Competency Standards
for the Community Health Nurse

2nd Edition

2001
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Competency Standards authored by Elizabeth Gray
Editing and publishing support by Eastern Perth Public & Community Health Unit
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**Foreword**

It gives me great pleasure to recommend the revised Competency Standards for Beginning and Advanced practice in community health nursing. The standards flow from the reflections on the realities of community health nursing practice and a commitment to those whose health and wellbeing is constantly improved by such practice. The statements contained in these standards clearly represent the insights and understandings that have, for many years, characterised community health nursing practice in Western Australia. By sharing their knowledge and expertise the authors have demonstrated their commitment to the primary health care principles of collaboration and partnership. Their efforts provide an exemplary guide to maintaining and promoting the health of communities and those who live in them.

Anne McMurray,
R.N.; PhD.; F.R.C.N.A.; F.I.H.C.A.;
Professor and Dean, Faculty of Nursing & Health, Griffiths University, Queensland.

October 2001
This second edition of the competency standards is a response to the recommendations made by the Project Team in 1998 that a review be conducted in two years. The need for a review was endorsed by the Community Nurses Special Interest Group’s National Conference in Bunbury, Western Australia in September 2000.

This edition builds on the 1998 document and readers are encouraged to refer to that document to familiarise themselves with the process used to start this journey. Reference: Competency Standards for community health nurses, 1998. Community Health Nurses and Health Department of Western Australia.

Project Management

- Eastern Perth Public and Community Health Unit

Funding Body

- This project was supported by Best Practice Funding from the Health Department of Western Australia for the 2000-2001 period.

Collaborative Support

- The Community Nurses Special Interest Group, Australian Nursing Federation, W.A. Branch supported the funding application and the review process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Manager</th>
<th>Barbara Hughes</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eastern Perth Public &amp; Community Health Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Officer</td>
<td>Hilary Giles</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eastern Perth Public &amp; Community Health Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Consultant</td>
<td>Elizabeth Gray</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Project team

- Barbara Hughes
- Hilary Giles
- Elizabeth Gray
- Patricia Duffield
  South West Population Health Unit
- Diane Riley
  Nurses Board of Western Australia
Process for the review.

The philosophy behind the review was to build on the excellent work and extensive consultation conducted around the State of the initial project team. The review project team achieved this by:

- Appointing a consultant and a project officer to commence work on reviewing the first edition.
- Meeting regularly to comment and review the work of the consultant and project officer.
- Focusing on language use, repetition within the units and currency of the standards.
- Collapsing units of competency from 6 to 5 units.
- Developing a theme to order elements that describe the community health nurse’s work with the client as an individual, family, small group and population aggregates.
- Establishing focus groups in the metropolitan and rural regions to review the beginning level competency draft document, midway through the process.
- Establishing a reference group of community health nurses in August 2001 to approve the final draft for beginning and advanced level competency standards.

* 

To Elizabeth Gray; Project Consultant, a special thanks and acknowledgement for her expertise in competency development. She continued her work from the earlier project and shaped the ideas of the Community Health Nurses into the language and form for professional competency standards.

*
COMMUNITY HEALTH NURSES WHO PARTICIPATED IN FOCUS GROUPS

Sue Hamilton   Jenny Green   Deb Sykes   Mary Benaim
Lil Trotter    Jill Hibben   Shirley Painter Stephanie Borrow
Christine Lock Kelly Thomas Angela Somerville Fiona Ewing
Marie Tyrell-Clark Jenny Kwan Margaret Abernethy Eileen McKeogh
Kathy McKeogh   Wyn McCormick Isabel Redfern Leanda Verrier
Anna Flannery Trish Clark Evelyn Semmens Sue Chance
Suzann Franklin Maureen Dickson Karine Anderson Julieann McComish
Samantha Brown Pamela Martin Beverley Bradshaw Christine Gawn
Clare Sermanni Julie Creighton Faye Cechner Ros Bajic
Zenna Browning Natalie Maslen Debbie Wallwork Raelene Ashenden-Rose
Raelene Longbottom Jane O’Shannessy Chris Harling Claire Bishop
Pat Hall       Julie Hutchenson Jodie Ingrey Carol Radel
Val Bailey     Jocelyn Edmonds Caroline Burke Trish Yensch
Colleen Crowley Jill Higgins Judy Stocks Sylvia Bush
Pat O’Shea

and the community health nurses from Vasse-Leeuwin Health Service

COMMUNITY HEALTH NURSES WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE REFERENCE GROUP

Maryanne Pestelle Jill Hibben Caroline Burke
Sue Hamilton    Hilary Giles Murray Masters
Elizabeth Gray Trish Yensch Marie Tyrrell-Clark
Leanda Verrier Marian Smith Sylvia Bush
Jill Higgins   Judy Stocks Chris Harling
Patricia Duffield Eileen McKeogh Wyn McCormick

