
Standards of proficiency for registered nurses

Originally published: 17 May 2018



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These updated standards were approved by Council at their meeting on 28 March 2018. They were redesigned in March 2024.

Introduction

The Nursing and Midwifery Council has a duty to review the standards of proficiency that we set for the professions we regulate on a regular basis. This is to ensure that our standards remain contemporary and fit for purpose to protect the public. In reviewing the standards, we have considered the changes that are taking place in society and health care, and the implications these have for registered nurses of the future in terms of their role, knowledge and skill requirements.

The proficiencies in this document specify the knowledge and skills that registered nurses must demonstrate when caring for **people** of all ages and across all care settings. They reflect what the public can expect nurses to know and be able to do to deliver safe, kind and effective nursing care.

They also provide a benchmark for nurses from overseas wishing to join the UK register, as well as for those who plan to return to practice after a period of absence.

The role of the nurse in the 21st century

Registered nurses play a vital role in providing, leading and coordinating care that is compassionate, evidence-based, and **person-centred**.

They are accountable for their own actions and must be able to work autonomously, as an equal partner with a range of other professionals, and in interdisciplinary teams. In order to respond to the impact and demands of professional nursing practice, they must be emotionally intelligent and resilient individuals who are able to manage their own personal health and wellbeing, and know when and how to access support.

Registered nurses make an important contribution to the promotion of health, health protection and the prevention of ill health. They do this by empowering people, communities and populations to exercise choice, take control of their own health decisions and behaviours, and by supporting people to manage their own care where possible.

Registered nurses provide leadership in the delivery of care for people of all ages and from different backgrounds, cultures and beliefs. They provide nursing care for people who have complex mental, physical, cognitive, and behavioural care needs, those living with dementia, the elderly, and for people at the end of their life. They must be able to care for people in their own home, in the community or hospital or in any health care settings where their needs are supported and managed.

Registered nurses work in the context of continual change, challenging environments, different models of care delivery, shifting demographics, innovation, and rapidly evolving technologies. Increasing integration of health and social care services will require registered nurses to negotiate boundaries and play a proactive role in interdisciplinary teams. The confidence and ability to think critically, apply knowledge and skills, and provide expert, evidence-based, direct nursing care therefore lies at the centre of all registered nursing practice.

About our standards

Our standards of proficiency apply to all NMC registered nurses and should be read with our standards for education and training. The standards for education and training set out our expectations regarding delivery of all pre-registration and post-registration NMC approved nursing and midwifery education programmes.

Our standards for education and training apply to all Approved Education Institutions (AEIs) and are set out in three parts: [Part one: Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education](#); [Part two: Standards for student supervision and assessment](#); and Part three: programme standards, which are the standards specific for each pre-registration or post-registration programme. AEIs must comply with our standards to be approved to run any NMC approved programmes.

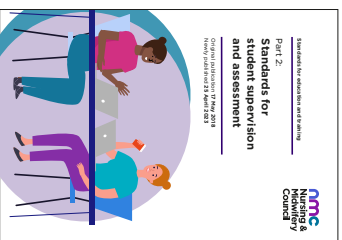
Together, the standards for education and training aim to provide AEIs and their practice learning partners with the flexibility to develop innovative approaches to education for nurses, midwives and nursing associates, while being accountable for the local delivery and management of approved programmes in line with our standards. The relationship between the different sets of standards is shown in the diagram on the next page.

Standards for education and training

Part 1

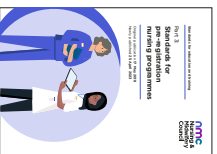


Part 2

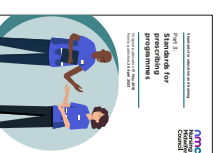


Part 3 - Programme standards

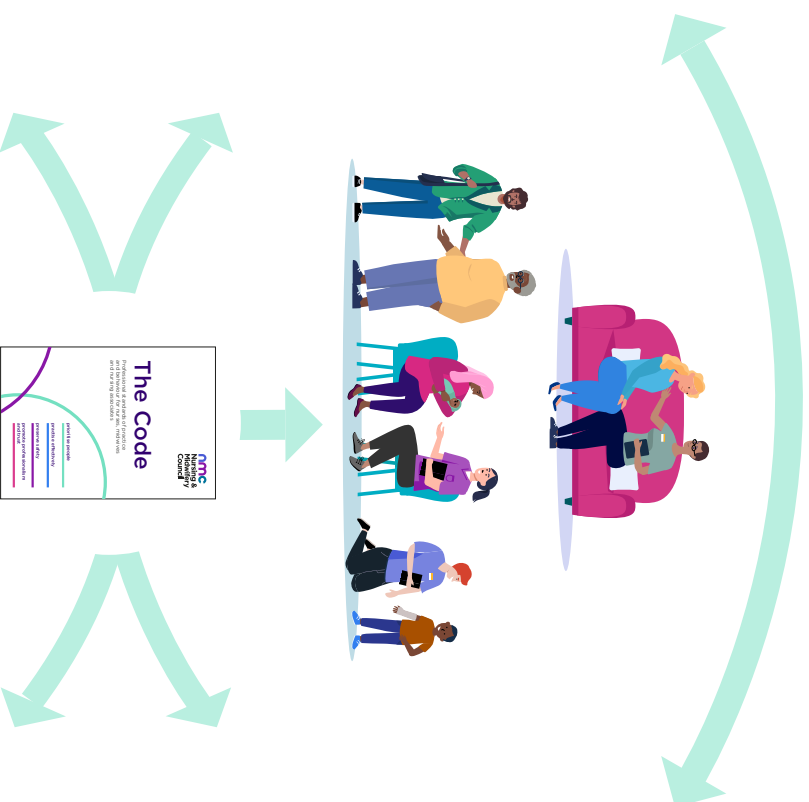
Pre-registration



Post-registration



Standards of proficiency



Legislative framework

Article 15(1) of the [Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001](#) ([‘the Order’](#))¹ requires the Council to establish standards for education and training which are necessary to achieve the standards of proficiency for admission to the register, as required by Article 5(2) of the Order. [The Standards for pre-registration nursing programmes](#) are established under the provision of Article 15(1) of the Order.

Article 5(2) of the Order requires the NMC to establish standards of proficiency necessary to be admitted to each part of the register and for safe and effective practice under that part of the register. The standards of proficiency have been established under this provision.

¹ SI 2002/253

How the proficiencies have been structured

The proficiencies are grouped under seven platforms, followed by two annexes. Together, these reflect what we expect a newly registered nurse to know and be capable of doing safely and proficiently at the start of their career.

