

LaFleur Brooks' Health Unit Coordinating

7th edition

Chapter 01

Health Unit Coordinating: An Allied Health
Career

Lesson 1.1

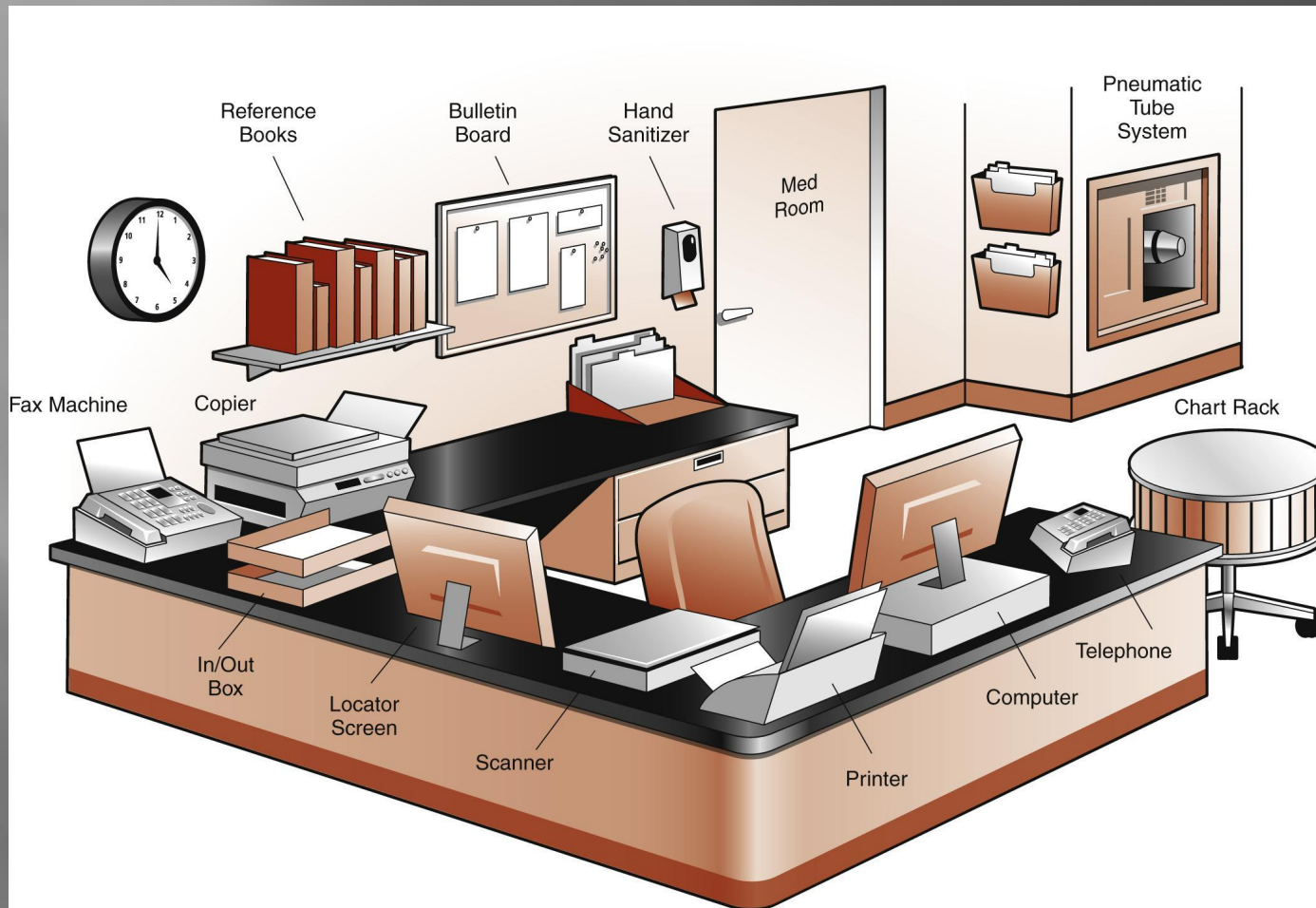
The Health Unit Coordinator Profession

1. Define the terms in the vocabulary list.
2. Write the meaning of the abbreviations in the abbreviations list.
3. Explain the events that led up to creating the position that eventually became known as health unit coordinator (HUC).
4. Identify four stages that health professions have traditionally gone through to become a profession.
5. List five benefits of being a member of the National Association of Health Unit Coordinators.
6. List five benefits of becoming a certified HUC.

