your region](#)

#### **VitalSmarts**

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[Learn more](#)

#### **AACN also recommends these learning and information sources:**

[AACN Scope and Standards for Acute and Critical Care Nursing Practice – Search on "standards"](#)

[AACN Scope and Standards of Practice for the Acute Care Nurse Practitioner – Search on "standards"](#)

[AACN Scope of Practice and Standards of Professional Performance for the Acute and Critical Care Clinical Nurse Specialist – Search on "standards"](#)

[AACN and ANA Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice – Search on "standards"](#)

[AACN Staffing Blueprint – Search on "staffing"](#)

### **STANDARD 4: Appropriate Staffing**

[AACN Synergy Model for Patient Care](#)

[Acute and Critical Care Clinical Nurse Specialists: Synergy for Best Practices – Search on "synergy"](#)

[Synergy: The Unique Relationship Between Nurses and Patients – Search on "synergy"](#)

[Synergy for Clinical Excellence: The AACN Synergy Model for Patient Care – Search on "synergy"](#)

## **Recommended Additional Resources**

### **Start or Join a Reading Club**

Many healthcare organizations already have active evidence-focused reading or journal clubs. You can also start your own. Use AACN-recommended books, articles, posters, and other resources about appropriate staffing to start a reading club or join an existing one.

[Find resources](#)

### **TeamSTEPPS**

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[Learn more](#)

### **New Resources**

New resources are regularly added to the AACN Healthy Work Environments Web site.

[Visit the site](#)

# Standard Scores

## STANDARD 5: Meaningful Recognition

Using the scoring guidelines provided with your assessment report, evaluate your team's score for this standard.

OR - North East

| Assessment Date | Responses | Score | SD | D  | NA | A  | SA | Response Distribution |     |     |
|-----------------|-----------|-------|----|----|----|----|----|-----------------------|-----|-----|
| 01-Aug-09       | 13        | 2.87  | 18 | 21 | 31 | 18 | 13 | 39%                   | 31% | 31% |

**Aggregate Score: 2.87**

### Individual Item Scores

|   |    |      |    |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |
|---|----|------|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|
| 4. The formal reward and recognition systems work to make nurses and other staff feel valued.   |    |      |    |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |
| 01-Aug-09   | 13 | 2.46 | 23 | 31 | 31 | 8  | 8  | 54% | 31% | 16% |
| 9. Administrators, nurse managers, physicians, nurses, and other staff members speak up and let people know when they've done a good job. |    |      |    |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |
| 01-Aug-09   | 13 | 2.85 | 23 | 15 | 31 | 15 | 15 | 38% | 31% | 30% |
| 17. There are motivating opportunities for personal growth, development, and advancement.   |    |      |    |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |
| 01-Aug-09   | 13 | 3.31 | 8  | 15 | 31 | 31 | 15 | 23% | 31% | 46% |

### Scoring Guidelines

Please use the following scale to interpret your team's scores for this assessment:

- 1.00 – 2.99 – Needs Improvement
- 3.00 – 3.99 – Good
- 4.00 – 5.00 – Excellent

### **STANDARD 5: Meaningful Recognition**

#### **Does your meaningful recognition score indicate opportunity for improvement?**

Lack of meaningful recognition leads to discontent, poor morale, reduced productivity, and suboptimal care outcomes. Consider the recommendations below as you develop a plan to improve your meaningful recognition for your team. Addressing barriers to meaningful recognition should be a key component of staff retention and productivity improvement programs.

#### **Is your appropriate staffing score good or excellent?**

Congratulations! There may still be some specific items where your team's score was noticeably lower. We recommend that you explore what might underlie those scores and engage the team in determining how best to address the challenge. Meeting the meaningful recognition standard is vital since lack of meaningful recognition contributes to discontent, poor morale, reduced productivity and suboptimal care outcomes.

#### **WHAT IS THE EVIDENCE?**

Lack of meaningful recognition has a negative impact on staff satisfaction and nurse retention.

In the Critical Care Nurses' Work Environments 2008 Study, 60% of the nurses agreed that nurses in their organization were recognized for the value each RN brings to the organization. Nearly six in 10 agreed that RNs in their organization recognize others for the value other colleagues bring to the work of the organization.

[Read more](#)

The American Hospital Association Commission on Workforce for Hospitals and Health Systems reports that hospitals recognized for attracting and retaining nurses emphasize personal growth and development, and provide multiple rewards for expertise and opportunities for clinical advancement.