Key components of the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of registered nurses are described under each of the seven platforms. We believe that this approach provides clarity to the public and the professions about the core knowledge and skills that they can expect every registered nurse to demonstrate.

These proficiencies will provide new graduates into the profession with the knowledge and skills they need at the point of registration which they will build upon as they gain experience in practice and fulfil their professional responsibility to continuously update their knowledge and skills. For example, after they register with us, registered nurses will already be equipped to progress to the completion of a prescribing qualification.

The platforms are:

- 1. Being an accountable professional**
- 2. Promoting health and preventing ill health**
- 3. Assessing needs and planning care**
- 4. Providing and evaluating care**
- 5. Leading and managing nursing care and working in teams**
- 6. Improving safety and quality of care**
- 7. Coordinating care**

The outcome statements for each platform have been designed to apply across all four fields of nursing practice (adult, children, learning disabilities, mental health) and all care settings. This is because registered nurses must be able to meet the person-centred, holistic care needs of the people they encounter in their practice who may be at any stage of life and who may have a range of mental, physical, cognitive or behavioural health challenges.

They must also be able to demonstrate a greater depth of knowledge and the additional more advanced skills required to meet the specific care needs of people in their chosen fields of nursing practice.

The annexes to these standards of proficiency are presented in two sections. The annexes provide a description of what registered nurses should be able to demonstrate they can do at the point of registration in order to provide safe nursing care.

Annexe A specifies the communication and relationship management skills required, and **Annexe B** specifies the nursing procedures that registered nurses must demonstrate that they are able to perform safely. As with the knowledge proficiencies, the annexes also identify where more advanced skills are required by registered nurses, working in a particular field of nursing practice.

Platform 1

Being an accountable professional

Registered nurses act in the best interests of people, putting them first and providing nursing care that is person-centred, safe and compassionate. They act professionally at all times and use their knowledge and experience to make evidence-based decisions about care. They communicate effectively, are role models for others, and are accountable for their actions. Registered nurses continually reflect on their practice and keep abreast of new and emerging developments in nursing, health and care.

Outcomes

The outcomes set out below reflect the proficiencies for accountable professional practice that must be applied across the standards of proficiency for registered nurses, as described in platforms 2-7, in all care settings and areas of practice.

At the point of registration, the registered nurse will be able to:

- 1.1** understand and act in accordance with [The Code: Professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses, midwives and nursing associates](#), and fulfil all registration requirements
- 1.2** understand and apply relevant legal, regulatory and governance requirements, policies, and ethical frameworks, including any mandatory reporting duties, to all areas of practice, differentiating where appropriate between the devolved legislatures of the United Kingdom
- 1.3** understand and apply the principles of courage, transparency and the professional duty of candour, recognising and reporting any situations, behaviours or errors that could result in poor care outcomes
- 1.4** demonstrate an understanding of, and the ability to challenge, discriminatory behaviour
- 1.5** understand the demands of professional practice and demonstrate how to recognise signs of vulnerability in themselves or their colleagues and the action required to minimise risks to health
- 1.6** understand the professional responsibility to adopt a healthy lifestyle to maintain the level of personal fitness and wellbeing required to meet people's needs for mental and physical care
- 1.7** demonstrate an understanding of research methods, ethics and governance in order to critically analyse, safely use, share and apply research findings to promote and inform best nursing practice
- 1.8** demonstrate the knowledge, skills and ability to think critically when applying evidence and drawing on experience to make evidence-informed decisions in all situations

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- 1.9** understand the need to base all decisions regarding care and **interventions** on people's needs and preferences, recognising and addressing any personal and external factors that may unduly influence their decisions
 - 1.10** demonstrate resilience and emotional intelligence and be capable of explaining the rationale that influences their judgements and decisions in routine, complex and challenging situations
 - 1.11** communicate effectively using a range of skills and strategies with colleagues and people at all stages of life and with a range of mental, physical, cognitive and behavioural health challenges
 - 1.12** demonstrate the skills and abilities required to support people at all stages of life who are emotionally or physically vulnerable
 - 1.13** demonstrate the skills and abilities required to develop, manage and maintain appropriate relationships with people, their families, carers and colleagues
 - 1.14** provide and promote non-discriminatory, person-centred and sensitive care at all times, reflecting on people's values and beliefs, diverse backgrounds, cultural characteristics, language requirements, needs and preferences, taking account of any need for adjustments
 - 1.15** demonstrate the numeracy, literacy, digital and technological skills required to meet the needs of people in their care to ensure safe and effective nursing practice
 - 1.16** demonstrate the ability to keep complete, clear, accurate and timely records
 - 1.17** take responsibility for continuous self-reflection, seeking and responding to support and feedback to develop their professional knowledge and skills
 - 1.18** demonstrate the knowledge and confidence to contribute effectively and proactively in an interdisciplinary team
 - 1.19** act as an ambassador, upholding the reputation of their profession and promoting public confidence in nursing, health and care services
 - 1.20** safely demonstrate evidence-based practice in all skills and procedures stated in Annexes A and B.

Platform 2

Promoting health and preventing ill health

Registered nurses play a key role in improving and maintaining the mental, physical and behavioural health and wellbeing of people, families, communities and populations. They support and enable people at all stages of life and in all care settings to make informed choices about how to manage health challenges in order to maximise their quality of life and improve health outcomes. They are actively involved in the prevention of and protection against disease and ill health and engage in public health, community development and global health agendas, and in the reduction of health inequalities.

Outcomes

The proficiencies identified below will equip the newly registered nurse with the underpinning knowledge and skills required for their role in health promotion and protection and prevention of ill health.

At the point of registration, the registered nurse will be able to:

- 2.1 understand and apply the aims and principles of health promotion, protection and improvement and the prevention of ill health when engaging with people
- 2.2 demonstrate knowledge of epidemiology, demography, **genomics** and the wider **determinants of health**, illness and wellbeing and apply this to an understanding of global patterns of health and wellbeing outcomes
- 2.3 understand the factors that may lead to inequalities in health outcomes
- 2.4 identify and use all appropriate opportunities, making reasonable adjustments when required, to discuss the impact of smoking, substance and alcohol use, sexual behaviours, diet and exercise on mental, physical and behavioural health and wellbeing, in the context of people's individual circumstances
- 2.5 promote and improve mental, physical, behavioural and other health related outcomes by understanding and explaining the principles, practice and evidence base for health screening programmes
- 2.6 understand the importance of early years and childhood experiences and the possible impact on life choices, mental, physical and behavioural health and wellbeing
- 2.7 understand and explain the contribution of social influences, **health literacy**, individual circumstances, behaviours and lifestyle choices to mental, physical and behavioural health outcomes
- 2.8 explain and demonstrate the use of up to date approaches to behaviour change to enable people to use their strengths and expertise and make informed choices when managing their own health and making lifestyle adjustments

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- 2.9** use appropriate communication skills and **strength-based approaches** to support and enable people to make informed choices about their care to manage health challenges in order to have satisfying and fulfilling lives within the limitations caused by reduced capability, ill health and disability
 - 2.10** provide information in accessible ways to help people understand and make decisions about their health, life choices, illness and care
 - 2.11** promote health and prevent ill health by understanding and explaining to people the principles of pathogenesis, immunology and the evidence-base for immunisation, vaccination and herd immunity
 - 2.12** protect health through understanding and applying the principles of infection prevention and control, including communicable disease surveillance and antimicrobial stewardship and resistance.

