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## AACN Scope and Standards for Acute and Critical Care Nursing Practice



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The American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN) has recently updated its scope and standards for critical nursing practice. The new guidelines describe and measure the expected level of practice and professional performance for acute and critical care registered nurses and specify how acute and critical care nursing contributes to a patient- and family-centered healthcare system.

The standards were first issued in 2008 and the recent updates incorporate advances in scientific knowledge, clinical practice, technology and other changes in the dynamic healthcare environment. They also account for changes in the working environment for nurses by healthcare reform and the Affordable Care Act which emphasises on providing safe and quality care and pay-for-performance incentives.

Linda Bell, RN, MSN, AACN clinical practice specialist explains that the “scope and standards is a must-have document that reflects nurses’ evolving role and the ongoing need to remain flexible in response to the increasingly complex needs of our patients.”

The 2015 edition of the standards is a valuable resource for both acute and critical care registered nurses. It is also a practical tool for students, faculty, nurses in practice, members of the interprofessional team and other nursing colleagues.

Source: [The American Association of Critical-Care Nurses \(AACN\)](#)

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