Thanks to all these community health nurses for their input, which was essential to ensure the competency standards remained the work of community health nurses throughout Western Australia.
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Introduction
In the first edition of community health nurses’ competency standards it was identified that "Western Australian community health nurses are providers of primary health care which involves a high level of complexity and requires considerable depth of practice skills. The autonomous nature of community health nursing practice requires substantial skills in comprehensive assessment, communication, negotiation, decision making and accountability. It focuses on the promotion of the community’s health rather than disease and on partnership with the client in health care decision making. St John found that the community health nurse searches out and addresses unmet health needs within families, groups and, on occasion, communities and sees their individual and family clients as situated within the complex fabric of the community. Further she suggests that community health nurses require a sophisticated understanding of the community and that operationalising a notion of the community in practice is complex and fluid." (1998, p1)

As a specialist area of nursing practice the nature of the role requires community health nurses to operate in a wide variety of practice settings, often involving generalist as well as specialist practice functions. Competency standards are a valuable tool in guiding best practice and WA community health nurses have embraced the use of competency standards to assist in the identification of practice requirements and to support and maintain the professional status of their specialty area.

Community health nurses in Western Australia in 1998 documented their competency standards for the beginning and advanced level of practice, which reflected the continuum of professional development. Many nursing specialities have developed competency standards to demonstrate their unique area of practice. All these specialty competencies build on the basic competencies of the registered nurses and at the advanced level interlink with the Australian Nursing Federation advanced level competencies for a registered nurse. In some instances the community health nurse will draw on other specialty standards, such as the Standards for Remote area Nursing Practice, as well as those contained in this document to reflect their practice.

In this second edition the competency standards have been re examined to confirm they adequately reflect practice in the current health environment. These competency standards are seen as a living document owned by Community Health Nurses throughout the State. As such ongoing input is required by community health nurses to ensure relevancy and currency for the practice of community health nursing from beginning to advanced level.

Competencies are now an accepted method of describing the complexity of nursing practice. Competencies from other health professional groups within the nursing profession identify the different practice areas and modalities of practice. Competency based statements are now utilised in job descriptions, performance management, in re registration and in guiding individual practice and mentoring of future nurses and new practitioners.

This document provides competency statements through which these processes may be developed and contains the competency standards for the beginning level and advanced community health nurses developed by nurses in Western Australia and reviewed by community health nurses in 2001.

Readers are encouraged to read the first edition of the Competency Standards for the community health nurse to understand the initial project methodology, narrative analysis and case studies which were utilised in commencing the documentation of our practice.

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1 St John, W. 1996. From ambiguity to action: An insiders perspective on the role of the community health nurse in Australia. La Trobe University, Victoria..p340
These competency standards are complementary to the basic competencies all registered nurses are required to meet.

The first edition of the Competency Standards for the community health nurse (1998, p2) identified the following occupational statements:

**Competency standards for the Beginning Practitioner in Community Health Nursing**

A beginning community health nurse is a registered nurse with previous nursing experience.

**Occupational Statement**

Community health nurses practice primary health care in a diverse range of settings. They provide continuous monitoring of the health status of communities and respond to episodic health needs. Community health nurses need to be creative, adaptable and responsive to a variety of norms, cultures and value systems whether they are working with individuals, families or community groups.

**Competency standards for the Advanced Practitioner in Community Health Nursing**

**Occupational Statement**

The advanced community health nurse utilises a high level of professional skills and knowledge in partnership with individuals, families and communities designed to increase client capacity to take responsibility for their own health.

**Abbreviations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANCI</td>
<td>Australian Nursing Council (Incorporated)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RN</td>
<td>Registered Nurse</td>
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<tr>
<td>ANF</td>
<td>Australian Nursing Federation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organisation</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Education Package**

An education package which discusses the community health nurse competencies and their application within the workplace is available via the internet at:


