Competencies for the Registered Nurse Scope of Practice

Approved by the Council: June 2005

Domains of competence for the registered nurse scope of practice

There are four domains of competence for the registered nurse scope of practice. Evidence of safety to practise as a registered nurse is demonstrated when the applicant meets the competencies within the following domains:

Domain one: Professional responsibility

This domain contains competencies that relate to professional, legal and ethical responsibilities and cultural safety. These include being able to demonstrate knowledge and judgement and being accountable for own actions and decisions, while promoting an environment that maximises clients' safety, independence, quality of life and health.

Domain two: Management of nursing care

This domain contains competencies related to client assessment and managing client care, which is responsive to clients' needs, and which is supported by nursing knowledge and evidence based research.

Domain three: Interpersonal relationships

This domain contains competencies related to interpersonal and therapeutic communication with clients, other nursing staff and interprofessional communication and documentation.

Domain four: Interprofessional health care & quality improvement

This domain contains competencies to demonstrate that, as a member of the health care team, the nurse evaluates the effectiveness of care and promotes a nursing perspective within the interprofessional activities of the team.

Competencies and indicators

The competencies in each domain have a number of key generic examples of competence performance called *indicators*. These are neither comprehensive nor exhaustive; rather they provide *examples* of evidence of competence. The indicators are designed to assist the assessor when using his/her professional judgement in assessing the attainment of the competencies. The indicators further assist curriculum development for bachelors' degrees in nursing or first year of practice programmes. Registered nurses are required to demonstrate competence. They are accountable for their actions and take responsibility for the direction of nurse assistants, enrolled nurses and others. The competencies have been designed to be applied to registered nurse practice in a variety of clinical contexts. They take into account the contemporary role of the registered nurse, who utilises nursing knowledge and complex nursing judgement to assess health needs, provide care, and advise and support people to manage their health. The registered nurse practises independently and in collaboration with other health professionals. The registered nurse performs general nursing functions, and delegates to, and directs enrolled nurses and nurse assistants.

The registered nurse also provides comprehensive nursing assessments to develop, implement, and evaluate an integrated plan of health care, and provides nursing interventions that require substantial scientific and professional knowledge and skills. This occurs in a range of settings in partnership with individuals, families, whanau and communities.

Nursing students are supervised in practice by a registered nurse. Nursing students are assessed against all competencies on an ongoing basis, and will be assessed for entry to the registered nurse scope of practice at the completion of their programme.

Nurses involved in management, education, policy and research

The competencies also reflect the scope statement that some registered nurses use their nursing expertise to manage, teach, evaluate and research nursing practice. Registered nurses, who are not practising in direct client care, are exempt from those competencies in domain two (management of nursing care) and domain three (interpersonal relationships) that only apply to clinical practice. There are specific competencies in these domains for nurses working in management, education, policy and/or research. These are included at the end of domains two and three. Nurses who are assessed against these specific competencies are required to demonstrate how they contribute to practice. Those practising in direct client care and in management, education, policy and/or research must meet both sets of competencies.

Note: Please read the glossary of terms on page 7 of this document.

Nursing Council of NZ Competencies
Summary Index of Evidence

Nursing Council Competencies		Competency Met/Unmet (Tick/Cross)	Evidence (Section and page)
Domain one: Professional responsibility			
Competency 1.1	**Accepts responsibility for ensuring that his/her nursing practice and conduct meet the standards of the professional, ethical and relevant legislated requirements.**		
1.1.1	Indicator: Practises nursing in accord with relevant legislation/codes/policies and upholds client rights derived		
1.1.2	Indicator: Accepts responsibility for actions and decision making within scope of practice.		
1.1.3	Indicator: Identifies breaches of law that occur in practice and reports them to the appropriate person(s).		
1.1.4	Indicator: Demonstrates knowledge of, and accesses, policies and procedural guidelines that have implications for practice.		
1.1.5	Indicator: Uses professional standards of practice.		
Competency 1.2	**Demonstrates the ability to apply the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti o Waitangi to nursing practice.**		
1.2.1	Indicator: Understands the Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti o Waitangi and its relevance to the health of Maori in Aotearoa/New Zealand.		
1.2.2	Indicator: Demonstrates knowledge of differing health and socioeconomic status of Maori and non-Maori.		
1.2.3	Indicator: Applies the Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti o Waitangi to nursing practice.		
Competency 1.3	**Demonstrates accountability for directing, monitoring and evaluating nursing care that is provided by nurse assistants, enrolled nurses and others.**		
1.3.1	Indicator: Understands accountability for directing, monitoring and evaluating nursing care provided by nurse assistants, enrolled nurses and others.		