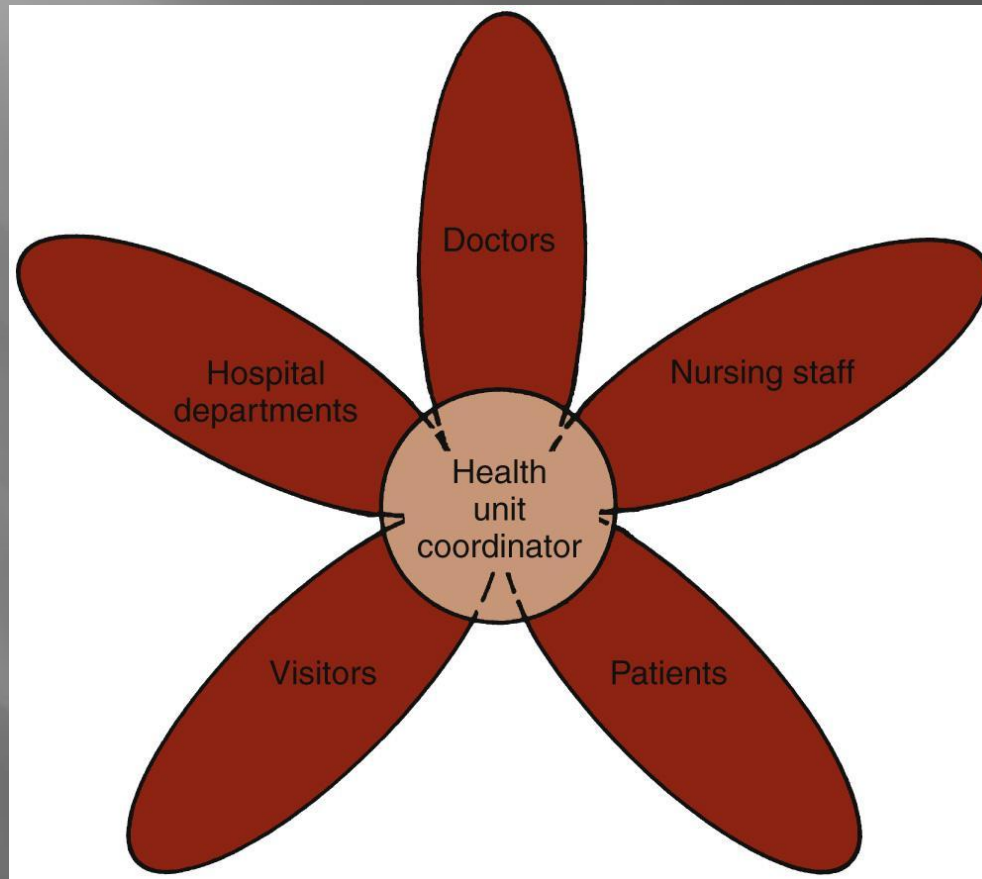
Introduction to Health Unit Coordinating

- ▣ The HUC
 - is usually first person encountered when one walks onto a hospital nursing unit
 - has always been considered essential to the nursing team and to the effectiveness of the unit
 - coordinates activities on the unit.

HUC's Work Area



Health Unit Coordinator Job Description



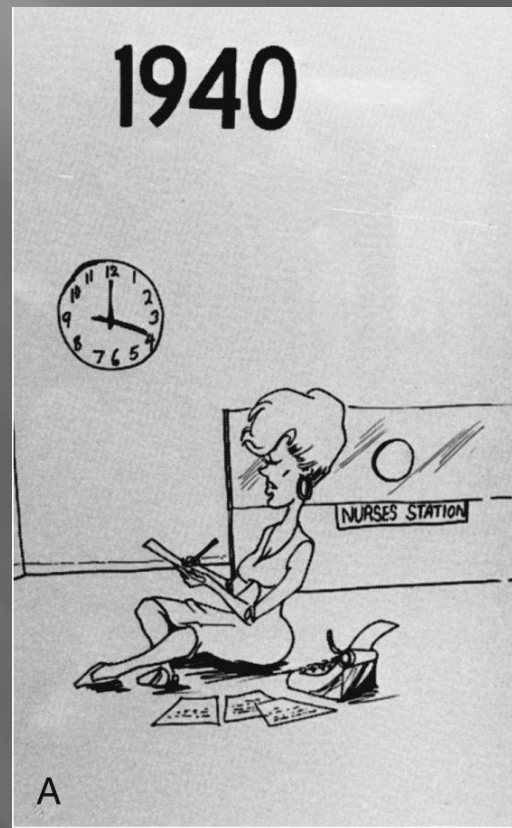
History of Health Unit Coordinating

- ▣ On-the-job training
- ▣ Formal education
- ▣ Professional association
- ▣ Certification
- ▣ Recertification