**Quick Reference Format**

The following two pages summarise the units and elements of competencies, allowing the nurse to photocopy or print them as a quick reference ‘pocket’ copy. A detailed description follows the summary sheets, describing units, elements and performance criteria.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNITS AND ELEMENTS OF COMPETENCE</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1.0</strong> Maintain a professional and ethical practice in the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Demonstrate nursing decision making in a range of situations.</td>
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<td>1.2 Promote community health nursing and participate in professional development.</td>
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<td>1.3 Demonstrate respect for client rights.</td>
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<td>1.4 Promote the safety of the client, self and others.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2.0</strong> Promote enabling interactions in professional relationship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Establish enabling communication with the client and colleagues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Establish and maintain therapeutic interactions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.3 Establish and maintain effective collaboration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.0</strong> Manage client care in the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Reflect primary health care principles in collaborative partnerships to encourage client independence and self responsibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Analyse community health needs and plan service delivery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Assist the client to manage health issues through the use of proactive and facilitative approaches to work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Promote client focused outcomes in the provision of optimum health service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UNITS AND ELEMENTS OF COMPETENCE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4.0</strong> Promote health and the maintenance of well being in the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Apply a public health framework in the practice of community health nursing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Plan and integrate health promotion into all aspects of community health nursing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Develop and implement program plans within a community setting in collaboration with stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4 Facilitate learning and individual behaviour changes by providing information adapted to the context of the client.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5 Evaluate health promotion activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5.0</strong> Manage a defined community health nursing practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Manage human and material resources.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.2 Take responsibility for allocated financial resources.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.3 Manage a defined nursing care setting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4 Use research and evaluation skills to improve the quality of community health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.0</strong> Provide leadership and support in the promotion of health and maintenance of well being.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Apply a comprehensive knowledge of health promotion gained from experience and informed by current information to achieve public health policies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Provide support and coordination for the integration of health promotion into community health nursing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Coordinate the development and implementation of health promotion plans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4 Participate in and support initiatives to assist learning and individual behaviour change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5 Evaluate health promotion activities and provide recommendations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5.0</strong> Manage a community health nursing practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Provide leadership in the management of human and material resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2 Financial resources are negotiated and managed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3 Manage the nursing care setting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4 Promote research and evaluation to improve the quality of community health</td>
</tr>
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</table>
**BEGINNING COMPETENCY STANDARDS FOR THE COMMUNITY HEALTH NURSE**

1.0 *Maintain a professional and ethical practice in the Community.*

This unit reflects the ability of the nurse to practise in a safe, professional and ethical manner using decision-making skills acquired from previous experience.

The role is grounded in the body of nursing knowledge and decision making is based on the systematic appraisal of the best nursing evidence available and client preferences.

**Element of Competency 1.1**
**Demonstrate nursing decision making in a range of situations**

**Performance Criteria**
- Effective problem solving strategies are developed in partnership with the client
- Situations are assessed using a systematic decision making technique
- Decisions are based on the client’s expressed need
- Judgement based on experience and knowledge is reflected in decision making
- Decisions are based on experience and clinical judgement when the client’s decision contravenes safe practice
- Nursing decisions are guided by the nurses Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct
- Common law duty of care is incorporated into nursing judgements
- A degree of autonomy is reflected in the decisions made in routine nursing practice
- Participation in team decision making is demonstrated
- Decision making outcomes are evaluated to ensure accountability
- Appropriate solutions are identified from a broad range of options

**Element of Competency 1.2**
**Promote community health nursing and participate in professional development.**

**Performance Criteria**
- The professional role of the community health nurse is explained to peers and clients
- Participation in activities of professional organisations is demonstrated
- Unsafe practice and professional misconduct is identified and reported
- Own professional nursing standards are monitored to ensure safe practice
- Personal and professional growth needs are identified and addressed through performance management
- The influence of role modelling and mentoring is acknowledged and utilised in self-development
- Responsibility and accountability is accepted for own nursing practice and performance appraisal

**ADVANCED COMPETENCY STANDARDS FOR THE COMMUNITY HEALTH NURSE**

1.0 *Facilitate and support professional and ethical practice in Community Health Nursing.*

The advanced community health nurse assumes responsibility to review policies and procedures and nursing practice of self and colleagues.

**Element of Competency 1.1**
**Demonstrate nursing decision making in a broad range of complex situations**

**Performance Criteria**
- Autonomous decisions are made in community health nursing demonstrating initiative and independence
- Complex situations are resolved using multiple approaches to the decision making process
- Nursing decisions are informed by risk benefit analysis using interpretive skills
- Significant nursing decisions are made to address complex issues
- A comprehensive approach is used in decision making to focus on client’s expressed and actual needs
- High level judgement based on experience and knowledge is reflected in decision making
- Decisions are based on experience and clinical judgement and a knowledge of statutory and common law when the client’s decision contravenes safe practice
- Mastery of a broad professional knowledge is incorporated into decision making
- Potential conflict situations are identified and managed using diverse problem solving techniques