[Read more](#)

Meaningful recognition has been identified as an important element of healthcare excellence programs like the AACN Beacon Award for Critical Care Excellence and the Magnet Recognition Program®.

[Read more about the Beacon Award](#)

[Read more about the Magnet Recognition Program](#)

#### **GETTING STARTED**

Recognition of the value and meaningfulness of one's contribution to an organization's work is a fundamental human need and an essential requisite to personal and professional development. People who are not recognized feel invisible, undervalued, unmotivated, and disrespected. Like true collaboration, meaningful recognition is a process, not an event. It must be ongoing and grown over time, becoming a norm within the work culture.

#### **Master the Healthy Work Environment Standards**

Become well-versed in the AACN Standards for Establishing and Sustaining Healthy Work Environments. If you haven't already, read the standards with your assessment scores in mind. Flag key areas on which to focus your effort.

[Download the standards](#)

### **STANDARD 5: Meaningful Recognition**

#### **Focus on Standard 5 and Its Critical Elements**

Drill down into the standard for appropriate staffing—its background, critical elements, references, and suggested reading. Critical elements are the blueprint to guide your action steps and stimulate discussion. Some focus on an individual's responsibilities; others on what is required of the organization. Keep this distinction in mind when evaluating your team's strengths and weaknesses. Changing individuals' behaviors may call for one set of interventions and changing an organization's behaviors will require a different set.

[Read more](#)

#### **Discuss the Standards**

Join forces with other team leaders to identify what their groups see as barriers to meaningful recognition. Perhaps another unit or department has a highly effective model for recognition and could become the basis for your efforts. Incorporate the standards into existing and new meetings. Existing meetings might include work teams, interdisciplinary patient safety teams, AACN Beacon Award for Critical Care Excellence and Magnet Recognition Program® teams, process improvement, and governance council meetings. New meetings will be those where you design and carry out your implementation plan to embedding meaningful recognition into your organization's culture.

[Find Discussion Resources](#)

[Read more about the Beacon Award](#)

[Read more about the Magnet Recognition Program](#)

#### **Host Learning Events**

Providing education and professional development in the skills underlying meaningful recognition—namely, mutual goal setting, negotiation, facilitation, conflict management, systems thinking and performance improvement—is essential to achieving this standard. Developing an education and training program will help your team learn new skills and advance existing ones.

[Find speakers in your region](#)

#### **VitalSmarts**

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[Learn more](#)

#### **AACN recommends these learning materials and information sources:**

[Incentive Performance Center](#)

[International Society for Performance Improvement](#)

[The Art of Meaningful Recognition](#)

[The Effect of Incentives on Workplace Performance](#)

[Giving Credit, Saying Thanks](#)

[Incentives, Motivation & Workplace Performance: Research and Best Practices](#)

### **STANDARD 5: Meaningful Recognition**

## **Recommended Additional Resources**

### **Start or Join a Reading Club**

Many healthcare organizations already have active evidence-focused reading or journal clubs. You can also start your own. Use AACN-recommended books, articles, posters, and other resources about meaningful recognition to start a reading club or join an existing one.

[Find resources](#)

### **TeamSTEPPS**

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[Learn more](#)

### **New Resources**

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[Visit the site](#)

# Standard Scores

## STANDARD 6: Authentic Leadership

Using the scoring guidelines provided with your assessment report, evaluate your team's score for this standard.

OR - North East

| Assessment Date | Responses | Score | SD | D  | NA | A  | SA | Response Distribution |     |     |
|-----------------|-----------|-------|----|----|----|----|----|-----------------------|-----|-----|
| 01-Aug-09       | 13        | 3.23  | 10 | 15 | 31 | 28 | 15 | 25%                   | 31% | 43% |

**Aggregate Score: 3.23**

### Individual Item Scores

5. Most nurses and other staff here have a positive relationship with their nurse leaders (managers, directors, advanced practice nurses, etc.).

|           |    |      |   |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |
|-----------|----|------|---|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|
| 01-Aug-09 | 13 | 3.15 | 8 | 31 | 15 | 31 | 15 | 39% | 15% | 46% |
|-----------|----|------|---|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|

13. Nurse leaders (managers, directors, advanced practice nurses, etc.) demonstrate an understanding of the requirements and dynamics at the point of care, and use this knowledge to work for a healthy work environment.