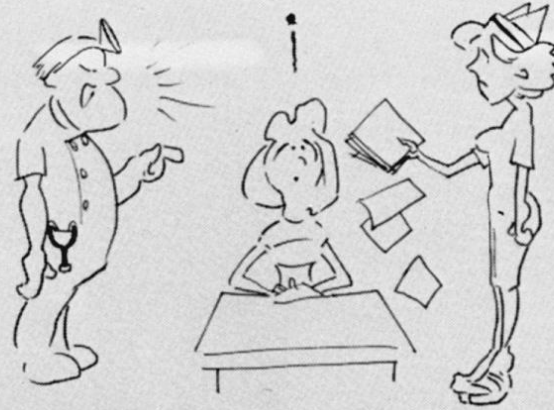
Events that Led to HUC Position

- ▣ World War II – hospitals experienced a drastic shortage of registered nurses.
- ▣ To compensate, auxiliary personnel were trained on the job.
- ▣ HUCs were trained to assist the nurse with nonclinical tasks, and nursing assistants were trained to assist the nurse at the bedside.

Floor Secretary - World War II - Shortage of Nurses - On the Job Trained



Ward Clerk



WARD CLERK
1962

B

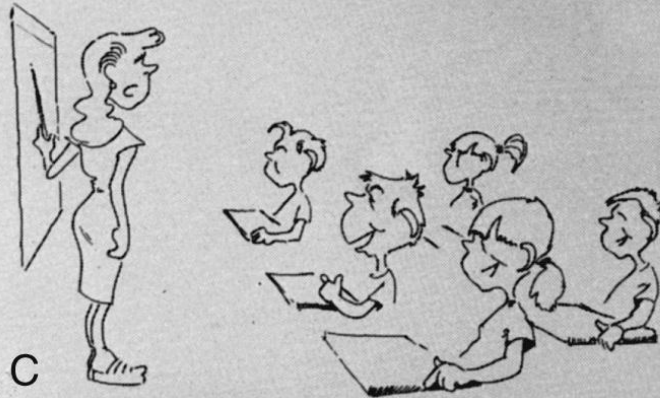
ASSUMES MORE RESPONSIBILITY

1966 - First Educational Program: Voc-Tech School Minneapolis

1966

FIRST EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

**VOC-TECH SCHOOL
MINNEAPOLIS**



First Meeting for the Formation of the National Association of Health Unit Coordinators in 1980

- ▣ August 23rd - Formation of the National Association of Health Unit Clerks/Coordinators
- ▣ Date has been set aside as National Health Unit Coordinator Day.

First Certification Exam in 1983



E

First certification exam

1990 - “Clerks” Was Removed from National Association’s Name



Logo prior to 1990 showing “unit clerk”



F Logo as of 1990 — “unit clerks”
dropped

Five Reasons to Become a Member of NAHUC

- ▣ Professional representation
- ▣ Format to share ideas and challenges
- ▣ National networking
- ▣ National directory
- ▣ Opportunity to develop leadership skills

NAHUC Membership Information

BOX 1-4

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HEALTH UNIT COORDINATORS MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

To receive a National Association of Health Unit Coordinators (NAHUC) membership application, contact NAHUC in the following ways:

Phone:

Toll-free: 888-22-NAHUC (62482)

Local: 815-633-4351

Address: 1947 Madron Road
Rockford, IL 61107-1716

Fax: 815-633-4438

Website: www.nahuc.org

E-mail: office@nahuc.org

Five Reasons to Become Certified

- ▣ Increased credibility
- ▣ Gaining a broader perspective of health unit coordinating (not just your own specialty)
- ▣ Increased mobility, geographically and/or vertically
- ▣ Peer and public recognition and respect
- ▣ Improved self-image

Lesson 1.2

The Evolving Health Unit Coordinator Position

7. List three tasks that the HUC would perform related to each of the following: nursing personnel, doctors, hospital departments, patients, and hospital visitors.
8. Discuss the benefits of using the electronic medical record (EMR), computer physician order entry (CPOE) with e-prescribing, and clinical decision support system (CDSS).
9. Identify five ways to prepare for the changing HUC position with the use of EMR and six things that the HUC can do to stay current in the position.

Lesson 1.2

The Evolving Health Unit Coordinator Position (cont'd)

10. Demonstrate use of the Internet and search engines to locate information on the Web.
11. List three positions in which the HUC may be cross-trained.
12. List two possible nonclinical career choices for the health unit coordinator.

Responsibilities of the HUC

- ▣ Regarding Nursing Staff:
 - Communicate all new doctors' orders or messages to the patient's nurse.
 - Maintain the patient's paper chart or manage the electronic record.
 - Communicate information involving new patient arrivals and requests for patient transfers.
 - Perform the nonclinical tasks required for admission, discharge, and transfer of a patient.

Responsibilities of the HUC, cont'd

- ▣ Regarding Nursing Staff:
 - Prepare the patient's chart for surgery (if a paper chart is in use).
 - Prepare necessary consent forms for patient surgeries or procedures.
 - Handle all telephone communication for the nursing unit.
 - Maintain nursing unit supplies.