1.3.2	Indicator: Seeks advice from a senior registered nurse if unsure about the role and competence of nurse assistants, enrolled nurses and others when delegating work.
1.3.3	Indicator: Takes into consideration the role and competence of staff when delegating work.
1.3.4	Indicator: Makes appropriate decisions when assigning care, delegating activities and providing direction for enrolled nurses, nurse assistants and others.
Competency 1.4	**Promotes an environment that enables client safety, independence, quality of life, and health.**
1.4.1	Indicator: Identifies and reports situations that affect client or staff members' health or safety.
1.4.2	Indicator: Accesses, maintains and uses emergency equipment and supplies.
1.4.3	Indicator: Maintains infection control principles.
1.4.4	Indicator: Recognises and manages risks to provide care that best meets the needs and interests of clients and the public.
Competency 1.5	**Practises nursing in a manner that the client determines as being culturally safe.**
1.5.1	Indicator: Applies the principles of cultural safety in own nursing practice.
1.5.2	Indicator: Recognises the impact of the culture of nursing on client care and endeavours to protect the client's well-being within this culture.
1.5.3	Indicator: Practises in a way that respects each client's identity and right to hold personal beliefs, values and goals.
1.5.4	Indicator: Assists the client to gain appropriate support and representation from those who understand the client's culture, needs and preferences.
1.5.5	Indicator: Consults with members of cultural and other groups as requested and approved by the client.

1.5.6	Indicator: Reflects on his/her own practice and values that impact on nursing care in relation to the client's age, ethnicity, culture, beliefs, gender, sexual orientation and/or disability.
1.5.7	Indicator: Avoids imposing prejudice on others and provides advocacy when prejudice is apparent.

Domain two: Management of nursing care

Competency 2.1	Provides planned nursing care to achieve identified outcomes.
2.1.1	Indicator: Contributes to care planning, involving clients and demonstrating an understanding of clients' rights, to make informed decisions.
2.1.2	Indicator: Demonstrates understanding of the processes and environments that support recovery.
2.1.3	Indicator: Identifies examples of the use of evidence in planned nursing care of students with chronic conditions.
2.1.4	Indicator: Undertakes practice procedures and skills in a competent and safe way.
2.1.5	Indicator: Administers interventions, treatments and medications, (for example: intravenous therapy, calming and restraint), within legislation, codes and scope of practice; and according to authorised prescription, established policy and guidelines.
Competency 2.2	**Undertakes a comprehensive and accurate nursing assessment of clients in a variety of settings.**
2.2.1	Indicator: Undertakes assessment in an organised and systematic way.
2.2.2	Indicator: Uses suitable assessment tools and methods to assist the collection of data.
2.2.3	Indicator: Applies relevant research to underpin nursing assessment.
Competency 2.3	**Ensures documentation is accurate and maintains confidentiality of information.**
2.3.1	Indicator: Maintains clear, concise, timely, accurate and current client records within a legal and ethical framework.
2.3.2	Indicator: Demonstrates literacy and computer skills necessary to record, enter, store, retrieve and organise data essential for care delivery.

Competency 2.4	Ensures the client has adequate explanation of the effects, consequences and alternatives of proposed treatment options.
2.4.1	Indicator: Provides appropriate information to clients to protect their rights and to allow informed decisions.
2.4.2	Indicator: Assesses the readiness of the client to participate in health education.
2.4.3	Indicator: Makes appropriate professional judgement regarding the extent to which the client is capable of participating in decisions related to his/her care.
2.4.4	Indicator: Discusses ethical issues related to health care/nursing practice, (for example: informed consent, privacy, refusal of treatment and rights of formal and informal clients).
2.4.5	Indicator: Facilitates the client's access to appropriate therapies or interventions and respects the client's right to choose amongst alternatives.
2.4.6	Indicator: Seeks clarification from relevant members of the health m regarding the individual's request to change and/or refuse care.
2.4.7	Indicator: Takes the client's preferences into consideration when providing care.
Competency 2.5	Acts appropriately to protect oneself and others when faced with unexpected client responses, confrontation, personal threat or other crisis situations.
2.5.1	Indicator: Understands emergency procedures and plans and lines of communication to maximise effectiveness in a crisis situation.
2.5.2	Indicator: Takes action in situations that compromise client safety and well-being.
2.5.3	Indicator: Implements nursing responses, procedures and protocols for managing threats to safety within the practice environment.