|           |    |      |    |   |    |    |   |     |     |     |
|-----------|----|------|----|---|----|----|---|-----|-----|-----|
| 01-Aug-09 | 13 | 3.15 | 15 | 8 | 31 | 39 | 8 | 23% | 31% | 47% |
|-----------|----|------|----|---|----|----|---|-----|-----|-----|

18. Nurse leaders (managers, directors, advanced practice nurses, etc.) are given the access and authority required to play a role in making key decisions.

|           |    |      |   |   |    |    |    |     |     |     |
|-----------|----|------|---|---|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|
| 01-Aug-09 | 13 | 3.38 | 8 | 8 | 46 | 15 | 23 | 16% | 46% | 38% |
|-----------|----|------|---|---|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|

### Scoring Guidelines

Please use the following scale to interpret your team's scores for this assessment:

1.00 – 2.99 – Needs Improvement

3.00 – 3.99 – Good

4.00 – 5.00 – Excellent

### **STANDARD 6: Authentic Leadership**

#### **Does your authentic leadership score indicate opportunity for improvement?**

Authentic leadership is an essential part of job satisfaction for nurses. In its absence, nurses are challenged in making their optimal contribution to patient care. Improving the skills and competence of formal and informal organizational leaders should be an ongoing and significant component of professional development. Consider the recommendations below as you prepare your plan to strengthen authentic leadership skills.

#### **Is your authentic leadership score good or excellent?**

Congratulations! There may still be some specific items where your team's score was noticeably lower. We recommend that you explore what might underlie those scores and engage the team in determining how best to address the challenge. Healthy work environments are difficult to establish and impossible to sustain without authentic leadership. Leaders are the living bridge between individual nurses and the organization.

#### **WHAT IS THE EVIDENCE?**

Evidence indicates that leadership is lacking in our nation's hospitals, contributing to lower staff satisfaction and turnover.

[Read more](#)

Authentic leadership has been identified as an important element of healthcare excellence programs like the AACN Beacon Award for Critical Care Excellence and the Magnet Recognition Program®.

[Read more about the Magnet Recognition Program](#)

[Read more about the Beacon Award](#)

Nearly 6 out of 10 nurses in the Critical Care Nurses' Work Environments 2008 study reported that nurse leaders in their organization fully embrace the concept of a healthy work environment. A similar number reported that their organization's nurse leaders engaged others in achieving a healthy work environment.

[Read more](#)

#### **GETTING STARTED**

Nurse leaders must be skilled communicators, team builders, agents for positive change, committed to service, results oriented, and role models for collaborative practice. Yet they often lack the resources and support needed to develop those skills and the access to key decision making forums in their organization.

#### **Master the Healthy Work Environment Standards**

Become well-versed in the AACN Standards for Establishing and Sustaining Healthy Work Environments. If you haven't already, read the standards with your assessment scores in mind. Flag key areas on which to focus your effort.

[Download the standards](#)

#### **Focus on Standard 6 and Its Critical Elements**

Drill down into the standard for authentic leadership—its background, critical elements, references and suggested reading. Critical elements are the blueprint to guide your action steps and stimulate discussion. Some focus on the leader's responsibilities; others on what is required of the organization. Keep this distinction in mind when evaluating your team's strengths and weaknesses. Changing your behaviors and those of other leaders may call for one set of interventions and changing an organization's behaviors will require a different set.

[Read more](#)

### **STANDARD 6: Authentic Leadership**

#### **Discuss the Standards**

Who are the leaders in your own and other organizations that model authentic leadership? Join forces with other team leaders to identify what they identify as facilitating and blocking authentic leadership. Incorporate the standards into existing and new meetings. Existing meetings might include work teams, interdisciplinary patient safety teams, AACN Beacon Award and Magnet Recognition Program® teams, process improvement, and governance council meetings. New meetings will be those where you design and carry out your implementation plan to embedding authentic leadership into your organization's culture.

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#### **Host Learning Events**

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[Learn more](#)

#### **AACN recommends these learning materials and information sources:**

[AACN Beacon Award for Critical Care Excellence](#)

[AONE - American Organization of Nurse Executives](#)

[AONE Aspiring Nurse Leaders Institute](#)

[Dharma Consulting and Eric Klein](#)

[Essentials of Nurse Manager Orientation e-Learning Program](#)

[Magnet Recognition Program®](#)

[Nurse Manager Leadership Partnership Inventory Tool](#)

[Reina Trust Building Institute](#)

### **STANDARD 6: Authentic Leadership**

## **Recommended Additional Resources**

### **Start or Join a Reading Club**

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