**Element of Competency 1.2**
**Promote community health nursing and the professional development of self and others.**

**Performance Criteria**
- The complexities, roles, functions and subtleties of community health nursing are communicated to others
- Professional needs of self and others are identified, analysed and addressed
- Requests for assistance in client care are addressed
- A high level of participation is demonstrated in activities of professional organisations
- Unsafe practice and professional misconduct is identified and addressed
- Responsibility is accepted for the provision of information and the implementation of professional development strategies
- Responsibility is accepted for preceptoring, mentoring and orientation as part of the professional role
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEGINNING COMPETENCY STANDARD</th>
<th>ADVANCED COMPETENCY STANDARD</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Element of Competency 1.2 (cont)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Element of Competency 1.2 (cont)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reflective practice is used with colleagues to assess performance and improve nursing practice</td>
<td>• The changing role of the community health nurse to incorporate current trends in practice is advanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Gaps in nursing services are identified and reported</td>
<td>• Nursing practices are monitored to maintain professional standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Nursing practice is evaluated and recommendations for improvement within legal parameters are made</td>
<td>• A contribution is made to nursing research and the body of nursing knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A contribution is made to nursing research and the body of nursing knowledge</td>
<td><strong>Element of Competency 1.3 Demonstrate respect for client rights.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Performance Criteria</strong></td>
<td><strong>Performance Criteria</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The client is encouraged to participate in prevention, early identification and intervention strategies</td>
<td>• Client centred care is planned, coordinated and facilitated within a multidisciplinary context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Nursing care is planned with the client</td>
<td>• A commitment to the client outcomes is demonstrated through skilful consultation, advocacy, planned individual care and the protection of client rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The rights of the client are acknowledged, explained and protected in professional interaction</td>
<td>• The client is supported and encouraged to exercise their rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Written information is provided to inform clients of their rights</td>
<td>• Advocacy is demonstrated where policies and practises infringe on the rights of the client</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The client's right to autonomy is recognised and supported</td>
<td>• Confidentiality of client information within statutory and ethical guidelines is actively promoted with all team members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Access and equity issues are identified</td>
<td>• Responsibility for adherence to ethical work practices is demonstrated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Information to assist the client make informed decisions is comprehensive, non-judgemental and culturally acceptable</td>
<td>• Opposing viewpoints on ethical issues are accepted with intervention by mediation if necessary to uphold the rights of the client</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Nursing care is planned within a culturally acceptable framework</td>
<td><strong>Element of Competency 1.4 Demonstrate responsibility for the protection and safety of the client, self and others.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• An advocacy role is accepted to assist the client</td>
<td><strong>Performance criteria</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Client confidentiality is maintained and the release of information is based on ethical and health service guidelines in accordance with legislation</td>
<td>• Responsibility is accepted for identification and action on potential or actual occupational, safety and health hazards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The validity of opposing viewpoints on ethical issues is recognised and differing opinions respected</td>
<td>• Collaboration and evaluation is used to assess the safety of the client and nurse on home and community visits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Element of Competency 1.3 Demonstrate responsibility for promoting the rights of the client.</strong></td>
<td>• Judgement is used in a highly varied context to promote safety of the client, self and others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Performance criteria</strong></td>
<td>• Responsibility is taken for monitoring and compliance with occupational health and safety legislation and policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Occupational Safety and Health standards are incorporated into own health practice</td>
<td><strong>Element of Competency 1.4 Demonstrate responsibility for the protection and safety of the client, self and others.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Potential or actual hazards and environmental health issues are identified</td>
<td><strong>Performance criteria</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The safety of the client in the home and community is assessed and documented</td>
<td>• Responsibility is accepted for identification and action on potential or actual occupational, safety and health hazards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Responsibility is taken for prior planning and safe outcomes of home and community visits</td>
<td>• Collaboration and evaluation is used to assess the safety of the client and nurse on home and community visits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Responsibility is accepted for the provision of safety information to the client.</td>
<td>• Judgement is used in a highly varied context to promote safety of the client, self and others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Environmental hazards are reported within the health service and with other services and agencies</td>
<td>• Responsibility is taken for monitoring and compliance with occupational health and safety legislation and policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Action is taken where environmental health issues are identified</td>
<td><strong>Element of Competency 1.4 Demonstrate responsibility for the protection and safety of the client, self and others.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BEGINNING COMPETENCY STANDARD

2.0 Promote Enabling Interactions In Professional Relationships.

Client focused community health nursing practice is based on professional judgement, open and effective communication which is facilitative, non judgmental, sensitive to cultural diversity and individual differences.

Element of Competency
2.1 Establish enabling communication with the client and colleagues.

Performance Criteria
• The pivotal role of the client is recognised in the maintenance of on-going communication
• Culturally acceptable communication strategies are used
• On-going communication is used for co-ordinated care
• Appropriate communication technology is used to communicate and gather information
• The client’s customs, religious and other practices where they impact on health outcomes, are acknowledged in documentation
• Communication strategies that include, advocacy, discussion group facilitation, public speaking and written information are used
• Responsibility is accepted for the establishment, maintenance, finalisation and preservation of necessary documentation

Element of Competency
2.2 Establish and maintain therapeutic interactions.