Platform 3

Assessing needs and planning care

Registered nurses prioritise the needs of people when assessing and reviewing their mental, physical, cognitive, behavioural, social and spiritual needs.

They use information obtained during assessments to identify the priorities and requirements for person-centred and evidence-based nursing interventions and support. They work in partnership with people to develop person-centred care plans that take into account their circumstances, characteristics and preferences.

Outcomes

The proficiencies identified below will equip the newly registered nurse with the underpinning knowledge and skills required for their role in assessing and initiating person-centred plans of care.

At the point of registration, the registered nurse will be able to:

- 3.1** demonstrate and apply knowledge of human development from conception to death when undertaking full and accurate person-centred nursing assessments and developing appropriate care plans
- 3.2** demonstrate and apply knowledge of body systems and homeostasis, human anatomy and physiology, biology, genomics, pharmacology and social and behavioural sciences when undertaking full and accurate person-centred nursing assessments and developing appropriate care plans
- 3.3** demonstrate and apply knowledge of all commonly encountered mental, physical, behavioural and cognitive health conditions, medication usage and treatments when undertaking full and accurate assessments of nursing care needs and when developing, prioritising and reviewing person-centred care plans
- 3.4** understand and apply a person-centred approach to nursing care, demonstrating shared assessment, planning, decision-making and goal setting when working with people, their families, communities and populations of all ages
- 3.5** demonstrate the ability to accurately process all information gathered during the assessment process to identify needs for individualised nursing care and develop person-centred evidence-based plans for nursing interventions with agreed goals
- 3.6** effectively assess a person's capacity to make decisions about their own care and to give or withhold consent
- 3.7** understand and apply the principles and processes for making reasonable adjustments
- 3.8** understand and apply the relevant laws about mental capacity for the country in which you are practising when making decisions in relation to people who do not have capacity

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- 3.9** recognise and assess people at risk of harm and the situations that may put them at risk, ensuring prompt action is taken to safeguard those who are **vulnerable**
 - 3.10** demonstrate the skills and abilities required to recognise and assess people who show signs of self-harm and/or suicidal ideation
 - 3.11** undertake routine investigations, interpreting and sharing findings as appropriate
 - 3.12** interpret results from routine investigations, taking prompt action when required by implementing appropriate interventions, requesting additional investigations or escalating to others
 - 3.13** demonstrate an understanding of co-morbidities and the demands of meeting people's complex nursing and social care needs when prioritising care plans
 - 3.14** identify and assess the needs of people and families for care at the end of life, including requirements for palliative care and decision making related to their treatment and care preferences
 - 3.15** demonstrate the ability to work in partnership with people, families and carers to continuously monitor, evaluate and reassess the effectiveness of all agreed nursing care plans and care, sharing decision-making and readjusting agreed goals, documenting progress and decisions made
 - 3.16** demonstrate knowledge of when and how to refer people safely to other professionals or services for clinical intervention or support.

Platform 4

Providing and evaluating care

Registered nurses take the lead in providing evidence-based, compassionate and safe nursing interventions. They ensure that care they provide and delegate is person-centred and of a consistently high standard.

They support people of all ages in a range of care settings. They work in partnership with people, families and carers to evaluate whether care is effective and the goals of care have been met in line with their wishes, preferences and desired outcomes.

Outcomes

The proficiencies identified below will equip the newly registered nurse with the underpinning knowledge and skills required for their role in providing and evaluating person-centred care.

At the point of registration, the registered nurse will be able to:

- 4.1** demonstrate and apply an understanding of what is important to people and how to use this knowledge to ensure their needs for safety, dignity, privacy, comfort and sleep can be met, acting as a role model for others in providing evidence based care
- 4.2** work in partnership with people to encourage shared decision making in order to support individuals, their families and carers to manage their own care when appropriate
- 4.3** demonstrate the knowledge, communication and relationship management skills required to provide people, families and carers with accurate information that meets their needs before, during and after a range of interventions
- 4.4** demonstrate the knowledge and skills required to support people with commonly encountered mental health, behavioural, cognitive and learning challenges, and act as a role model for others in providing high quality nursing interventions to meet people's needs
- 4.5** demonstrate the knowledge and skills required to support people with commonly encountered physical health conditions, their medication usage and treatments, and act as a role model for others in providing high quality nursing interventions when meeting people's needs
- 4.6** demonstrate the knowledge, skills and ability to act as a role model for others in providing evidence-based nursing care to meet people's needs related to nutrition, hydration and bladder and bowel health
- 4.7** demonstrate the knowledge, skills and ability to act as a role model for others in providing evidence-based, person-centred nursing care to meet people's needs related to mobility, hygiene, oral care, wound care and skin integrity
- 4.8** demonstrate the knowledge and skills required to identify and initiate appropriate interventions to support people with commonly encountered symptoms including anxiety, confusion, discomfort and pain

- 4.9** demonstrate the knowledge and skills required to prioritise what is important to people and their families when providing evidence-based person-centred nursing care at end of life including the care of people who are dying, families, the deceased and the bereaved
- 4.10** demonstrate the knowledge and ability to respond proactively and promptly to signs of deterioration or distress in mental, physical, cognitive and behavioural health and use this knowledge to make sound clinical decisions
- 4.11** demonstrate the knowledge and skills required to initiate and evaluate appropriate interventions to support people who show signs of self-harm and/or suicidal ideation
- 4.12** demonstrate the ability to manage commonly encountered devices and confidently carry out related nursing procedures to meet people's needs for evidence-based, person-centred care
- 4.13** demonstrate the knowledge, skills and confidence to provide first aid procedures and basic life support
- 4.14** understand the principles of safe and effective administration and optimisation of medicines in accordance with local and national policies and demonstrate proficiency and accuracy when calculating dosages of prescribed medicines
- 4.15** demonstrate knowledge of pharmacology and the ability to recognise the effects of medicines, allergies, drug sensitivities, side effects, contraindications, incompatibilities, adverse reactions, prescribing errors and the impact of polypharmacy and over the counter medication usage
- 4.16** demonstrate knowledge of how prescriptions can be generated, the role of generic, unlicensed, and off-label prescribing and an understanding of the potential risks associated with these approaches to prescribing
- 4.17** apply knowledge of pharmacology to the care of people, demonstrating the ability to progress to a prescribing qualification following registration
- 4.18** demonstrate the ability to coordinate and undertake the processes and procedures involved in routine planning and management of safe discharge home or transfer of people between care settings.

