



EDUCATION POLICY, STANDARDS AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

FOR DISTRICT NURSES

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New Zealand Nurses Organisation

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INTRODUCTION

The scope of district nursing practice is extensive. It incorporates working with clients and their families across the lifespan and within the client's home. It includes generalist and specialist nursing knowledge and skills as well as knowledge of community resources which may be needed to complement care. They function independently and interdependently in assessing needs, monitoring, delivering and evaluating care.

Education is vital in the development, maintenance and extension of district nursing knowledge and skills.

The objectives of the NZ College of Primary Health Care Nurses NZNO, include the provision of leadership for district nurse development through standards of practice, newsletters, conferences and other relevant information, the promotion and development of educational programmes, research into district nursing issues and facilitation of the ongoing strategic and professional development of district nurses.

The education policy, standards and framework complement other NZ College of Primary Health Care Nurses NZNO documents and should be read in conjunction with these. They include:

- Rules 2001
- Standards of Practice for District Nurses 2001
- A Strategic Plan for District Nursing in NZ 2003 - 2006

In addition, this document makes explicit for district nurses the NZNO Nursing Education Policy and Standards 1993, and complies with the Nursing Council of NZ, Post Registration Education Framework, 2001.

The roles of the NZ Qualification Authority and the Clinical Training Agency are taken into account.

As district nursing continues to meet the challenges of changing health policy and need, and post-Registration nursing education programmes expand the Standards and Framework will be reviewed and developed further. The initial review has occurred two years after adoption (2004) and will now be reviewed every five years.

POLICY

Policy Foundation

The NZ College of Primary Health Care Nurses NZNO recognises that education, research and professional development are integral to the concept of speciality practice.

Society expects district nurses to be highly skilled and knowledgeable. Education programmes need to respond to the changing social, political, cultural, economic and technological context and the future health care needs of New Zealand Society.

District nursing education occurs in a context, which demonstrates active acknowledgment of the cultural needs of all New Zealanders. This is integral to the social contract between New Zealand society and the nursing profession. The principles of the Treaty of Waitangi – protection, participation and partnership – are adhered to.

Policy Framework

District nurse development is a process which builds on pre-Registration education and encompasses entry to the speciality of district nursing and continues throughout the nurse's district nursing career. A career framework supports the education and development plan for progression of district nurses.

The education framework which supports the career framework is inclusive of continuing education, graduate and postgraduate education programme. Graduate and postgraduate education is to be provided by tertiary institutes and postgraduate programmes are clinically focused incorporating advanced practice, critical thinking and clinical judgement components.

Education Policy

The NZ College of Primary Health Care Nurses NZNO has a commitment to excellence in district nursing and the development and co-ordination of educational programmes designed to facilitate the highest possible standards of nursing practice.

The NZ College of Primary Health Care Nurses NZNO promotes the professional development of district nurses, recognising the complex and multiple ways in which district nurses gain new knowledge and skills, and recognising the rapid change in both health service and education provision.

The education policy will be met by

- national standardisation of content, quality and evaluation in formal district nursing education programmes/courses
- creation of portable qualifications for district nurses fostered by the implementation of National Standards
- an education framework inclusive of continuing education, graduate and postgraduate education
- the provision of graduate and postgraduate education by tertiary institutes
- clinically focused postgraduate programmes which incorporate advanced practice, critical appraisal and clinical judgement components

The NZ College of Primary Health Care Nurses NZNO is directly involved in professional development through a variety of means including

- An annual/biennial conference with a strong professional focus
- National newsletters distributed to members a minimum of 4 times per year and including professional articles

Indirectly the College is involved in district nurse education by

- Setting standards for District Nurse orientation programmes
- Liaising with education providers in reviewing curricula and evaluation criteria of education programmes relevant to district nursing
- Recommending appropriate presenters to participate in education programmes
- Endorsing education programmes which meet the College's criteria for endorsement
- Lobbying for resources to enable district nurses to participate in continuing education
- Supporting local and national district nursing education initiatives
- Establishing key resource documents for district nurses

Career and Professional Development Framework for District Nurses

Purpose

The career and professional development framework is to guide district nurses in their development of knowledge, skills and expansion of the scope of practice. It is a reference tool for employers in their acknowledgment of the systematic development of expertise by district nurses and identification of the level of practice a particular nurse has achieved.

Practice competence/skill is underpinned by knowledge development

Framework

Four levels of expertise are identified and described on the following page. The model depicts progression through the levels, competencies, professional development and recognition at each level and aligns this to the Nursing Council of NZ (NCNZ) post-Registration Education Framework for Nurses (2001) and the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF).