Performance Criteria
• Theoretical knowledge and clinical skills are used to meet identified need of the client
• Defined goals are identified through communication within the counselling role
• The client is offered the full range of options available
• Plans of care in the counselling role are formulated and progress monitored with the client and appropriate others
• Independent and interdependent counselling is provided to meet the needs of the client
• Where appropriate and following consent from the client referrals are made to other health services and agencies

ADVANCED COMPETENCY STANDARD

2.0 Facilitate and Support Enabling Interactions In Professional Relationships.

The advanced community health nurse, through effective communication and leadership, promotes health and enhances the capacity of clients to maximise health outcomes.

Element of Competency
2.1 Establish and maintain enabling communication with the client and colleagues.

Performance Criteria
• High level communication skills are used to maximize the health status of the community
• Effective, culturally appropriate interaction between the client and staff is facilitated
• Critical, relevant and culturally appropriate information is provided in complex situations
• Coordinated care is achieved through leadership and effective communication
• Staff are supported in stressful situations
• The expression of feelings is facilitated by the provision of an appropriate environment for nurses and clients
• Responsibility is accepted for the preservation of necessary documentation

Element of Competency
2.2 Facilitate therapeutic interactions.

Performance Criteria
• Theoretical knowledge, clinical skills and experience are used to meet identified client needs and support team members
• An environment is created which is conducive to the establishment and maintenance of a therapeutic relationship
• Plans of care in the counselling role are formulated in collaboration with the client and appropriate others
• Independent and interdependent counselling is provided to meet the needs of the client
• Constructive strategies are used and outcomes of the interaction are reviewed in reflective practice
• The therapeutic interaction is concluded in consultation with the client
• Appropriate collaboration and referrals are facilitated
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEGINNING COMPETENCY STANDARD</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Element of Competency</strong></td>
<td><strong>Element of Competency</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Establish and maintain effective collaboration.</td>
<td>2.3 Establish and maintain effective collaboration and mutual respect within the team.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Performance Criteria</strong></td>
<td><strong>Performance Criteria</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Collaborative relationships are established and maintained through the allocation of dedicated time</td>
<td>• Continual building and defining of team needs and networks are employed to ensure collaborative achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Participation in team interaction and planning is established and team expectations identified</td>
<td>• A desired outcome is negotiated through collaboration and coordination within the team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined</td>
<td>• The dissemination of plans to all team members is facilitated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Delegated responsibility is accepted within the team member’s level of competence</td>
<td>• Requests for assistance from other staff members are given a considered response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Initiative is encouraged and supported</td>
<td>• Responsibilities are delegated within team member’s level of competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Resource information is collected, collated and shared with colleagues</td>
<td>• The ability to adapt to the required role is demonstrated in team decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Potential conflict is recognised and managed</td>
<td>• Maturity and political astuteness are used to deal effectively with issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Participation in on-going review of team effectiveness is demonstrated</td>
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**BEGINNING COMPETENCY STANDARD**

3.0 Manage client care in the community.

Community health nurses apply the principles of primary health care to assist the individual, family and community (the client) to manage their own health within context of their environment using a holistic approach which views the client as a partner.

**Element 3.1**

Reflect primary health care principles in collaborative partnerships to encourage client independence and self responsibility.

**Performance criteria**

- The autonomy of the client is enhanced in client focused planning
- The client’s rights to partnership, participation and autonomy in nursing care is recognised and supported to provide positive outcomes
- Evidence based practice is used in the provision of nursing care
- Strategies are used to encourage independence and enable clients to maintain their own health
- The client is assisted to access relevant health information and resources to deal with issues
- Service delivery is based on a social justice framework
- World Health Organisation principles are considered in the provision of optimal health programs

**Element 3.2**

Analyse community health needs and plan service Delivery.

**Performance criteria**

- Early identification of clients health issues is facilitated
- Local health issues are prioritised and programs developed in liaison with the client
- Early intervention which is culturally and socially acceptable is determined in collaboration with the client
- Demographic information is used in the development of programs
- Social economic and environmental data are collected to assist in the identification of service needs goals and objectives
- Community resources are determined to implement the plan in consultation with the client
- The client, family is supported in the identification and prioritisation of health related goals
- Information is analysed and interpreted to assist in the development of plans
- Nursing action is planned using a multidisciplinary approach to optimise opportunities which may enhance programs in the community

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**ADVANCED COMPETENCY STANDARD**

3.0 Provide leadership and facilitation in the management of client care in the community.

The advanced community health nurse supports other community health nurses in assisting the client to manage their own health within the context of their environment and social experience.

**Element 3.1**

Reflect primary health care principles to achieve client outcomes.