Platform 5

Leading and managing nursing care and working in teams

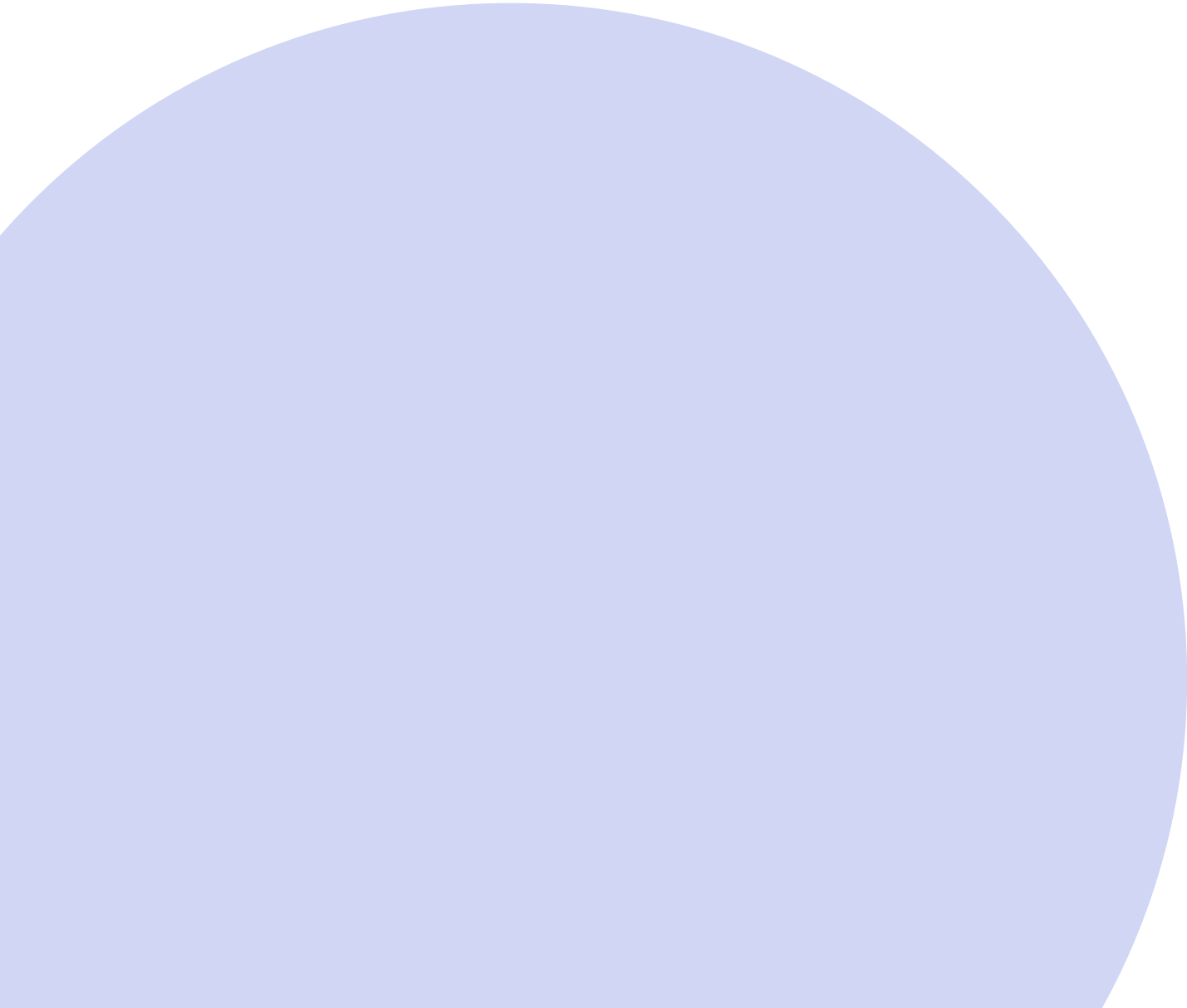
Registered nurses provide leadership by acting as a role model for best practice in the delivery of nursing care. They are responsible for managing nursing care and are accountable for the appropriate delegation and supervision of care provided by others in the team including lay carers. They play an active and equal role in the interdisciplinary team, collaborating and communicating effectively with a range of colleagues.

Outcomes

The proficiencies identified below will equip the newly registered nurse with the underpinning knowledge and skills required for their role in leading and managing nursing care and working effectively as part of an interdisciplinary team.

At the point of registration, the registered nurse will be able to:

- 5.1** understand the principles of effective leadership, management, group and organisational dynamics and culture and apply these to team working and decision-making
- 5.2** understand and apply the principles of **human factors**, environmental factors and strength-based approaches when working in teams
- 5.3** understand the principles and application of processes for performance management and how these apply to the nursing team
- 5.4** demonstrate an understanding of the roles, responsibilities and scope of practice of all members of the nursing and interdisciplinary team and how to make best use of the contributions of others involved in providing care
- 5.5** safely and effectively lead and manage the nursing care of a group of people, demonstrating appropriate prioritisation, delegation and assignment of care responsibilities to others involved in providing care
- 5.6** exhibit leadership potential by demonstrating an ability to guide, support and motivate individuals and interact confidently with other members of the care team
- 5.7** demonstrate the ability to monitor and evaluate the quality of care delivered by others in the team and lay carers
- 5.8** support and supervise students in the delivery of nursing care, promoting reflection and providing constructive feedback, and evaluating and documenting their performance
- 5.9** demonstrate the ability to challenge and provide constructive feedback about care delivered by others in the team, and support them to identify and agree individual learning needs

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- 5.10** contribute to supervision and team reflection activities to promote improvements in practice and services
 - 5.11** effectively and responsibly use a range of digital technologies to access, input, share and apply information and data within teams and between agencies
 - 5.12** understand the mechanisms that can be used to influence organisational change and public policy, demonstrating the development of political awareness and skills.
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Platform 6