Progression

Progression from level one to level two is by achieving the core requirements identified in the recommended orientation programme for district nurses (p16) and consolidating those in the practice setting. Assessment of achievement includes self assessment and review of practice by a district nurse mentor co-ordinating and assisting with the orientation process. Assessment may also be by an appraisal system.

Level Two maintenance is assessed by an employer performance appraisal system or levels of practice programme.

Level Three attainment and maintenance is by means of the employer assessment against the criteria and using a performance appraisal or levels of practice system. It incorporates formal graduate or postgraduate education related to district nursing. This may be the attainment of a

- Graduate certificate or diploma
- Post-graduate certificate or diploma
- Transition papers for BN relevant to district nursing

Level Four attainment and maintenance is by means of the employer assessment against the criteria and using a performance appraisal or levels of practice system. It incorporates formal postgraduate education related to district nursing. This may be the attainment of

- Masters or Doctoral level
- Nurse Practitioner

Nursing Education in Transition

Nurses now attain Registration through a graduate degree programme, that is level 700 on the NZ Qualifications Framework. Many district nurses currently in practice have a Diploma in Nursing as their Registration qualification.

Post Registration nursing education is in a transition phase, with both graduate (level 7) and postgraduate (level 8) programmes available.

Those without graduate education may directly enter postgraduate programmes with recognition of prior learning and satisfactory grades.

It is predicted that many level 7 speciality papers will be upgraded to meet the criteria for advanced nursing 8 papers in the future. This is acknowledged in the education section of the framework described on the following two pages.

Career and Professional Development Framework

Levels and Descriptor	Criteria	Professional Development Programme Suggestions	NCNZ and NZQA Framework	Recognition System for nurse
1. Graduate/new District Nurse Develops core district nursing knowledge and skills	- Demonstrates an understanding and application of the core district nursing skills identified in the recommended orientation programme for DNs - Practices safely within community settings - Reflects on practice and committed to further development - Begins to establish relationships and liaises with other health professionals and community services - Member of NZ College of Primary Health Care Nurses and NZNO	Orientation to D Nursing Palliative care workshop Wound care introduction Diabetes workshop IV Certification for community Introduction to local community profile and demographics	NCNZ - orientation - continuing education - short courses - staff development These are usually locally provided programmes which are not formally recognised through a national credentialing process	Self assessment Preceptor assessment Orientation programme assessment Employer appraisal Employer credentialing mechanism
2. Competent District Nurse Consolidates core knowledge and develops specialty knowledge and skills.	- Completes timely, holistic and systematic assessment of health need - Knows community resources - Begins to audit nursing practice - Proactive within the service - Involved in peer review - Copes appropriately with many contingencies - An active member within College	Identify learning needs and any special interests in practice Commence graduate or postgraduate education.	NCNZ - Speciality nursing programme - continuing education - short courses - staff development NZQA - Level 7 Graduate certificate or diploma - Level 8 accessing postgraduate	Employer recognition

			programmes	
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3. Proficient District Nurse Has an in-depth knowledge of district nursing and may have developed a sub-speciality	- Expands role and scope of practice - Demonstrates broad repertoire of DN knowledge and skills at expert level - May develop an in-depth knowledge of particular sub-speciality of practice - Provides leadership for DNs & is role model and preceptor for other DNs - Involved in policy and protocol development locally - Contributes to College activities	Completes graduate and/or postgraduate certificate or diploma Maintain current clinical knowledge through continuing education	NCNZ speciality nursing programme - continuing education - short courses - staff development NZQA Level 7 or 8 - graduate or postgraduate certificate or diploma - may be working towards Masters	Employer recognition
4. Expert District Nurse Is recognised as an expert in district nursing practice and has an in-depth knowledge in at least one specific area of practice	- Delivers quality patient care in unpredictable challenging situations - Has a broad scope of practice - Works autonomously and collaboratively - Is a standard setter - Initiates evidence-based practice and change - Develops policy/protocols - Is a role model and mentor for other district nurses - Provides leadership nationally through the College	Updates as above Working towards Masters qualification	NCNZ Advanced Nursing Practice programmes MN, MA, PhD NZQA – Level 8	Employer recognition programme NZNO Certification as Nurse Clinician

STANDARD ONE

District Nursing education is managed through an appropriate education provider and in consultation with experienced district nurses.