Competency 2.6	**Evaluates client's progress toward expected outcomes in partnership with clients.**
2.6.1	Indicator: Identifies criteria for evaluation of expected outcomes of care.
2.6.2	Indicator: Evaluates the effectiveness of the client's response to prescribed treatments, interventions and health education in collaboration with the client and other health care team members. (Beginning registered nurses would seek guidance and advice from experienced registered nurses).
2.6.3	Indicator: Reflects on client feedback on the evaluation of nursing care and health service delivery.
Competency 2.7	**Provides health education appropriate to the needs of the client within a nursing framework.**
2.7.1	Indicator: Checks clients' level of understanding of health care when answering their questions and providing information.
2.7.2	Indicator: Uses informal and formal methods of teaching that are appropriate to the client's or group's abilities.
2.7.3	Indicator: Participates in health education, and ensures that the client understands relevant information related to their health care.
2.7.4	Indicator: Educates client to maintain and promote health.
Competency 2.8	**Reflects upon, and evaluates with peers and experienced nurses, the effectiveness of nursing care.**
2.8.1	Indicator: Identifies one's own level of competence and seeks assistance and knowledge as necessary.
2.8.2	Indicator: Determines the level of care required by individual clients.
2.8.3	Indicator: Accesses advice, assistance, debriefing and direction as necessary.

Competency 2.9	Maintains professional development
2.9.1	Indicator: Contributes to the support, direction and teaching of colleagues to enhance professional development.
2.9.2	Indicator: Updates knowledge related to administration of interventions, treatments, medications and best practice delines within area of practice.
2.9.3	Indicator: Takes responsibility for one's own professional development and for sharing knowledge with others.
2.9.4	*Although nurses involved in management, education, research and policy making are exempt from being assessed against the above competencies in domain two, they are required to provide evidence of how they contribute to the management of care*
Competency 2.9.5	Competencies for nurses involved in management:
2.9.5.i	Promotes an environment that contributes to ongoing demonstration and evaluation of competencies.
2.9.5.ii	Promotes a quality practice environment that supports nurses' abilities to provide safe, effective and ethical nursing practice.
2.9.6	**Competencies for nurses involved in education:**
2.9.6.i	Promotes a practice environment that encourages learning and evidence-based practice.
2.9.6.ii	Participates in professional activities to keep abreast of current trends and issues in nursing.
2.9.6.iii	Promotes an environment that contributes to ongoing demonstration and evaluation of competencies.
2.9.6.iv	Integrates evidence-based theory and best practice into education activities.
2.9.6.v	Participates in professional activities to keep abreast of current trends and issues in nursing.

2.9.7	**Competencies for nurses involved in research:**
2.9.7i	Promotes a research environment that supports and facilitates research mindedness and research utilisation.
2.9.7ii	Supports and evaluates practice through research activities and application of evidence-based knowledge.
2.9.7iii	Participates in professional activities to keep abreast of current trends and issues in nursing.
2.9.8	**Competencies for nurses involved in policy:**
2.9.8i	Utilises research and nursing data to contribute to policy development, implementation and evaluation.
2.9.8ii	Participates in professional activities to keep abreast of current trends and issues in nursing.

Domain three: Interpersonal relationships

Competency 3.1	**Establishes, maintains and concludes therapeutic interpersonal relationships with client.**
3.1.1	Indicator: Initiates, maintains and concludes therapeutic interpersonal interactions with clients.
3.1.2	Indicator: Incorporates therapeutic use of self and psychotherapeutic communication skills as the basis for nursing care for clients with mental health needs.
3.1.3	Indicator: Utilises effective interviewing and counselling skills in interactions with clients.
3.1.4	Indicator: Demonstrates respect, empathy and interest in client.
3.1.5	Indicator: Establishes rapport and trust with the client.
Competency 3.2	**Practises nursing in a negotiated partnership with the client where and when possible.**
3.2.1	Indicator: Undertakes nursing care that ensures clients receive and understand relevant and current information concerning their health care that contributes to informed choice.
3.2.2	Indicator: Implements nursing care in a manner that facilitates the independence, self-esteem and safety of the client and an understanding of therapeutic and partnership principles.
3.2.3	Indicator: Recognises and supports the personal resourcefulness of people with mental and/or physical illness.
3.2.4	Indicator: Acknowledges family/whanau perspectives and supports their participation in services.
Competency 3.3	**Communicates effectively with clients and members of the health care team.**
3.3.1	Indicator: Uses a variety of effective communication techniques.
3.3.2	Indicator: Employs appropriate language to context.