**Performance criteria**

- The self management capacity of the client is increased through assisted access to accurate and relevant information
- A multidisciplinary team approach is used consistently in the practice of community health nursing
- Continual building and defining of networks is required to cope with fluctuations and shifts in alliances
- Complex collaboration, maturity and political astuteness are demonstrated when dealing with community issues

**Element 3.2**

Participate in collaborative analysis and planning.

**Performance criteria**

- Experience, knowledge and clinical judgement is used in analysis and interpretation of data to ensure service delivery meets the needs of the client
- The broader aspects and implications of the situation are identified
- National, State and local health priorities are identified and incorporated into service delivery
- Nursing decisions are informed by multiple approaches to information gathering including epidemiological data
- Strategies to measure goal achievement are identified in partnership with the client
- Action is taken to ensure the wider community is aware of issues which may affect them
### BEGINNING COMPETENCY STANDARD

**Element 3.3**

Assist the client to manage health issues through the use of proactive and facilitative approaches to work.

**Performance Criteria**
- A recognised integrated and systematic assessment is used for a client-focused outcome
- The client's perceived and actual needs and readiness to act are considered in planning health care
- The client is supported to develop their own plans for the provision of health services
- The client's strengths, concerns and expectations are identified in the plan of care
- A nursing diagnosis is made using a problem solving approach
- Continuity of care is enhanced by cultural sensitivity and collaboration with the client, family, community and colleagues
- Referrals are made to other professionals, support services or organizations

**Element 3.4**

Promote client focused outcomes in the provision of optimum health service delivery.

**Performance Criteria**
- A range of information gathering techniques is applied to ensure a comprehensive assessment
- Selected nursing interventions and expected outcomes are included in family and community health planning
- Cultural socio-economic and historical factors are considered in the development of strategies
- On-going assessment and review is used to monitor the client's progress, results are discussed and plans modified in collaboration with the client

### ADVANCED COMPETENCY STANDARD

**Element 3.3**

Use multiple approaches to assist the client to manage health issues.

**Performance Criteria**
- Multiple approaches are used to develop appropriate evidence based interventions
- The client and other nurses are provided with information, counselling and support to assist in the identification of health needs
- Leadership is provided in the promotion of the client's partnership and participative role in care
- Social and cultural practices are recognised, respected and incorporated into management of care
- Collaboration and support for colleagues are used to enhance health care
- Continuity of care is coordinated

**Element 3.4**

Support client and colleagues in the promotion of client focused outcome.

**Performance Criteria**
- Guidance is given to facilitate a range of information gathering strategies
- The evaluation of expected outcomes is facilitated in collaboration with client and colleagues
- Reflective practice in collaboration with the client and colleagues is used to coordinate the review and monitoring of service delivery
- Changes are implemented, monitored and reviewed
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEGINNING COMPETENCY STANDARD</th>
<th>ADVANCED COMPETENCY STANDARD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.0 Promote health and the maintenance of well being in the community.</strong></td>
<td><strong>4.0 Provide leadership and support in the promotion of health and maintenance of well being.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health promotion is an integral component of community health nursing practice and is reflected in a variety of activities with individuals, families and community.</td>
<td>Health promotion is an integral component of community health nursing practice and is reflected in the variety of health promotion models used to achieve the desired outcomes.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Element 4.1**
Apply a public health framework in the practice of community health nursing.

**Performance Criteria**
- Epidemiological data are used to monitor the health status of sub groups
- Culturally appropriate strategies are used in the development and implementation of programs
- A planned partnership approach is applied by community health nurses for the management of public health issues
- Local, regional and state-wide programs and policies are applied in community health nursing practice
- Strategies for public health action are supported

**Element 4.2**
Plan and integrate health promotion into all aspects of community health nursing.

**Performance Criteria**
- Relevant literature is analysed and applied
- Needs assessment data is interpreted
- Source data on health needs is identified
- Local health issues are prioritised with the client
- Other health team members and organisations are encouraged to support health promotion activities
- Health promotion activities are logical, sequenced and sustainable
- Health promotion activities are based on theory and evidence
- Measurable objectives are identified
- Resources are organised for health promotion

**Element 4.3**
Develop and implement program plans within a community setting in collaboration with stakeholders.

**Performance criteria**
- Public health policies are considered in the implementation of programs
- Prevention of disease and early intervention is promoted and actively pursued
- Factors underlying health problems are identified and priorities determined with the client
- Opportunities for health promotion are utilised
- Programs or interventions are planned and developed in conjunction with the client
- Health Promotion programs are pre-tested

**Element 4.1**
Apply a comprehensive knowledge of health promotion gained from experience and informed by current information to achieve public health outcomes.

