

The Nursing Council of Hong Kong

Core-Competencies for

Registered Nurses (Mentally Subnormal)

(August 2013)

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I. Preamble

Registered Nurses (Mentally Subnormal) serve the community by meeting the health needs of individuals suffering from mental subnormality in a range of care environment including, but not limited to, residential and day rehabilitative settings. The Registered Nurses (Mentally Subnormal) work with families and carers to care for the mentally subnormal of all ages. Apart from being a formal carer of clients with mental subnormality, the nurse needs to take up other professional roles, such as health promoter, educator, counsellor, care coordinator and manager, researcher and client's advocator.

To ensure a regulated practice and to enhance the advancement of nursing practice for the mentally subnormal, it is essential that the roles of Registered Nurses (Mentally Subnormal) and their professional competencies are clearly defined.

This document has been developed by the Nursing Council of Hong Kong (NCHK) to serve the following purposes:

1. To state the philosophy of mentally subnormal nursing based on which such practice is developed in Hong Kong;
2. To outline the professional roles of RN (Mentally Subnormal) and the core-competencies required to fulfilling these roles;
3. To describe the scope and characteristics of the core-competencies to guide the curriculum development of education programmes that prepare RN (Mentally Subnormal) who can practise mentally subnormal nursing safely, ethically and effectively; and
4. To inform the public, the employers and stakeholders locally and internationally of what they may expect from the RN (Mentally Subnormal) on entry to practice.

These core-competencies should be possessed by the RN (Mentally Subnormal) on entry to practice. In addition, the RN (Mentally Subnormal) should practise according to the Code of Professional Conduct, the Scope of Professional Practice and other legal and ethical requirements defined by the NCHK as stipulated in the Nurses Registration Ordinance, Chapter 164. This document will be subjected to constant review in order to ensure its appropriateness and usefulness to reflect the contemporary role and requirements of practicing as a RN (Mentally Subnormal) in Hong Kong.

This document has undergone open consultation with nursing and health care professionals in major local health care organisations, nursing education institutions and nursing professional bodies.

II. PHILOSOPHY OF MENTALLY SUBNORMAL NURSING

The philosophy of mentally subnormal nursing in this section summarises our beliefs in the nature and practice of professional mentally subnormal nursing as well as our views on the person, environment, health, and mental health. Such beliefs also provide basic information for the development of education programme and syllabus for mentally subnormal nursing registration in the NCHK.

Nursing is a caring, enabling, knowledge-based and competence-assessed profession, which is dynamic in meeting the changing health needs of the society. It is committed to promoting and maintaining health; as well as to caring for the sick and the disabled as individuals, or in families, groups, institutions, home settings and in the community.

The practice of nursing is client-focused and evidence-based. It is carried out at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels of health care. It functions through problem solving and collaboration with the client as well as other health care professionals to define and achieve mutually agreed health goals.

The provision of holistic, client-centred care requires research-based professional knowledge and skills through the implementation of the nursing process; the adoption of a caring and responsible attitude; effective communication and interpersonal skill as well as ethical principles. The quality of care is maintained through the enhancement of professional competencies via continuous nursing education.

Mentally subnormal nursing is a profession, possessing its unique history, ideology, knowledge, and skills. It is committed to promote and maintain mental and physical health of mentally subnormal individuals. Mentally subnormal nursing facilitates individual development and provides services to the mentally subnormal individuals whose primary health needs are related to mental, emotional, developmental and physical problems, especially serious disorders and persistent disabilities in partnership with them and their carers.

The person is a unique, holistic being with the potential to learn and develop through interacting with the changing environment. Each person has intrinsic worth and has the right to participate in the decision-making, which affects his/her own life and dignity, and must always be treated with respect.

The environment consists of external and internal components, which change constantly and generate both positive and negative stressors. The internal environment of a person, comprising biological, psychological, spiritual and intellectual components, interacts with the external environment that encompasses social, cultural and situational influences. This continual interaction affects the person's functioning as an individual, as well as in families, groups and community. The creation, preservation and conservation of a sustainable environment are crucial to the maintenance and promotion of human survival.

Health is a state of well-being, perceived differently by the individual at specific points in time along the health-illness continuum. It is affected by biological, psychological, socio-economical, developmental, political, cultural and religious factors. The level of well-being depends on the maintenance of equilibrium within the person, and between the person's interaction with the changing environment.

Mental health as suggested by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in 2010, is a state of well being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community. In this positive sense, mental health is the foundation for individual well-being and the effective function of a community. The positive dimension of mental health is also stressed in WHO's definition of health as contained in its constitution in 1948: "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."

III. SCOPE OF CORE-COMPETENCIES REQUIRED OF A REGISTERED NURSE (Mentally Subnormal)

Glossary

1. Registered Nurse (Mentally Subnormal) [RN (Mentally Subnormal)]

A nurse who has completed a mentally subnormal nursing programme and has registered under the Professional Register Part III of the Nursing Council of Hong Kong.

