



The Nursing Council of Hong Kong

Core-Competencies for

Registered Nurses (Sick Children)

(March 2015)

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1. Preamble

Registered Nurses (Sick Children) serve the community by meeting the health needs of children and adolescents in a range of care environment including, but not limited to, hospitals, clinics, schools, and residential, rehabilitative and community settings. The Registered Nurses (Sick Children) work with families and carers to care for neonates, infants, children, and adolescents. Apart from being a formal carer of children and adolescents, the nurse needs to take up other professional roles, such as a health promoter, educator, counsellor, client's advocate, care coordinator, manager, and researcher.

To ensure a regulated practice and to enhance the advancement of nursing practice for the care of neonates, infants, children and adolescents, it is essential that the roles of Registered Nurses (Sick Children) and their professional competencies in primary, secondary, and tertiary care 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 sick children nursing based on which such practice is developed in Hong Kong;
2. To outline the professional roles of Registered Nurses (Sick Children) 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 Registered Nurses (Sick Children) who can practise sick children 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 Registered Nurses (Sick Children) on entry to practice.

These core-competencies should be possessed by the Registered Nurses (Sick Children) on entry to practice. In addition, the Registered Nurses (Sick Children) 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 Registered Nurse (Sick Children) 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 SICK CHILDREN NURSING

The philosophy of sick children nursing in this section summarises our beliefs in the nature and practice of professional sick children nursing as well as our views on the person, environment, and health. Such beliefs also provide basic information for the development of education programmes and syllabus for sick children 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 clients, families, as well as other health care professionals to define and achieve mutually agreed health goals.

The provision of holistic, client-focused, and family-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 continuing nursing education.

Sick Children Nursing is a profession possessing its unique history, ideology, knowledge, and skills. It is committed to promoting, maintaining and restoring the health of neonates, infants, children, and adolescents. The Registered Nurses (Sick Children) must recognise, respect and respond to the individuality of children, and their rights to be safe, to enjoy life, and to reach their potentials. The Registered Nurses (Sick Children) must attend to the children's physical, psychological, social, developmental, cultural, and spiritual needs and work in partnership with families to provide optimal care for the children.

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.

III. SCOPE OF CORE-COMPETENCIES REQUIRED FOR A REGISTERED NURSE (SICK CHILDREN)

Glossary

1. Registered Nurse (Sick Children) [RN (SC)]

A nurse who has completed a sick children nursing programme and has registered under the Professional Register Part IV of the Nursing Council of Hong Kong.

2. Competence

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 (SC) is expected to possess at entry to practice as an outcome of their nursing education in order to provide the clients with safe, effective and ethical care.

4. The Client

The focus of care provision by a RN (SC) 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.

5. The Child

Any individual from birth through infancy (including neonates), childhood, and adolescence.

6. The Family

A basic social unit consisting of the child and significant other(s) or carer(s) as defined by the individual, and typically involving parent(s) or legal guardian(s), and sibling(s) if applicable.

The Scope of Core-Competencies Required for a RN (SC)

The scope of core-competencies required of a RN (SC) comprises 5 competence areas:

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

Please refer to the following table for details.

SCOPE OF CORE-COMPETENCIES FOR REGISTERED NURSES (SICK CHILDREN)

Roles		Competence Area 1: Professional, Legal and Ethical Nursing Practice			
		Ability	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
1.	Carer	<p>Proficiency in applying nursing theories, evidence-based nursing knowledge, problem-solving skills, and therapeutic techniques to perform professional nursing duties safely, legally, ethically and effectively.</p> <p>The nurse must be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● think analytically, critically, and reflectively. ● integrate professional knowledge into practice including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – assessing the health needs of the individual, family, groups, and community using a bio-psycho-social-spiritual framework; – managing physical, mental, psychosocial, and/or spiritual ill health via working with the client and the family to develop a care plan and contribute to its implementation and evaluation; – enabling the client and family to achieve self-determined health goals and maximum independence, or a peaceful death; – performing nursing techniques proficiently; – maintaining accurate documentation; – using appropriate channels of referral; and – working effectively with health care team members. ● maintain the confidentiality and respect the client's right to privacy. ● acknowledge the client's rights to dignity, autonomy and access to information. ● recognize limits of own abilities and qualifications in accepting delegations. ● respond appropriately to instances of unsafe practice to safeguard the client's health. ● maintain an environment conducive to health including infection control. 	<p>A. General, Behavioural and Life Sciences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● biological, chemical, ecological, social, and behavioural sciences relevant to nursing ● growth and development of the newborn, infant, toddler, preschooler, school-age child, and adolescent ● family-centred care <p>B. Professional Nursing Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● the nursing profession ● concepts and theories of nursing, caring, and professionalism ● evidence-based nursing practice ● principles and practice of paediatric and family nursing ● atraumatic care of children and families ● Chinese medicinal nursing and complementary and alternative medicine <p>C. Legal and Ethical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● legal aspects pertinent to nursing practice ● professional conduct principles and nursing ethics ● principles of safe practice ● contemporary ethical issues <p>D. Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● theories of communication and counselling ● interpersonal relationship and team work <p>E. Rights and Responsibilities of the Individual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● human rights and responsibilities ● patients' rights and responsibilities 	<p>A. Cognitive Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● critical thinking ● decision making ● problem solving ● planning ● organising ● reflective thinking ● assertiveness ● self-directed learning <p>B. Psycho-motor Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● health assessment ● clinical nursing and therapeutic techniques <p>C. Psychosocial Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● communication ● interpersonal skills ● team work ● counselling <p>D. Skills in Information Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● electronic communication ● data processing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● respect for life, dignity, and rights of the individual ● respect individual differences in beliefs, values, and cultural practices ● accept responsibility for own actions and be accountable for the care provided ● caring ● supporting ● enabling/empowering ● life-long learning
2.	<p>Service Provider at three levels of health care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● primary ● secondary ● tertiary 				