**Performance Criteria**
- Public/community health issues are identified, prioritised and documented
- Current public health findings and data are applied to the management of community health service activities
- Culturally appropriate strategies are used to direct and facilitate the development of programs
- The coordination and integration of local, regional and state-wide programs and policies is demonstrated
- Support for health initiatives is coordinated to assist in the management of identified public health issues

**Element 4.2**
Provide support and coordination for the integration of health promotion into community health nursing.

**Performance Criteria**
- A wide range of relevant literature and supporting health promotion data is accessed and provided to colleagues
- Health needs assessment is coordinated
- Local health initiatives are linked with national and state programs to maximise effectiveness
- An interdisciplinary and multi agency approach is used in health promotion
- The community is kept informed of health initiatives and outcomes
- Funding sources for health promotion are identified and accessed

**Element 4.3**
Coordinate the development and implementation of health promotion programs.

**Performance criteria**
- Information is provided to assist in capacity building for program development
- Knowledge of resources and funding sources is applied to the planning process
- Pre-testing of programs is coordinated
- Opportunities for health promotion are supported and applied consistently
- Responsibility is accepted for the coordination of program planning strategies
- Regional state and national data is used to determine priorities for health promotion
## BEGGINING COMPETENCY STANDARD

### Element 4.3 (cont)
- The process and outcome procedures are explained to the client
- Community based organisations are supported in the promotion of health promotion
- Enabling strategies that are culturally acceptable are used to implement population based health
- A commitment to continuous improvement is demonstrated through participation in improvement activities

### Element 4.4
Facilitate learning and individual behaviour changes by providing information adapted to the context of the client.

**Performance Criteria**
- Behavioural factors that promote or compromise health are identified
- The client is involved in the development of a teaching/learning plan
- A range of health education approaches are applied
- Measurable objectives and appropriate strategies are included in the plan
- A variety of resources is used to supplement teaching
- The client's readiness to learn is identified
- Opportunities to provide health teaching are identified and a range of methods used
- Current accurate and verifiable information is provided
- Positive reinforcement is provided to the client
- The role and availability of other health disciplines are explained
- Teaching is evaluated by a variety of strategies which observe changes in knowledge, attitude, skills and behaviour

### Element 4.5
Evaluate health promotion activities.

**Performance criteria**
- Evaluation methodology is considered in the planning stage
- A variety of tools are used in the evaluation process
- Process evaluation is used to refine the implementation of the programs
- Impact evaluation is used to determine effective strategies
- Feedback is sought from the community on the appropriateness of goals, objectives, target groups, strategies and program costs
- Results of evaluation are provided to the community
- Evaluation results are used to refine future activities

## ADVANCED COMPETENCY STANDARD

### Element 4.3 (cont)
- Continuous improvement is achieved through reflection, evaluation, feedback and redefinition of plans
- Advocacy is practised to assist in the achievement of planned health goals
- The media is used when appropriate
- Health and the enhancement of the quality of life is promoted by collaboration with community based organisations

### Element 4.4
Participate in and support initiatives to assist in learning and individual behaviour changes.

**Performance Criteria**
- Analysis of health needs assessment is discussed with colleagues to assist in the identification of client’s learning needs
- Experience and a high level of sensitivity is used to identify when the client is ready to make changes
- Opportunities for health teaching are identified and promoted to other service providers
- Recommendations on appropriate promotion / teaching strategies are made if required
- Reflection is used to assist in the evaluation of health teaching

### Element 4.5
Evaluate health promotion activities and provide Recommendations.

**Performance criteria**
- The long term effects of health promotion programs are evaluated to monitor change and make recommendations
- Multiple models for evaluation are used
- Well developed analytical skills are used to evaluate health promotion program
- Feedback is sought from the community and colleagues
- Evaluation results and recommendations are provided to the community and other relevant stakeholders
### BEGINNING COMPETENCY STANDARD

5.0 Manage a defined community health nursing practice.

The community health nurse is able to apply the principles of sound management and quality improvement strategies. All areas of practice take into account relevant legislation, policies and practices that guide and govern the organisation of community health nursing.

**Element of Competency 5.1**

Manage human and material resources.

**Performance criteria**
- Human, material technical resources are managed to ensure effective use
- Legislative, industrial and organisational requirements are followed and applied
- Workloads and responsibilities are considered in the fair distribution of work
- Evidence of effective use of time is demonstrated
- Appropriate equipment is utilised in the assessment and care of the client
- Responsibility is accepted for monitoring and maintaining equipment in working order

**Element of competency 5.2**

Take responsibility for allocated financial resources.

**Performance Criteria**
- Needs are identified and reported
- Expenditure is adjusted to meet changing priorities
- Input is provided into the budgeting process and evaluation of cost effectiveness
- The client's rights to access and equity of service provision is promoted within fiscal management

### ADVANCED COMPETENCY STANDARD

5.0 Manage a community health nursing practice.

The advanced community health nurse applies management principles, practices and quality standards in actively promoting community health nursing.

