



DATE: 09/05/2020

CENZ-NZNO POSITION STATEMENT EMERGENCY NURSING EDUCATION

SUMMARY

The College of Emergency Nurses New Zealand – NZNO aims to promote excellence in emergency nursing within New Zealand / Aotearoa, through the development of frameworks for clinical practice, education and research.

CENZ-NZNO POSITION: KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

It is the position of the CENZ - NZNO that:

- Emergency nursing is an established clinical specialty.
- Emergency nurses use education to improve patient outcomes, integrate the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi into practice, to address health inequalities and to develop the profession.
- Nurses entering emergency nursing require support to transition to specialty nursing practice, in accordance with the CENZ-NZNO Position Statement for New Nursing Graduates in Emergency Departments.
- Nursing education is an ongoing process and continuing post-registration learning is an expectation.
- There are mutual obligations on employers as well as nurses to facilitate meaningful opportunities for learning and continuing education.
- The CENZ-NZNO Knowledge and Skills Framework is a resource for emergency nursing education.
- Further work needs to be undertaken at a political level to advance opportunities for funding and education allocation for nurses; this should include provision of professional supervision.
- CENZ-NZNO continues to support clinical education through provision of grants and awards to eligible members.
- CENZ-NZNO continues to provide networks and specialty groups to support education and dissemination of resources in emergency nursing.
- Emergency nurses have an ethical and professional obligation to maintain education appropriate to relevant risk management, disaster responses, and / or mass casualty planning in line with identified local hazards.

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BACKGROUND:

Emergency nursing is a highly specialised area of practice, with its own unique body of knowledge. There has been considerable advancement in clinical treatment options, technical skill requirements, and the capacity for interventions over time. As the patient population continues to age, the acuity of presentations, the complexity and number of co-morbidities also increases. Emergency nurses need to utilise knowledge, skills, and clinical judgment to recognise patients who are currently or potentially at risk of becoming significantly unwell (CENNZ-NZNO, 2016).

Emergency nursing involves a complex interplay of knowledge, skill, judgment and attitudes brought together and expressed in the form of practice. Employers often reduce nursing to a series of tasks, failing to recognise the importance of attributes such as critical thinking. Education needs to cover a broad scope to address the development of values, attitudes, leadership and management in addition to psychomotor activities. There is an expectation for formal, post graduate education in the form of postgraduate certificate, diploma and Master's level education (Jones et al 2020).

Emergency nurses utilise broad based expertise to provide specialty care and within the emergency care environment there need to be further opportunities for increasing depth and sub specialisation. It is the unique combination of emergency care knowledge, skills, values and attitudes which enable Emergency nurses to competently meet the challenges of this diverse and specialised practice (King, 2019). Nurses entering the speciality must be guided and nurtured through a professional development process. This can be achieved through preceptorship for new graduates and professional supervision for all nurses.

Emergency knowledge and skills include attainment of speciality competencies relating to resuscitation, trauma management and triage. In addition, emergency nurses are expected to develop competencies related to the management of mass incident/casualty and disaster scenarios and to have the capacity to respond in situations of local and national crisis. Emergency nurses are also required to have knowledge and skills to manage victims and perpetrators of crime, to adhere to forensic guidelines and to manage the social and emotional circumstances that accompany these situations. Within the specialty there are opportunities for advanced practice roles including those based on leadership, education and autonomous clinical practice within a collaborative, interdisciplinary model.

Practitioners moving into advanced roles, including Clinical Nurse Specialist or Nurse Practitioner as well as authorised nurse prescribers, require support from managers, colleagues and educators. There needs to be acknowledgement of the financial, emotional and social costs associated with balancing educational commitments with workplace demands; this needs to include provision of educational leave and financial support for continuing education.

Simulation based learning is valuable across a range of skills based, situational and teamwork education, all of which are essential for emergency nursing. Recent studies have shown the importance of simulation in supporting development of clinical advocacy, validating practice, assessing systems and communication and the enhancement of team practices.

RATIONALE FOR CENNZ-NZNO RECOMMENDATIONS

- Emergency nursing practice requires specialty knowledge that includes assessment and management of a wide range of undifferentiated presentations, time critical aspects of care, management of a variable workload.
- The unpredictable and acute nature of Emergency Department workloads requires a sound knowledge and skill base.
- Both new and experienced nurses can find the transition to emergency nursing challenging and benefit from preceptorship and mentoring as they learn and consolidate the required clinical and academic education.
- The continuing advancement and clinical development within emergency care require a commitment to continuing education to ensure the ability to provide safe, effective emergency nursing care.
- Emergency nursing can be a stressful and challenging role, and professional supervision is an essential tool which should be provided.
- Emergency nursing education is a professional expectation, but also one that has associated financial, social and emotional costs.

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