- A new graduate or orientation programme is designed and delivered to meet the identified needs of the nurse new to the district nursing service.
- Continuing education sessions and programmes are delivered by knowledgeable practitioners in the field
- Graduate and postgraduate district nursing programmes are delivered by education institutes approved and/or accredited by an appropriate authority (refer to Education Amendment Act 1991)
- Graduate and postgraduate district nursing education programmes are placed on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework and advanced practice programmes are approved by the Nursing Council of New Zealand
- District nursing education programmes are developed in consultation with district nurses and the NZ College of Primary Health Care Nurses NZNO.
- Education providers demonstrate a positive attitude that promotes and cultivates district nursing, evidence based practice, research and scholarly activities.

STANDARD TWO

Curricula comply with the NZ College of Primary Health Care Nurses NZNO Standards for District Nurses Education 2001. Application may be made for NZ College of Primary Health Care Nurses NZNO endorsement of district nurse education programmes.

- Programmes are directed towards meeting the health needs of society and the learning needs of district nurses
- The College standards of practice for district nurses 2001 underpin the curriculum
- Programme aims, outcomes and curriculum are written
- Interrelationships of nursing theory, practice and research underpin programmes
- Relevant New Zealand and international societal data and resources are used
- Professional, cultural, ethical, legal, political and economic aspects of New Zealand Society are reflected as appropriate in the programme
- Historical, current and future trends are considered
- Curriculum reflects nursing knowledge and skills required in the district nursing setting
- Educators have appropriate experience and qualifications according to the programme they are teaching
- Entry criteria are explicit, fair and equitable and allow recognition for prior learning
- Exit qualifications are congruent with the NZ College of Primary Health Care Nurses NZNO career and education framework
- The NZ College of Primary Health Care Nurses NZNO is involved in the regular review and revision of curricula

STANDARD THREE

The education process facilitates and empowers district nurse learners

- District Nurses are encouraged to reflect critically on their practice
- Learner needs are incorporated into the programme
- Different ways of learning are acknowledged by providing a variety of learning opportunities
- Learners are encouraged to be self-directed in meeting the course requirements
- Opportunities are provided for the sharing of knowledge and experience
- Learners demonstrate skills in self and peer assessment
- Regular feedback on progress is given and appropriate remedial action provided
- Assessment of achievement is based on stated outcomes
- Assessment criteria and strategies are explicit and fair

STANDARD FOUR

Nursing practice within a multidisciplinary health team and community supports is fostered within district nursing education programmes

- The knowledge base of other disciplines is used in district nursing education where appropriate.
- Collaborative and co-operative relationships are fostered in a variety of learning environments
- The development of collaborative and co-operative relationships outside the learning environment is fostered.
- The relevance of education programmes provided by those associated with community and primary health care are acknowledged.

Endorsement of Education programmes by the NZ College of Primary Health Care Nurses NZNO

Purpose

The purpose of endorsement of education programmes is to validate programmes as appropriate for district nursing and recommended by the NZ College of Primary Health Care Nurses NZNO. Endorsement will be given only when these standards for education programmes are met and the content is reviewed for appropriateness for district nurses

The NZ College of Primary Health Care Nurses NZNO endorsement can be used in advertising the programmes. The NZ College of Primary Health Care Nurses NZNO will advertise annually, via their newsletter or magazine, endorsed programmes.

Application

Application is made by education providers to the National Committee of the NZ College of Primary Health Care Nurses NZNO. A minimal cost may be applied. Three copies of the programme shall be forwarded.

Review

The review and endorsement committee shall consist of three members of the Education Subgroup of the National Committee. The Subgroup may seek outside expert opinion or second other members onto the committee.

Criteria

For endorsement the programme will

- be relevant to district nursing
- have content specific to the scope district nursing
- meet the standards for education for district nurses

Note: This endorsement is a speciality professional endorsement. It is to complement not replace approval processes through the NZ Qualifications Authority, NZ Polytechnic Programmes Committee, Community University Academic Programmes or the Nursing Council of NZ.

Recommended Orientation Programme for District Nurses

The orientation programme for district nurses shall be inclusive of a learning needs assessment with each new district nurse against the requirements for the position. The orientation programme shall comprise a core module and a fundamental skills module designed to meet the need identified through the learning needs assessment process.

The NZ College of Primary Health Care Nurses NZNO recommends that the new district nurse has a

- minimum of two weeks supernumerary induction programme during which the core module is delivered
- minimum of three months with an identified preceptor and learning programme to meet ongoing orientation needs in module one
- during this period the nurse will be able to manage a non-complex caseload with support. The complexity of this caseload could increase as the nurse's knowledge and skills grow.