Improving safety and quality of care

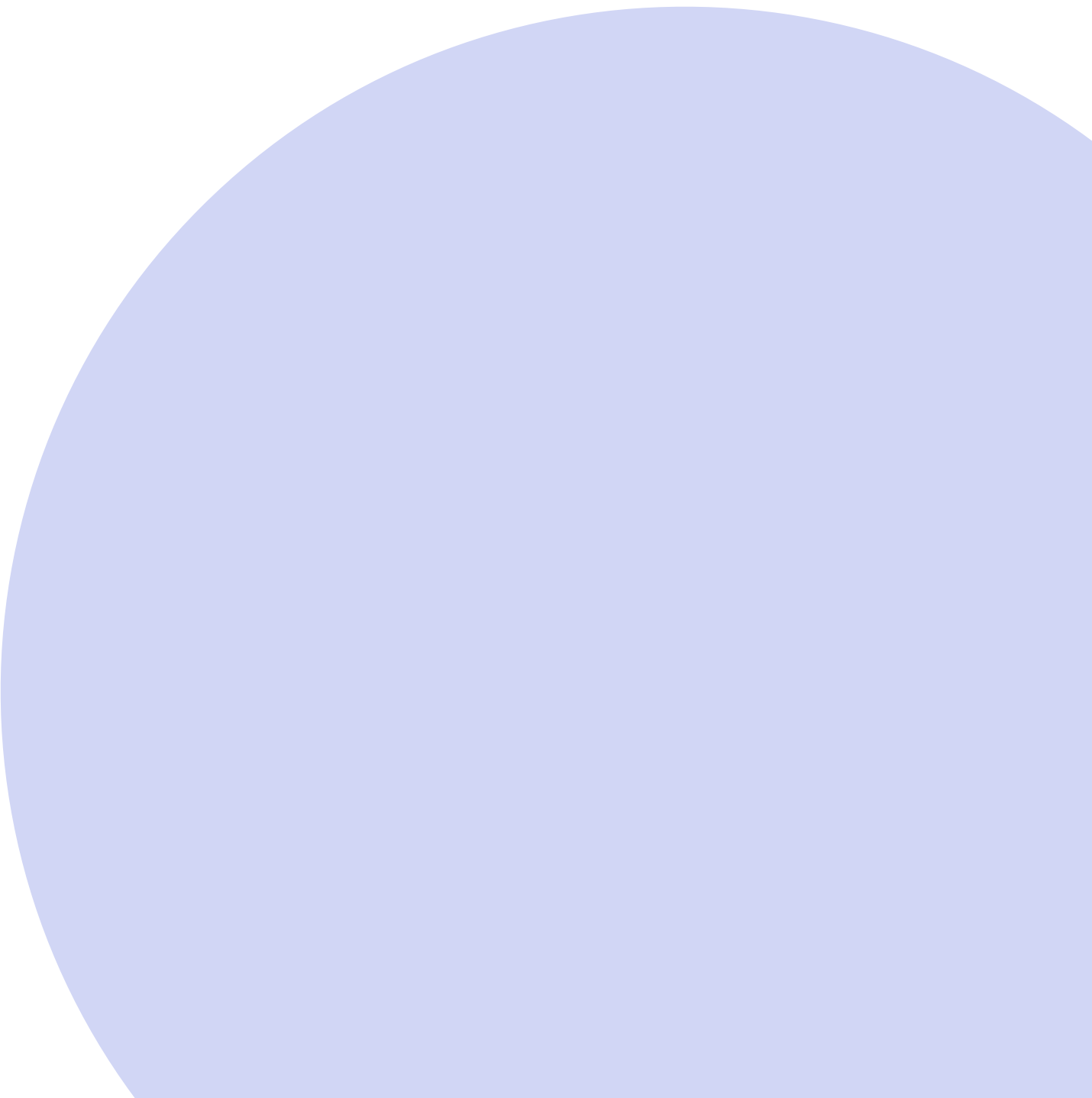
Registered nurses make a key contribution to the continuous monitoring and quality improvement of care and treatment in order to enhance health outcomes and people's experience of nursing and related care. They assess risks to safety or experience and take appropriate action to manage those, putting the best interests, needs and preferences of people first.

Outcomes

The proficiencies identified below will equip the newly registered nurse with the underpinning knowledge and skills required for their role in contributing to risk monitoring and quality of care improvement agendas.

At the point of registration the registered nurse will be able to:

- 6.1** understand and apply the principles of health and safety legislation and regulations and maintain safe work and care environments
- 6.2** understand the relationship between safe staffing levels, appropriate skills mix, safety and quality of care, recognising risks to public protection and quality of care, escalating concerns appropriately
- 6.3** comply with local and national frameworks, legislation and regulations for assessing, managing and reporting risks, ensuring the appropriate action is taken
- 6.4** demonstrate an understanding of the principles of improvement methodologies, participate in all stages of audit activity and identify appropriate quality improvement strategies
- 6.5** demonstrate the ability to accurately undertake risk assessments in a range of care settings, using a range of contemporary assessment and improvement tools
- 6.6** identify the need to make improvements and proactively respond to potential hazards that may affect the safety of people
- 6.7** understand how the quality and effectiveness of nursing care can be evaluated in practice, and demonstrate how to use service delivery evaluation and audit findings to bring about continuous improvement
- 6.8** demonstrate an understanding of how to identify, report and critically reflect on near misses, critical incidents, major incidents and serious adverse events in order to learn from them and influence their future practice
- 6.9** work with people, their families, carers and colleagues to develop effective improvement strategies for quality and safety, sharing feedback and learning from positive outcomes and experiences, mistakes and adverse outcomes and experiences

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- 6.10** apply an understanding of the differences between risk aversion and risk management and how to avoid compromising quality of care and health outcomes
 - 6.11** acknowledge the need to accept and manage uncertainty, and demonstrate an understanding of strategies that develop resilience in self and others
 - 6.12** understand the role of registered nurses and other health and care professionals at different levels of experience and seniority when managing and prioritising actions and care in the event of a major incident.
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Platform 7

Coordinating care

Registered nurses play a leadership role in coordinating and managing the complex nursing and integrated care needs of people at any stage of their lives, across a range of organisations and settings. They contribute to processes of organisational change through an awareness of local and national policies.

Outcomes

The proficiencies identified below will equip the newly registered nurse with the underpinning knowledge and skills required for their role in coordinating, leading and managing the complex needs of people across organisations and settings.