The HUC Assisting the Nurse



Responsibilities of the HUC, cont'd

- ▣ Regarding Doctors:
 - Assist in finding patients' charts.
 - Assist as necessary with physician order entry if EMR is used.
 - Transcribe the doctors' orders (if paper charts are used).
 - Scan reports or documents (or send to Health Information Management) into the patient's electronic record.

Transcribing Orders



Scanning Reports and Documents



Responsibilities of the HUC, cont'd

- ▣ Regarding doctors:
 - Procure requested equipment for patient examinations.
 - Place calls to and receive calls from doctors' offices.
 - Obtain information for the physician regarding whether previously ordered procedures have been completed.

The HUC Assisting the Doctor



Responsibilities of the HUC, cont'd

- ▣ Regarding Other Departments:
 - Order, schedule, and coordinate diagnostic procedures and treatments when required.
 - Relay messages and information to appropriate departments as required.
 - Request services from maintenance and other service departments.
 - Work closely with the admitting department to admit, transfer, and discharge patients.
 - Order supplies for the nursing unit, ranging from food to paper products and patient care supplies.

Responsibilities of the HUC, cont'd

- ▣ Regarding Patients:
 - Instruct new patients on how to use the call light, turn on the television, and operate bed controls.
 - Relay patient requests to nursing personnel when answering the intercom located in each patient's room.
 - Greet and listen to concerns or requests of patients who come to nursing station. The HUC usually has little bedside contact with patients.

The HUC Assisting Patients



Responsibilities of the HUC, cont'd

- ▣ Regarding Visitors:
 - Assist visitors looking for a patient by locating the patient on the computer.
 - Provide information about the location of bathrooms, visitors' lounge, cafeteria, etc.
 - Inform visitors about the rules of visitation and explain any special precautions that may be required during their visit to a patient's room.
 - Receive telephone calls from relatives or friends who are inquiring about the patient's condition.
 - Listen to (document) and handle visitor concerns.

The HUC Assists Visitors



Benefits of the Electronic Medical Record (EMR)

- ▣ More than one person can be viewing and working on a patient's chart at the same time.
- ▣ Patient information is always current and easy to access.
- ▣ Information organized in one place at the click of a mouse eliminates the duplication of tests, reduces delays in treatment, and can help doctors collaborate more effectively as patients often see a variety of specialists.

Benefits of Computer Physician Order Entry (CPOE) and E-prescribing

- ▣ CPOE
 - No need to decipher a doctor's handwriting.
 - Reduces risk of errors.
- ▣ E-prescribing
 - Eliminates the HUC's responsibility of transcribing medications and having to interpret the doctor's handwriting.
 - Reduces risk of errors.

Benefits of a Clinical Decision Support System (CDSS)

- ▣ Offers assistance to the physician at the point of entering patient orders.
- ▣ Provides prompts that warn against the possibility of a drug interaction, an incorrect dose, or a patient allergy.

Preparing for the Changing HUC Position with the Use of EMR

- ▣ Complete a Health Unit Coordinator program.
- ▣ Complete communication and management classes related to health care.
- ▣ Complete advanced computer classes, including advanced computer skills (typing & keyboarding, Microsoft Office (including Word, Excel, Power Point, Access, and Outlook), and, if possible, an EMR class.
- ▣ Become a member of the NAHUC.
- ▣ Become certified.

Suggestions to Stay Current in the Health Unit Coordinator Profession

- ▣ Attend job-related in-services offered by the hospital.
- ▣ Take classes that are available at local community colleges.
- ▣ Stay active in the NAHUC.
- ▣ Receive and read the NAHUC newsletter and attend conferences.
- ▣ Keep certification current.
- ▣ Be curious - research new procedures or information on the Web.

Guidelines for Surfing the Web

- ❑ Choose words or phrases that accurately describe what you're searching.
- ❑ Enter the words or phrases into the text box provided in a selected search engine.
- ❑ Generally, capitalization and punctuation are not needed.
- ❑ Choose reliable websites, such as government agencies, universities, hospitals, news outlets, medical journals, etc.

Guidelines for Surfing the Web, cont'd

- ▣ Check the date the article or information was written or when it was last updated.
- ▣ Change the search words to be more specific if unable to find information.

Cross-training Opportunities

- ▣ Telemetry technician
- ▣ Case management assistant or secretary
- ▣ CNA may have a title of Patient Care Assistant or Patient Care Associate (PCA).
- ▣ May be trained to perform electrocardiography and/or phlebotomy

Career Choices for the Health Unit Coordinator

- ▣ There are many nonclinical positions available in health care, such as:
 - Clinical Research Associate
 - Health Information Manager