**Element of Competency 5.1**

Provide leadership in the management of human and material resources.

**Performance criteria**
- Analytical skills are used to identify problems, set priorities and identify the best resources for intervention
- Complex issues are addressed using high level negotiation and conflict resolution skills
- Human resources are utilised effectively and supported to assist optimum work performance
- Responsibilities of other personnel are considered in the fair distribution of workloads
- Leadership skills are demonstrated in management issues
- Accountability and overall responsibility is accepted for the management of material resources
- Responsibility is accepted for adherence to all relevant legislation and health service requirements

**Element of competency 5.2**

Financial resources are negotiated and managed.

**Performance Criteria**
- Needs are adjusted and expenditure adjusted to meet changing priorities
- Budgets are reviewed consistently and cost effectiveness is evaluated
- Responsibility is taken to identify funding sources
- High level skills are demonstrated in negotiation for funding
- Business cases are developed for the acquisition of funds
- Responsibility is taken for the management of allocated financial and other resources
BEGINNING COMPETENCY STANDARD

Element of Competency 5.3
Manage a defined nursing care setting.

Performance Criteria
- Workload is organised to ensure effective delivery of nursing care and to promote a safe outcome
- Health interviews are conducted in a manner that facilitates client comfort and security
- Teamwork and community support mechanisms are established
- Action is taken to rectify a potentially unsafe situation
- Nursing care is evaluated to promote optimal outcomes and continuity of care

Element of Competency 5.4
Use research and evaluation skills to improve the quality of community health nursing.

Performance Criteria
- Issues in nursing practice are identified using appropriate research methods
- The purpose, ethical issues and appropriateness of proposed research projects are identified
- Current literature and new developments in nursing is reviewed to improve nursing practice
- Research findings are used to determine the effectiveness of community health programs
- Nursing practise is modified in response to research
- A contribution is made to nursing research and the body of nursing knowledge

ADVANCED COMPETENCY STANDARD

Element of Competency 5.3
Manage the nursing care setting.

Performance Criteria
- Responsibility for workload organisation is taken to ensure effective delivery of nursing care
- Delegation of skills are used to provide optimal care
- Teamwork is used to manage nursing care setting and maximise outcomes
- Responsibility is taken to rectify a potentially unsafe situation
- Nursing care is monitored and evaluated to inform on-going optimal care
- Continuity of care is promoted by ensuring adequate resources, analysis of reviews, transmission of information and maintenance of client records

Element of Competency 5.4
Promote research and evaluation to improve the quality of community health nursing.

Performance Criteria
- Current literature is reviewed, disseminated and applied to improve nursing practice
- Research proposals are examined
- Ethical issues in research are considered
- The purpose of proposed research projects is reviewed and applications to practice considered
- Questioning and critical analysis is used
- Valid and relevant conclusions and recommendation are made
- Research findings are used to determine the effectiveness of community health programs
- Research findings are interpreted appropriately and presented to the community
- Colleagues are encouraged to participate in research
- Strategic alliances are developed to cooperate in collaborative research
GLOSSARY

Assessment
Assessment of performance against Competency standards

Attributes
The knowledge, skills and attributes that together enable competent performance.

Beginning Nurse in Community Nursing practice
The beginning community health nurse is a registered nurse with previous nursing experience.

Capacity
Capacity—capability, holding power, mental power.

Client
Refers to the recipient of health care. The client may be an individual, family, community, group or organisation.

Competence
A construct referring to all the personal characteristics that together enable competent performance.

Competency Standard
A competency standard is a statement of the skills and knowledge required for effective performance by a person in a particular position or role in the workplace. Competency standards do not describe the procedures necessary to perform that particular role. (Source: Adapted from Australian Competency Standards Framework, 2002, Australian Safety and Compensation Council, 2002)

Competent
Possessing the attributes necessary to perform a job to appropriate standards.

Context
The setting/environment within which the professional assessment occurs.

Context of community health nursing
The conditions to which the performance criteria apply.

Element of competency
A subdivision of a unit of competency that is observable in the workplace.

Health promotion
Health promotion is defined within the Ottawa Charter for Health promotion as the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health.

Primary health care
Essential health care made universally accessible to individuals and families in the community by means acceptable to them, through their full participation and at a cost that the community and country can afford. (WHO

Performance
What professionals do in the workplace. Activities and behaviours demonstrated in the workplace.

Performance criteria
An integrated list of the aspects of professional performance that would be regarded as evidence of competent professional performance in the workplace.

Risk-Benefit Analysis
Risk-benefit analysis is the comparison of the risk of a situation to its related benefits.

Role
A distinct area of practice within a profession.

Standard
The desirable and achievable level of performance against which actual practice is compared.

Unit of competency
A major segment of the overall competency of a profession, typically representing a major function or role of the profession.

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