			<ul style="list-style-type: none">● children's rights and charter <p>F. Information Technology in Nursing and Health Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● basic understanding of information technology (IT)● application of IT in nursing and health care		
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SCOPE OF CORE-COMPETENCIES FOR REGISTERED NURSE (Continued)

Roles		Competence Area 2: Health Promotion and Health Education			
		Ability	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
3.	Educator	<p>Ability to work in partnership with other health care providers, clients, families and the community in preventing illness, promoting, and protecting the health of the individual and society.</p> <p>The nurse must be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● recognise factors affecting health and the appropriate actions to take for the promotion of health. ● identify health related learning needs of clients. ● use educational principles and counseling techniques appropriately and effectively. ● communicate health information and coordinate health education/promotion activities effectively. ● seek, scrutinize, and utilize information from a variety of reliable sources for planning and improving health promotion and health education activities. ● intervene appropriately to safeguard the interests and well-being of the client. 	<p>A. Education Theories and Methods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● teaching and learning <p>B. Concepts of Health; Health Education and Health Promotion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● concepts of health and health care delivery system ● personal, environmental and community/public health ● theories and practice of health education and health promotion for the <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – individual – family – group – community ● contemporary issues in health education and health promotion <p>C. Communication Theories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● theories of interviewing and counselling <p>D. Rights and Responsibilities of the Individual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● human rights and responsibilities ● patients' rights and responsibilities ● children's rights and charter 	<p>A. Education Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● modelling ● facilitating ● empowering ● teaching <p>B. Assessment Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● community health assessment ● educational needs assessment <p>C. Problem Solving Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● problem identification, planning, implementing and evaluating health education activities for individuals, groups, and community <p>D. Communication Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● interviewing and counselling <p>E. Skills of an Advocate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● proactive in identifying the clients' health learning needs and positive in meeting these needs ● concerned about contemporary issues affecting the individual and the community ● active in participating in activities for health education and health promotion at local, national, and ecological levels ● committed to protecting the health of the individual and society
4.	Counsellor				
5.	Health Promoter				
6.	Care Co-ordinator				
7.	Client Advocate				

SCOPE OF CORE-COMPETENCIES FOR REGISTERED NURSE (Continued)

Roles		Competence Area 3: Management and Leadership			
		Ability	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
8.	Manager	<p>A. Possession of effective managerial and leadership skills in the provision of quality nursing care.</p> <p>B. Ability to initiate and implement change conducive to the improvement of health care provision.</p> <p>C. Ability to contribute to health care policy formulation when working in partnership with other health care team members and community sectors.</p> <p>D. Ability to assess and manage risk and safety issues.</p> <p>E. Ability to assess and manage crises.</p>	<p>A. Management Theories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● management of : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – health care setting – human resources – financial resources – crisis – time – change – risk <p>B. Leadership Theories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● nursing leadership ● leadership in health care <p>C. Health Care Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● health care system and trends ● contemporary health issues ● environmental, socio-cultural, socio-economic issues in health ● the making of health care policies <p>D. Political Issues in Nursing</p>	<p>A. Managerial Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● dealing with colleagues, clients, families, health care professionals and the public ● delegation ● supervision ● planning, organizing, monitoring, controlling, and evaluating <p>B. Leadership Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● leading/influencing ● motivating ● problem solving ● team building <p>C. Political Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● advocating ● lobbying ● negotiating ● public speaking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● positive ● proactive ● assertive ● accommodating ● fair ● open ● objective ● cooperative ● supportive ● caring
9.	Supervisor				
10.	Change Agent				
11.	Leader				
12.	Public Health Advocate				

SCOPE OF CORE-COMPETENCIES FOR REGISTERED NURSE (Continued)

Roles		Competence Area 4: Nursing Research			
		Ability	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
13.	Researcher	<p>A. Ability to apply knowledge and skills of nursing research in different health care settings and in the community.</p> <p>B. Ability to collect, analyse, interpret, and use research findings to improve nursing and health care practices.</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 Utilising Research Findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● knowledge of a research critique ● strategies to utilise research findings for evidence-based practice 	<p>Research Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● identifying relevant research areas ● data collection, analysis, and interpretation ● reporting, presenting and publishing results ● implementing evidence-based practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● objective ● proactive ● positive ● perseverance
Competence Area 5: Personal Effectiveness and Professional Development					
14.	Nurse professional	<p>A. Ability to maintain own physical, mental, and emotional well-being.</p> <p>B. Ability to develop and maintain nursing as a profession and maintain one's status as a professional registered nurse.</p>	<p>A. Personal Effectiveness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● knowledge of self, environment, stress and 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 Effectiveness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● healthy lifestyles 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, society, and health ● commitment to continuous learning ● supportive to professional organizations in functions conducive to professional development

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