On completion of this orientation package (Core Module and Module 1) the district nurse should have a knowledge and competency review and feedback meeting with her/his preceptor and line manager and at that time an ongoing professional development plan should be agreed.

Core Module

Induction programme and core skills

- Service frameworks
 - vision, values, philosophy, policies and standards
 - professional boundaries and scope of practice
 - ethical and legal frameworks for homebased care
 - cultural safety
 - professional support systems and development
 - introduction to team members and specialty resource nurses
- Health and Safety
 - management of emergencies in the home
 - de-escalation, calming and restraint training
 - transport policy and road safety
 - infection control

- keeping yourself safe/managing the challenges
- Clinical practice
- assessment skills and care planning
 - Wound management, acute and chronic. Attainment of beginning level one College of Primary Health Care Nurses Specialty Competencies for wound care management.
 - medication management in the home
- Communication
 - documentation and information technology
 - referrals and liaisons
 - key agencies in the community
 - preceptor meetings
 - Resource management
 - supplies and equipment
 - loan policies

Module One:

Fundamental Clinical Skills

- Wound management, acute and chronic. Attainment of competent level two College of Primary Health Care Nurses Specialty Competencies for wound care management.
- Continence inclusive of bowel management, stoma and ostomy care, catheterisation (male, female, permanent, intermittent).
- Introduction to chronic disease management (diabetes, respiratory and cardiac).
- Intravenous and oxygen therapy in the home.
- Introduction to pain management.
- Fundamental nutritional assessment and enteral therapy.
- Palliative care

This module could be delivered through a variety of mechanisms including preceptor teaching, videos, self-learning, specialty nurse education, in-service activities and short courses.

The College of Primary Health Care Nurses is developing or recommending levels of Specialty Practice Competencies for the above fundamental clinical skills to be used as a guide for levels of practice development within District Nursing (these will be available on the College website as developed).

This recommended orientation programme can be used as the basis for developing either a formal orientation programme offered by an

education provider or an individual orientation programme for a new district nurse within a district nursing setting.

References

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| <i>NZ College of Primary Health Care Nurses NZNO</i> | (2001) <u>Standards of Practice for District Nurses</u>
NZNO
(2003-2006) <u>A Strategic Plan for District Nursing in New Zealand</u>
NZNO |
| <i>New Zealand Nurses Organisation</i> | (1993) <u>Nursing Education – Policy and Standards</u>
NZNO |
| <i>Nursing Council of NZ</i> | (2001) <u>Framework, Guidelines and Competencies for Post-registration Nursing Education</u>
NCNZ |

Glossary

Community profile	- a profile of the community within which the district nurse is working and the key health priorities of those receiving district nursing services. This includes socio-economic profile, geographical parameters, social support mechanisms and networks available, health services and personnel.
Competence	- the demonstrated ability to apply the knowledge, skills and attitudes and to exercise the professional judgement which can reasonably be expected of a nurse in a practice context, commensurate with their qualifications and experience (Nursing Council of New Zealand, 1997).
Competencies	- set of attributes including the knowledge, skills and attributes required to perform key functions to the pre-determined standards expected of a nurse in practice (Nursing Council of New Zealand, 2001).
Credentialing	- the generic term applied to several sub categories of recognition systems and processes which denote that the individual has met predetermined conditions. The sub categories include - statutory regulation eg Registration as a Nurse - professional self regulation eg PN Accreditation and NZNO Certification - institutional regulation eg IV Certification
Graduate education	- completion of an education programme to Baccalaureate degree level. This is the equivalent of level 700 on the NZ Qualifications Framework.
Levels of practice	- descriptive stages of increasingly skilled performance in clinical practice based on experience and professional development. (Concept is based on the Dreyfus Model of Skill Acquisition as adapted by Patricia Benner to clinical nursing practice. Benner describes 5 levels – novice, advanced beginner, competent, proficient and expert).

Mentor	- adviser to assist with professional development, in this case orientation to the district nursing role and workplace. Similar to preceptor but it may be a district nurse who has been identified and approached by the new district nurse to assist her/him and not selected by the employer. That is, the mentor may be identified by either the employer or the new nurse to assist in the orientation process.
Postgraduate education	- programmes at level 800 on the NZ Qualifications Framework. A Post graduate Certificate has two level 800 papers. Post graduate Diploma has four level 800 papers. Masters programme has the equivalent of 8 level 800 papers.
	Doctoral programme
Preceptor	- a nurse who has undertaken a formal preceptor training programme, who assists a beginning practitioner or a nurse changing areas to achieve a competent level of practice.
Standards	- formal guidelines that set an acceptable level of quality for programmes or performance.