CYPRESS COLLEGE
DEPARTMENT OF NURSING

Nursing Student Advisory Statement

The philosophy of the Cypress College Registered Nursing Program is one that desires to include all students. All applications are welcomed once prerequisites are met. In the best interest of our students, the Nursing Department wishes to inform you that certain physical, emotional and learning abilities are necessary in order to protect your individual well-being and provide for the safety of the patients/clients placed in your care. The following are basic physical abilities required of any student for success in the Registered Nursing Program.

Standing/Walking – Much of the workday is spent on carpet, tile, linoleum or cement. Approximate walking distance per shift: 3-5 miles while providing care, obtaining supplies and lab specimens, monitoring and charting patient response, and managing/coordinating patient care.

Lifting – Some of the workday is spent lifting from floor to knee, knee to waist, and waist to shoulder levels while handling supplies (at least 30 times per shift). These supplies include trays (5-10 pounds) and equipment such as Continuous Passive Motion Machines, Pulse Oximeters and Patient Controlled Analgesia pumps (5-35 pounds). The nurse must also assist with positioning patients in bed or moving patients on and off beds, gurneys and exam tables (average patient weight is 150-200 pounds).

Carrying – Some of the workday is spent carrying charts, trays and supplies (5 to 10 pounds)

Sitting – Part of the workday is spent sitting while operating computers, answering telephones, writing reports, reviewing charts and communicating with patients/clients as well as other health care personnel.

Pushing/Pulling – A large part of the workday is spent pushing/pulling while moving or adjusting equipment such as beds, wheelchairs, furniture, intravenous pumps and emergency carts.

Balancing and Climbing – Part of the workday is spent climbing stairs. The nurse must always balance self and use good body mechanics while providing physical support for patients/clients.

Stooping/Kneeling – Some of the workday is spent stooping/kneeling while retrieving and stocking supplies and medications, assessing equipment attached to patient/clients and using lower shelves of carts.
Bending – Bending at the waist is necessary frequently during the workday while monitoring patients, gathering supplies, assisting with patient positioning, providing intravenous fluids, adjusting patient beds, and assisting with bathing.

Crouching/Crawling – A minimal part of the workday is spent retrieving items on the floor and adjusting equipment.

Reaching/Stretching – Reaching/stretching is necessary frequently during the workday for hanging and removing intravenous bottles/bags, gathering supplies, connecting equipment, assisting with patient care and performing transfers and positioning.

Twisting/Turning – Some of the workday is spent twisting at the waist and turning the neck while gathering supplies, operating equipment, checking intravenous lines, bathing patients and assisting patients to walk.

Fingering – Fine and gross finger dexterity is required.

General Extremity Motion (upper and lower extremities) – It is evident from the previous statements that extremity movement is critical. Movement of the shoulder, elbow, waist, hand, fingers and thumb is required throughout the workday. Movement of the hip, knee, ankle, foot and toes are also required throughout the workday. It is necessary for the student to be able to turn, flex and extend his/her neck.

Feeling – The must be sensitive to heat and cold when assessing patients/clients. The nurse must be capable of feeling heat, cold, pain and pressure to the self to protect himself/herself from personal injury.

Talking – A majority of the workday requires an average ability to speak in English with a minimum of speech impediments and an ability to communicate with a wide variety of people while being easily understood.

Hearing – A majority of the workday requires an ability to hear and correctly interpret what is heard. This not only includes taking verbal or telephone orders and communicating with patients, visitors and other members of the health care team; but also involves the physical assessment of cardiovascular, pulmonary and gastrointestinal sounds and the analysis of patient monitor alarms.

Vision – Acute visual skills are necessary to read and interpret charts, reports, monitor equipment and to assess and detect patients’ signs and symptoms (color of skin, wounds, drainage and other body fluids, infusion sites). In addition, the eyes of nurses are often the first sense to detect a change in patient/client status.

Olfaction – The ability to detect unusual odors is pivotal to the physical assessment of the patient/client. It is also crucial to nursing care to be able to detect abnormal scents associated with numerous body fluids, wounds and patient/clients with casts or other appliances.