



DATE: 09/05/2020

## **CENNZNZ-NZNO POSITION STATEMENT**

### **CLINICAL NURSE SPECIALISTS IN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS**

#### **SUMMARY**

The College of Emergency Nurses – NZNO is committed to and promotes the recognition and integration of advanced nursing practice roles into emergency care teams to enable improved patient outcomes. Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS) provide expert evidence-based care that improves access to care and patient satisfaction. They provide a viable, effective and relevant role within NZ emergency departments.

#### **CENNZNZ POSITION: KEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is the position of the College of Emergency Nurses - NZNO that the Clinical Nurse Specialist role:

- is an advanced nursing role within the Registered Nurses scope of practice.
- is a designated senior nursing role, which has developed independently to that of the Nurse Practitioner (NP); both CNS and NP fulfil meaningful roles within different scopes of practice
- illustrates both breadth and depth of knowledge including clinical assessment skills and post graduate education specialising in emergency care.
- practices with advanced abilities, knowledge, and specialised skills to meet the emergency care needs of patients, their families and significant others.
- provides coaching, mentoring and educational opportunities for members of the multi-disciplinary team.
- uses current evidence to guide practice.
- works collaboratively with clinical and professional support that includes clinical supervision, mentoring and professional development.
- influences, informs and supports workforce planning and development.

## **BACKGROUND:**

Emergency nurses in New Zealand provide acute and emergent care to patients, families/whanau and communities through a range of clinical settings. This includes hospital Emergency Departments rural healthcare facilities, and community based acute healthcare centres.

Increasing numbers of presentations to Emergency Departments has required the development of new processes and models of care. Multiple factors and complexities contribute to the increasing demand for emergency care and we believe that the role of CNS is one response that can assist with this (CENNZ-NZNO, 2016).

Advanced nursing practice roles, including CNS and NP, have become established in many New Zealand Emergency Departments over the last two decades as innovative, patient-focused, holistic and cost-effective strategies to meet demand for emergency care (King, 2013).

CNS roles relate to the expert level of the specialist Knowledge and Skills Framework, they demonstrate higher level clinical decision making, based on focussed and in-depth knowledge and skills acquisition in a context of consolidated experiential learning (CENNZ-NZNO, 2016). They utilise highly developed skills, integrating advanced knowledge and professional development to provide comprehensive and holistic patient care (Carryer et al., 2018; Cooper, et al., 2019; O'Connor, 2016).

Emergency CNS role descriptions vary depending on individual department models of care. Clinical care is a key component of practice, and the CNS utilises advanced practice competencies and skills to assess and treat patients presenting for emergency care. They work collaboratively with clients and colleagues as part of the multidisciplinary team.

Other key components within some CNS roles include providing team-based specialist support, contributions to education, research, and quality improvement activities. They bring value to clients and to the health care team both through improving patient safety and promoting positive health outcomes. Change management, solution focused strategies for health care issues, and promoting excellence in clinical practice are benefits associated with CNS roles (Zavotsky et al., 2016).

CNSs contribute to the development of nursing knowledge through the use of evidence-based practice. Their involvement in quality roles and research enables them to demonstrate knowledge translation and develop standards of practice that contribute to optimal patient outcomes.

## **RATIONALE FOR CENNZ RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **The evidence demonstrates that**

- The CNS role is well established and recognised as a functional and effective advanced practice role
- There is strong evidence supporting the role of CNSs engaging in clinical aspects of emergency care including mentoring, role modelling, minor injuries clinics, and education amongst others
- Workforce development and engagement with quality roles

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