At the point of registration, the registered nurse will be able to:

- 7.1** understand and apply the principles of partnership, collaboration and interagency working across all relevant sectors
- 7.2** understand health legislation and current health and social care policies, and the mechanisms involved in influencing policy development and change, differentiating where appropriate between the devolved legislatures of the United Kingdom
- 7.3** understand the principles of health economics and their relevance to resource allocation in health and social care organisations and other agencies
- 7.4** identify the implications of current health policy and future policy changes for nursing and other professions and understand the impact of policy changes on the delivery and coordination of care
- 7.5** understand and recognise the need to respond to the challenges of providing safe, effective and person-centred nursing care for people who have co-morbidities and complex care needs
- 7.6** demonstrate an understanding of the complexities of providing mental, cognitive, behavioural and physical care services across a wide range of integrated care settings
- 7.7** understand how to monitor and evaluate the quality of people's experience of complex care
- 7.8** understand the principles and processes involved in supporting people and families with a range of care needs to maintain optimal independence and avoid unnecessary interventions and disruptions to their lives
- 7.9** facilitate equitable access to healthcare for people who are vulnerable or have a disability, demonstrate the ability to advocate on their behalf when required, and make necessary reasonable adjustments to the assessment, planning and delivery of their care
- 7.10** understand the principles and processes involved in planning and facilitating the safe discharge and transition of people between caseloads, settings and services

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- 7.11** demonstrate the ability to identify and manage risks and take proactive measures to improve the quality of care and services when needed
 - 7.12** demonstrate an understanding of the processes involved in developing a basic business case for additional care funding by applying knowledge of finance, resources and safe staffing levels
 - 7.13** demonstrate an understanding of the importance of exercising political awareness throughout their career, to maximise the influence and effect of registered nursing on quality of care, patient safety and cost effectiveness.

Annexe A: Communication and relationship management skills

The communication and relationship management skills that a newly registered nurse must be able to demonstrate to meet the proficiency outcomes outlined in the main body of this document are set out in this annexe.

Effective communication is central to the provision of safe and compassionate person-centred care. Registered nurses in all fields of nursing practice must be able to demonstrate the ability to communicate and manage relationships with people of all ages with a range of mental, physical, cognitive and behavioural health challenges.

This is because a diverse range of communication and relationship management skills is required to ensure that individuals, their families and carers are actively involved in and understand care decisions. These skills are vital when making accurate, culturally aware assessments of care needs and ensuring that the needs, priorities, expertise, and preferences of people are always valued and taken into account.

Where people have special communication needs or a disability, it is essential that reasonable adjustments are made to communicate, provide and share information in a manner that promotes optimum understanding and engagement, and facilitates equal access to high quality care.

The communication and relationship management skills within this annexe are set out in four sections. For the reasons above, these requirements are relevant to all fields of nursing practice and apply to all care settings. It is expected that these skills would be assessed in a student's chosen field of practice.

The skills outlined in **Annexe A, Section 3: Evidence-based, best practice communication skills and approaches for providing therapeutic interventions**, also apply to all registered nurses, but the level of expertise and knowledge required will vary depending on the chosen field of practice. Registered nurses must be able to demonstrate these skills to an appropriate level for their intended field(s) of practice.

At the point of registration, the registered nurse will be able to safely demonstrate the following skills:

1. Underpinning communication skills for assessing, planning, providing and managing best practice, evidence-based nursing care

- 1.1** actively listen, recognise and respond to verbal and non-verbal cues
- 1.2** use prompts and positive verbal and non-verbal reinforcement
- 1.3** use appropriate non-verbal communication including touch, eye contact and personal space
- 1.4** make appropriate use of open and closed questioning
- 1.5** use caring conversation techniques
- 1.6** check understanding and use clarification techniques
- 1.7** be aware of own unconscious bias in communication encounters
- 1.8** write accurate, clear, legible records and documentation
- 1.9** confidently and clearly present and share verbal and written reports with individuals and groups
- 1.10** analyse and clearly record and share digital information and data
- 1.11** provide clear verbal, digital or written information and instructions when delegating or handing over responsibility for care
- 1.12** recognise the need for, and facilitate access to, translator services and material.

2. Evidence-based, best practice approaches to communication for supporting people of all ages, their families and carers in preventing ill health and in managing their care

- 2.1** share information and check understanding about the causes, implications and treatment of a range of common health conditions including anxiety, depression, memory loss, diabetes, dementia, respiratory disease, cardiac disease, neurological disease, cancer, skin problems, immune deficiencies, psychosis, stroke and arthritis
- 2.2** use clear language and appropriate written materials, making reasonable adjustments where appropriate in order to optimise people's understanding of what has caused their health condition and the implications of their care and treatment

- 2.3 recognise and accommodate sensory impairments during all communications
- 2.4 support and manage the use of personal communication aids
- 2.5 identify the need for and manage a range of alternative communication techniques
- 2.6 use repetition and positive reinforcement strategies
- 2.7 assess motivation and capacity for behaviour change and clearly explain cause and effect relationships related to common health risk behaviours including smoking, obesity, sexual practice, alcohol and substance use
- 2.8 provide information and explanation to people, families and carers and respond to questions about their treatment and care and possible ways of preventing ill health to enhance understanding
- 2.9 engage in difficult conversations, including breaking bad news, and support people who are feeling emotionally or physically vulnerable or in distress, conveying compassion and sensitivity.

3. Evidence-based, best practice communication skills and approaches for providing therapeutic interventions

- 3.1 motivational interview techniques
- 3.2 solution focused therapies
- 3.3 reminiscence therapies
- 3.4 talking therapies
- 3.5 de-escalation strategies and techniques
- 3.6 cognitive behavioural therapy techniques
- 3.7 play therapy
- 3.8 distraction and diversion strategies
- 3.9 positive behaviour support approaches.

4. Evidence-based, best practice communication skills and approaches for working with people in professional teams

- 4.1** Demonstrate effective supervision, teaching and performance appraisal through the use of:
 - 4.1.1** clear instructions and explanations when supervising, teaching or appraising others
 - 4.1.2** clear instructions and check understanding when delegating care responsibilities to others
 - 4.1.3** unambiguous, constructive feedback about strengths and weaknesses and potential for improvement
 - 4.1.4** encouragement to colleagues that helps them to reflect on their practice
 - 4.1.5** unambiguous records of performance
- 4.2** Demonstrate effective person and team management through the use of:
 - 4.2.1** strengths-based approaches to developing teams and managing change
 - 4.2.2** active listening when dealing with team members' concerns and anxieties
 - 4.2.3** a calm presence when dealing with conflict
 - 4.2.4** appropriate and effective confrontation strategies
 - 4.2.5** de-escalation strategies and techniques when dealing with conflict
 - 4.2.6** effective coordination and navigation skills through:
 - 4.2.6.1** appropriate negotiation strategies
 - 4.2.6.2** appropriate escalation procedures
 - 4.2.6.3** appropriate approaches to advocacy.