2. Competence/Competency

The ability, knowledge, skills and attitudes required of a nurse in performing a range of expected roles in professional nursing practice.

3. Core-competencies

The essential competencies that a RN (Mentally Subnormal) is expected to possess at entry to practice as an outcome of their nursing education in order to provide the local people with safe, effective and ethical care.

4. The Client

The focus of care provision by a RN (Mentally Subnormal) with whom the nurse is engaged in a professional helping relationship to maximize the client's potential, health and enhance his/her life experience throughout the developmental stages.

The Scope of Core-competencies Required of a RN (Mentally Subnormal)

The scope of core-competencies required of a RN (Mentally Subnormal) comprises 5 key aspects:

- Competency 1: Professional, Legal and Ethical Nursing Practice
- Competency 2: Health Promotion and Education
- Competency 3: Management and Leadership
- Competency 4: Nursing Research
- Competency 5: Personal and Professional Development

Description of these core-competencies is tabulated as below.

SCOPE OF CORE-COMPETENCIES OF REGISTERED NURSE (MENTALLY SUBNORMAL)

Roles		Competency 1: Professional, Legal and Ethical Nursing Practice			
		Ability	Knowledge	Skill	Attitude
1. 2.	<p>Carer</p> <p>Service Provider at 3 levels of health care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary • Secondary • Tertiary 	<p>Proficiency in evidence- based nursing practice, applying problem solving skills and psychotherapeutic interventions to perform effective nursing care safely, legally and ethically to maximize the potential of the mentally subnormal clients.</p> <p>The nurse should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • think and reflect analytically and critically. • integrate nursing knowledge and theories into practice particularly for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - assessment of psychosocial health needs in line with physiological ones using a systematic and holistic approach; - design, implementation and evaluation of care planning with the partnership of client and significant others; - restoration and promotion of well-being and enhancement of quality of life as client’s desire; - performing psychotherapeutic interventions proficiently and effectively and documenting the care accurately; and - collaboration with other members of healthcare, social and education facilities in the care provision. 	<p>A. Medical, Behavioural and Social Sciences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • biological, pharmacological, social and behavioural sciences relevant to nursing of mentally subnormal clients. <p>B. Therapeutic Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • theories of communication, motivation and counselling; • interpersonal relationships and team building; • concepts of therapeutic communication and interventions. • use of alternative communication methods. <p>C. Professional Nursing Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • concepts and theories of professional nursing and caring; • evidence-based nursing; • principles and practice of mentally subnormal nursing; • principles of normalization; • principles and practice of psychotherapeutic interventions, rehabilitation and integration into the community; • Chinese medicinal nursing and complementary and alternative medicine. <p>D. Legal and Ethical Aspects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • legal aspects pertinent to mentally subnormal nursing particularly the Mental Health Ordinance, Chapter 136; • ethical principles • professional conduct and nursing ethics • human rights and responsibilities; • client advocacy. <p>E. Information Technology applied to Nursing and Health Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contemporary concepts of information 	<p>A. Cognitive Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • critical thinking • clinical decision making • problem solving • reflective learning • assertiveness <p>B. Psycho-motor Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • health assessment • mentally subnormal nursing and basic general nursing techniques <p>C. Psychosocial Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communication and interpersonal skills • counselling • rapport and collaboration skill • psychotherapeutic interventions <p>D. Skills in Information Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of nursing informatics • electronic communication • informatics security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • respect for life, dignity, rights, beliefs, and culture of an individual • taking initiative for professional actions and be accountable for the care provided • supportive and collaborative with other health team members to provide systematic and holistic care for individuals, family and groups as needed • non-judgmental and accepting clients with mentally subnormal problems under care • enabling/empowering • continuous learning

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognise limits of own abilities and qualification in accepting delegations. • ensure client safety. • ensure client's rights of dignity, autonomy, privacy, confidentiality and access to information and responsibility to treatment, in consistent with the prevailing laws. • maintain a therapeutic environment conducive to positive learning and development. 	<p>technology (IT);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • application of IT in nursing care. 		
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SCOPE OF CORE-COMPETENCIES OF REGISTERED NURSE (MENTALLY SUBNORMAL) (Continued)