3.3.3	Indicator: Provides adequate time for discussion.
3.3.4	Indicator: Endeavours to establish alternative communication methods when clients are unable to verbalise.
3.3.5	Indicator: Accesses an interpreter when appropriate.
3.3.6	Indicator: Discussions concerning clients are restricted to settings, learning situations and or relevant members of the healthcare team.
3.3.7	*Although nurses involved in management, education, research and policy making are exempted from being assessed against the above competencies in domain three, they are required to provide evidence of how they contribute to interpersonal relationships.*
3.3.8	**Competencies for nurses involved in management, education, policy and research:**
Competency	Establishes and maintains effective interpersonal relationships with others, including utilising effective interviewing and counselling skills and establishing rapport and trust.
	Establishes and maintains effective interpersonal relationships with others, including utilising effective interviewing and counselling skills and establishing rapport and trust.
	Communicates effectively with members of the health care team, including using a variety of effective communication techniques, employing appropriate language to context and providing adequate time for discussion

Domain four: Interprofessional health care & quality improvement

Competency 4.1	Collaborates and participates with colleagues and members of the health care team to facilitate and coordinate care.
4.1.1	Indicator: Promotes a nursing perspective and contribution within the interprofessional activities of the health care team.
4.1.2	Indicator: Provides guidance and support to those entering as students, beginning practitioners and those who are transferring into a new clinical area.
4.1.3	Indicator: Collaborates with the client and other health team members to develop and plan of care.
4.1.4	Indicator: Maintains and documents information necessary for continuity of care and recovery.
4.1.5	Indicator: Develops a discharge plan and follow up care in consultation with the client and other members of the health care team.
4.1.6	Indicator: Makes appropriate formal referrals to other health care team members and other health related sectors for clients who require consultation.
Competency 4.2	Recognises and values the roles and skills of all members of the health care team in the delivery of care.
4.2.1	Indicator: Contributes to the co-ordination of care to maximise health outcomes for the client.
4.2.2	Indicator: Collaborates, consults with and provides accurate information to the client and other health professionals about the prescribed interventions or treatments.
4.2.3	Indicator: Demonstrates a comprehensive knowledge of community services and resources and actively supports service users to use them.
Competency 4.3	Participates in quality improvement activities to monitor and improve standards of nursing.
4.3.1	Indicator: Reviews policies, processes, procedures based on relevant research.

4.3.2	Indicator: Recognises and identifies researchable practice issues and refers them to appropriate people.
4.3.3	Indicator: Distributes research findings that indicate changes to practice to colleagues.

Glossary of terms

Appropriate Matching the circumstances of a situation or meeting the needs of the individual or group.

Assessment A systematic procedure for collecting qualitative and quantitative data to describe progress and ascertain deviations from expected outcomes and achievements.

Attributes Characteristics that underpin competent performance.

Benchmark Essential standard

Client An individual, family, group or community that is a consumer of nursing service.

Competence The combination of skills, knowledge, attitudes, values and abilities that underpin effective performance as a nurse.

Competent: The person has competence across all domains of competencies applicable to the registered nurse, at a standard that is judged to appropriate for the level of nurse being assessed.

Competency A defined area of skilled performance.

Context The setting/environment where competence can be demonstrated or applied.

Domain An organised cluster of competencies in nursing practice.

Effective Having the intended outcome.

Enrolled nurse A nurse registered under the *enrolled nurse* scope of practice.

Indicator Key generic examples of competent performance. They are neither comprehensive nor exhaustive. They assist the assessor when using their professional judgement in assessing nursing practice. They further assist curriculum development.

Legislated requirements Those requirements laid down by New Zealand Acts and Regulations.

Nurse A registered nurse, nurse practitioner, enrolled nurse or nurse assistant.

Nurse assistant A nurse registered under the *nurse assistant* scope of practice.

Nursing Council of New Zealand The responsible authority for nurses in New Zealand with legislated functions under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003.

The Nursing Council of New Zealand governs the practice of nurses by setting and monitoring standards of registration, which ensures safe and competent care for the public of New Zealand.

As the statutory authority, the Council is committed to enhancing professional excellence in nursing.

Performance criteria Descriptive statements that can be assessed and that reflect the intent of a competency in terms of performance, behaviour and circumstance.

Registered nurse A nurse registered under the *registered nurse* scope of practice

Reliability The extent to which a tool will function consistently in the same way with repeated use.

Treaty of Waitangi / Te Tiriti o Waitangi The founding document for Aotearoa/New Zealand signed in 1840 by the Maori people and the British Crown.

Validity The extent to which a measurement tool measures what it purports to measure.