Annexe B:

Nursing procedures

The nursing procedures that a newly registered nurse must be able to demonstrate to meet the proficiency outcomes, outlined in the main body of this document, are set out in this annexe.

The registered nurse must be able to undertake these procedures effectively in order to provide compassionate, evidence-based person-centred nursing care. A holistic approach to the care of people is essential and all nursing procedures should be carried out in a way which reflects cultural awareness and ensures that the needs, priorities, expertise and preferences of people are always valued and taken into account.

Registered nurses in all fields of practice must demonstrate the ability to provide nursing intervention and support for people of all ages who require nursing procedures during the processes of assessment, diagnosis, care and treatment for mental, physical, cognitive and behavioural health challenges. Where people are disabled or have specific cognitive needs it is essential that reasonable adjustments are made to ensure that all procedures are undertaken safely.

The nursing procedures within this annexe are set out in two sections. These requirements are relevant to all fields of nursing practice although it is recognised that different care settings may require different approaches to the provision of care. It is expected that these procedures would be assessed in a student's chosen field of practice where practicable.

Those procedures outlined in [Annexe B, Part I: Procedures for assessing needs for person-centred care, sections 1 and 2](#), also apply to all registered nurses, but the level of expertise and knowledge required will vary depending on the chosen field(s) of practice. Registered nurses must therefore be able to demonstrate the ability to undertake these procedures at an appropriate level for their intended field(s) of practice.

At the point of registration, the registered nurse will be able to safely demonstrate the following procedures:

Part 1: Procedures for assessing people's needs for person-centred care

- 1. Use evidence-based, best practice approaches to take a history, observe, recognise and accurately assess people of all ages:**
 - 1.1** mental health and wellbeing status
 - 1.1.1** signs of mental and emotional distress or vulnerability
 - 1.1.2** cognitive health status and wellbeing
 - 1.1.3** signs of cognitive distress and impairment
 - 1.1.4** behavioural distress based needs
 - 1.1.5** signs of mental and emotional distress including agitation, aggression and challenging behaviour
 - 1.1.6** signs of self-harm and/or suicidal ideation
 - 1.2** physical health and wellbeing
 - 1.2.1** symptoms and signs of physical ill health
 - 1.2.2** symptoms and signs of physical distress
 - 1.2.3** symptoms and signs of deterioration and sepsis.

2. Use evidence-based, best practice approaches to undertake the following procedures:

- 2.1** take, record and interpret vital signs manually and via technological devices
- 2.2** undertake venepuncture and cannulation and blood sampling, interpreting normal and common abnormal blood profiles and venous blood gases
- 2.3** set up and manage routine electrocardiogram (ECG) investigations and interpret normal and commonly encountered abnormal traces
- 2.4** manage and monitor blood component transfusions
- 2.5** manage and interpret cardiac monitors, infusion pumps, blood glucose monitors and other monitoring devices
- 2.6** accurately measure weight and height, calculate body mass index and recognise healthy ranges and clinically significant low/high readings
- 2.7** undertake a whole body systems assessment including respiratory, circulatory, neurological, musculoskeletal, cardiovascular and skin status
- 2.8** undertake chest auscultation and interpret findings
- 2.9** collect and observe sputum, urine, stool and vomit specimens, undertaking routine analysis and interpreting findings
- 2.10** measure and interpret blood glucose levels
- 2.11** recognise and respond to signs of all forms of **abuse**
- 2.12** undertake, respond to and interpret neurological observations and assessments
- 2.13** identify and respond to signs of deterioration and sepsis
- 2.14** administer basic mental health first aid
- 2.15** administer basic physical first aid
- 2.16** recognise and manage seizures, choking and anaphylaxis, providing appropriate basic life support
- 2.17** recognise and respond to challenging behaviour, providing appropriate safe holding and restraint.

Part 2: Procedures for the planning, provision and management of person-centred nursing care

- 3. Use evidence-based, best practice approaches for meeting needs for care and support with rest, sleep, comfort and the maintenance of dignity, accurately assessing the person's capacity for independence and self-care and initiating appropriate interventions**
 - 3.1** observe and assess comfort and pain levels and rest and sleep patterns
 - 3.2** use appropriate bed-making techniques including those required for people who are unconscious or who have limited mobility
 - 3.3** use appropriate positioning and pressure-relieving techniques
 - 3.4** take appropriate action to ensure privacy and dignity at all times
 - 3.5** take appropriate action to reduce or minimise pain or discomfort
 - 3.6** take appropriate action to reduce fatigue, minimise insomnia and support improved rest and sleep hygiene.

- 4. Use evidence-based, best practice approaches for meeting the needs for care and support with hygiene and the maintenance of skin integrity, accurately assessing the person's capacity for independence and self-care and initiating appropriate interventions**
 - 4.1** observe, assess and optimise skin and hygiene status and determine the need for support and intervention
 - 4.2** use contemporary approaches to the assessment of skin integrity and use appropriate products to prevent or manage skin breakdown
 - 4.3** assess needs for and provide appropriate assistance with washing, bathing, shaving and dressing
 - 4.4** identify and manage skin irritations and rashes
 - 4.5** assess needs for and provide appropriate oral, dental, eye and nail care and decide when an onward referral is needed
 - 4.6** use aseptic techniques when undertaking wound care including dressings, pressure bandaging, suture removal, and vacuum closures
 - 4.7** use aseptic techniques when managing wound and drainage processes
 - 4.8** assess, respond and effectively manage pyrexia and hypothermia.

5. Use evidence-based, best practice approaches for meeting needs for care and support with nutrition and hydration, accurately assessing the person's capacity for independence and self-care and initiating appropriate interventions

- 5.1** observe, assess and optimise nutrition and hydration status and determine the need for intervention and support
- 5.2** use contemporary nutritional assessment tools
- 5.3** assist with feeding and drinking and use appropriate feeding and drinking aids
- 5.4** record fluid intake and output and identify, respond to and manage dehydration or fluid retention
- 5.5** identify, respond to and manage nausea and vomiting
- 5.6** insert, manage and remove oral/nasal/gastric tubes
- 5.7** manage artificial nutrition and hydration using oral, enteral and parenteral routes
- 5.8** manage the administration of IV fluids
- 5.9** manage fluid and nutritional infusion pumps and devices.