Roles	Competency 2: Health Promotion and Education			
	Ability	Knowledge	Skill	Attitude
<p>3. Educator</p> <p>4. Counsellor</p> <p>5. Health Promoter</p> <p>6. Care Co-ordinator</p> <p>7. Client Advocate</p>	<p>Being able to work in partnership with service providers (health, education and social sectors), clients, families, caregivers and the community in preventing illness, promoting and protecting the mental health of the individual, family and society.</p> <p>The nurse should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognise the factors affecting well-being and the appropriate actions to take for health promotion. • identify the health-related and developmental needs of clients in different health care, education and social settings. • use learning principles and counselling techniques appropriately and effectively. • communicate health information and co-ordinate health education/promotion activities effectively. • collect and utilise updated evidence and reliable information for planning and improving health promotion and education activities. • intervene appropriately to safeguard the interests and well-being of clients. 	<p>A. Education Theories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teaching and learning methods, motivational theories. <p>B. Concepts of Health; Health Education and Health Promotion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • concepts of health • health, education and social care delivery system • theories and practice of health. • education and promotion for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – individual – family and group – the community • contemporary issues in mental health education and promotion. <p>C. Communication Theories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interviewing • nurse-patient relationships • therapeutic communication and counselling • cultural beliefs and societal values <p>D. Rights and responsibilities of an Individual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • human rights and responsibilities • patient's rights and responsibilities 	<p>A. Health Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • modelling and role playing • teaching, facilitating empowering and reflecting • reinforcing and shaping • psychoeducation <p>B. Problem Solving</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community health assessment • psychosocial and health assessment • educational needs assessment • problem identification, planning, implementing and evaluating health education activities for individuals, groups and the community <p>C. Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interviewing and counselling • building therapeutic relationship • networking <p>D. Presentation Skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proactive in identifying and meeting clients' health needs • committed in continuous updating of issues about health promotion and education • committed in participating in activities for health education and promotion at local, national and/or international levels • showing respect and understanding of clients' rights and health needs • aiming at holistic care for clients in need

SCOPE OF CORE-COMPETENCIES OF REGISTERED NURSE (MENTALLY SUBNORMAL) (Continued)

Roles	Competency 3: Management and Leadership			
	Ability	Knowledge	Skill	Attitude
<p>8. Manager</p> <p>9. Supervisor</p> <p>10. Change agent</p> <p>11. Leader</p> <p>12. Public Health Advocate</p>	<p>Effective managerial, supervision and leadership skills in nursing practice</p> <p>The nurse should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • initiate, implement and evaluate change conducive to improvement of health care services. • participate in health care policy planning and evaluation, in partnership with the health care team and the community sectors. • assess, prevent and manage risks in health of clients and families and occupational health and safety of colleagues. • supervise the junior colleagues and trainees for provision of quality nursing care. 	<p>A. Management & Leadership Theories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • management of time, risk, crises, services, and resources • leadership in nursing and health care • supervision • change theories • team building • motivation • management of risk and crisis <p>B. Health Care and Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • health care system and trend • contemporary health care issues pertaining to the mentally subnormal • factors influencing mentally subnormal health care policies <p>C. Politics and Health Care Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • multidisciplinary approach • mediation strategies 	<p>A. Managerial Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working relationships with colleagues, professionals of health care, social and education sectors; and the public • management of people and resources • conflict resolution • delegation and supervision <p>B. Leadership Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • leading • making changes • motivating • problem solving • team building <p>C. Political Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advocating • lobbying • negotiating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proactive in planning and improving of health care services for the mentally subnormal clients • assertive in initiating changes, supervising and provision of quality nursing care • open and accommodating • fair and objective in management of staff, clients, resources, policies, and conflicts • cooperative, supportive and cultivate team spirit in the care team

SCOPE OF CORE-COMPETENCIES OF REGISTERED NURSE (MENTALLY SUBNORMAL) (Continued)

Roles	Competency 4: Nursing Research			
	Ability	Knowledge	Skill	Attitude
13. Researcher	<p>A. Ability to apply the knowledge and skills in nursing research in different mentally subnormal health care settings and in the community</p> <p>B. Ability to collect, analyse, interpret and use research data to improve mentally subnormal nursing and health care practice</p>	<p>A. Basic Knowledge in Conducting Research in Health Care Settings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The research process • Use of computer software in data analysis <p>B. Appraising and Utilizing Research Findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of a research critique • Strategies in utilization of research findings in evidence-based practice 	<p>Research Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify relevant research areas • data collection, analysis and interpretation • reporting, presenting and publishing results • implementing evidence-base practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • objective • realistic • keen • proactive • positive • persistent

Roles	Competency 5: Personal and Professional Development			
	Ability	Knowledge	Skill	Attitude
14. Nurse Professional	<p>Being able to be a role model in health promotion and professional development.</p> <p>The nurse should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintain and promote health of self. • continue mentally subnormal nursing education to excel practice. • work with colleagues to maintain professional standard and develop the nursing profession. • maintain and promote professional image of mentally subnormal nursing. 	<p>A. Personal Effectiveness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knowledge of self, environment, stress coping and adaptation to change <p>B. Professional Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knowledge of professional organizations and advanced learning opportunities <p>C. Establishing and Maintaining Nursing as a Profession</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strategies in achieving professionalism 	<p>A. Personal Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • health life styles and health promotion practices • change adaptation and management skills • stress management skills <p>B. Public Speaking and Presentation Skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enthusiastic and positive towards life, human being, society and health • life-long commitment to continuous learning • supportive to professional organizations in functions conducive to professional development

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