6. Use evidence-based, best practice approaches for meeting needs for care and support with bladder and bowel health, accurately assessing the person's capacity for independence and self-care and initiating appropriate interventions

- 6.1** observe and assess level of urinary and bowel continence to determine the need for support and intervention assisting with toileting, maintaining dignity and privacy and managing the use of appropriate aids
- 6.2** select and use appropriate continence products; insert, manage and remove catheters for all genders; and assist with self-catheterisation when required
- 6.3** manage bladder drainage
- 6.4** assess bladder and bowel patterns to identify and respond to constipation, diarrhoea and urinary and faecal retention
- 6.5** administer enemas and suppositories and undertake rectal examination and manual evacuation when appropriate
- 6.6** undertake stoma care identifying and using appropriate products and approaches.

7. Use evidence-based, best practice approaches for meeting needs for care and support with mobility and safety, accurately assessing the person's capacity for independence and self-care and initiating appropriate interventions

- 7.1** observe and use evidence-based risk assessment tools to determine need for support and intervention to optimise mobility and safety, and to identify and manage risk of falls using best practice risk assessment approaches
- 7.2** use a range of contemporary moving and handling techniques and mobility aids
- 7.3** use appropriate moving and handling equipment to support people with impaired mobility
- 7.4** use appropriate safety techniques and devices.

8. Use evidence-based, best practice approaches for meeting needs for respiratory care and support, accurately assessing the person's capacity for independence and self-care and initiating appropriate interventions

- 8.1** observe and assess the need for intervention and respond to restlessness, agitation and breathlessness using appropriate interventions
- 8.2** manage the administration of oxygen using a range of routes and best practice approaches
- 8.3** take and interpret peak flow and oximetry measurements
- 8.4** use appropriate nasal and oral suctioning techniques
- 8.5** manage inhalation, humidifier and nebuliser devices
- 8.6** manage airway and respiratory processes and equipment.

9. Use evidence-based, best practice approaches for meeting needs for care and support with the prevention and management of infection, accurately assessing the person's capacity for independence and self-care and initiating appropriate interventions

- 9.1** observe, assess and respond rapidly to potential infection risks using best practice guidelines
- 9.2** use standard precautions protocols
- 9.3** use effective aseptic, non-touch techniques

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- 9.4** use appropriate personal protection equipment
 - 9.5** implement isolation procedures
 - 9.6** use evidence-based hand hygiene techniques
 - 9.7** safely decontaminate equipment and environment
 - 9.8** safely use and dispose of waste, laundry and sharps
 - 9.9** safely assess and manage invasive medical devices and lines.
- 10. Use evidence-based, best practice approaches for meeting needs for care and support at the end of life, accurately assessing the person's capacity for independence and self-care and initiating appropriate interventions**
- 10.1** observe and assess the need for intervention for people, families and carers, identify, assess and respond appropriately to uncontrolled symptoms and signs of distress including pain, nausea, thirst, constipation, restlessness, agitation, anxiety and depression
 - 10.2** manage and monitor effectiveness of symptom relief medication, infusion pumps and other devices
 - 10.3** assess and review preferences and care priorities of the dying person and their family and carers
 - 10.4** understand and apply organ and tissue donation protocols, advanced planning decisions, living wills and health and lasting powers of attorney for health
 - 10.5** understand and apply DNACPR (do not attempt cardiopulmonary resuscitation) decisions and verification of expected death
 - 10.6** provide care for the deceased person and the bereaved, respecting cultural requirements and protocols.

11. Procedural competencies required for best practice, evidence-based medicines administration and optimisation

- 11.1** carry out initial and continued assessments of people receiving care and their ability to self-administer their own medications
- 11.2** recognise the various procedural routes under which medicines can be prescribed, supplied, dispensed and administered; and the laws, policies, regulations and guidance that underpin them
- 11.3** use the principles of safe remote prescribing and directions to administer medicines
- 11.4** undertake accurate drug calculations for a range of medications
- 11.5** undertake accurate checks, including transcription and titration, of any direction to supply or administer a medicinal product
- 11.6** exercise professional accountability in ensuring the safe administration of medicines to those receiving care
- 11.7** administer injections using intramuscular, subcutaneous, intradermal and intravenous routes and manage injection equipment
- 11.8** administer medications using a range of routes
- 11.9** administer and monitor medications using vascular access devices and enteral equipment
- 11.10** recognise and respond to adverse or abnormal reactions to medications
- 11.11** undertake safe storage, transportation and disposal of medicinal products.

Glossary

The following terms and their accompanying explanations relate to the context of the standards of proficiency for registered nurses.

Abuse: is something that may harm another person, or endanger their life, or violate their rights. The person responsible for the abuse may be doing this on purpose or may not realise the harm that they are doing. The type of abuse may be emotional, physical, sexual, psychological, material or financial, or may be due to neglect.

Contraindications: a condition or factor that serves as a reason to withhold a certain medical treatment due to the harm that it would cause the patient.

Determinants of health: includes the social and economic environment, the physical environment and the person's individual characteristics and behaviours.

Genomics: branch of molecular biology concerned with the structure, function, evolution, and mapping of genomes.

Health literacy: the degree to which individuals can obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions.

Human factors: environmental, organisational and job factors, and human and individual characteristics, which influence behaviour at work in a way which can affect health and safety.

Interventions: any investigations, procedures, or treatments given to a person.

People: individuals or groups who receive services from nurses, midwives and nursing associates, healthy and sick people, parents, children, families, carers, representatives, also including educators and students and other within and outside the learning environment.

Person-centred: an approach where the person is at the centre of the decision making processes and the design of their care needs, their nursing care and treatment plan.

Strength-based approaches: strength-based practice is a collaborative process between the person supported by services and those supporting them, working together to reach an outcome that draws on the person's strengths and assets.

Vulnerable people: those who at any age are at a higher risk of harm than others. Vulnerability might be in relation to a personal characteristic or a situation. The type of harm may be emotional, physical, sexual, psychological, material or financial, or may be due to neglect.

Notes

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Our vision is safe, effective and kind nursing and midwifery that improves everyone's health and wellbeing. As the independent regulator of more than 808,000* nursing and midwifery professionals, we have an important role to play in making this a reality.

Our core role is to **regulate**. First, we promote high professional standards for nurses and midwives across the UK, and nursing associates in England. Second, we maintain the register of professionals eligible to practise. Third, we investigate concerns about nurses, midwives and nursing associates – something that affects a tiny minority of professionals each year. We believe in giving professionals the chance to address concerns, but we'll always take action when needed.

To regulate well, we **support** our professions and the public. We create resources and guidance that are useful throughout people's careers, helping them to deliver our standards in practice and address new challenges. We also support people involved in our investigations, and we're increasing our visibility so people feel engaged and empowered to shape our work.

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Registered charity in England and Wales (1091434) and in Scotland (SC038362).

*Data captured from 30 September 2023.