



**NEW ZEALAND
STANDARDS FOR
CRITICAL CARE
NURSING EDUCATION**

5th Edition 2019

Introduction

The New Zealand College of Critical Care Nurses (NZCCCN) believes an educated critical care nursing workforce is central to the provision of quality care for patients and their whanau. Patients have the right to receive care from appropriately qualified critical care nurses that meets the diverse and changing healthcare needs of the people of Aotearoa New Zealand. The Critical Care Nursing Education Standards provide the building blocks for the education and training of critical care nurses. A critical care orientation programme develops nurses from competent to advanced beginner, whilst on-going education and clinical experience develops nurses to competent level on the Professional Development and Recognition Programme (PDRP). The Critical Care Nursing Standards are aimed at developing nurses from competent to proficient level of on the PDRP (Benner, 1984). Inherent in these standards is the recognition that specialist and advanced nursing knowledge and skills are required to care for the critically unwell, yet these are not developed in undergraduate nursing education programmes.

The Critical Care Nursing Education Standards provide the framework for education providers to develop and deliver post-registration critical care nursing programmes. These standards are a minimum requirement for any critical care nursing programme. However, within the standards, there is scope for education providers to tailor programmes to reflect the needs of their local critical care population.

These standards endorse, and should be used in conjunction with:

- The NZCCCN Position Statement on Critical Care Nurse Education (2017)
- The New Zealand Standards for Critical Care Nursing Practice (2014)
- The New Zealand Standards for Critical Care Nurse Staffing (2015)
- The NZCCCN Position Statement on the Definition of Critical Care Nursing (2009)

These standards replace:

- The New Zealand Standards for Critical Care Nurse Education (2010)

Updating these standards is part of a three-phase project that the NZCCCN committee has undertaken. The first phase involved updating our current position statement on critical care nurse education. These standards represent the second phase of this project. In the third phase, we will look to aligning our current expectations for critical care education with the specific skills and knowledge expected of qualified critical care nurses. We anticipate this involving the development of a standardised knowledge and skills framework expanding on the topics described in Standard 2.3.

As a college, we are passionate about providing quality critical care to the people of Aotearoa New Zealand. Integral in this endeavour is the provision of quality post-registration critical care nurse education programmes, which embody the principles of cultural safety and Te Tiriti O Waitangi. It is hoped that the NZCCCN Critical Care Nursing Education Standards will facilitate the ongoing development of excellence in critical care nursing here in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The NZCCCN
August 2017

We acknowledge the use of The Critical Care Networks National Nurse Leads National Standards for Adult Critical Care Nurse Education (2016) from the United Kingdom in this update of the NZCCCN Standards for Critical Care Nursing Education.

STANDARDS

1. The Education Programme

STANDARD ONE	The educational programme must equip critical care nurses with the knowledge and skills to safely and effectively care for critically ill patients in Aotearoa New Zealand.	
	<i>This standard is being met when:</i>	
	1.1	Post registration critical care courses are accessible to registered nurses working in the critical care environment
	1.2	The education programme adheres to the standards outlined in this document
	1.3	The education programme adapts and remains responsive to the evolving nature of healthcare
1.4	The education programme is underpinned by the principles in Te Tiriti O Waitangi, and recognises and responds to Māori health needs	

2. The Curriculum

STANDARD TWO	The curriculum is developed collaboratively and directed towards providing the theoretical, clinical, and professional preparation necessary to develop high calibre critical care nurses.	
	<i>This standard is being met when the curriculum:</i>	
	2.1	Is developed by a or in consultation with a level 3 critical care unit
	2.2	Includes defined aims, objectives, and teaching methods, and content assessment criteria for the programme
	2.3	Includes, but is not limited to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knowledge of relevant anatomy, physiology and pathophysiology ▪ The ability to manage the critically ill patient along a variety of patient pathways ▪ Competence to assess, plan, implement and evaluate care for critically unwell patients ▪ Psychosocial care of the patient and their family ▪ Knowledge relating to pharmacology and pharmacokinetics ▪ Knowledge of treatment modalities, investigations, interpretation, and application of results ▪ Safe and effective use of critical care equipment ▪ The ability to demonstrate leadership, management and team skills ▪ The ability to plan and contribute to rehabilitation alongside the wider MDT
2.4	Provides both theoretical and practical content to provide the nurse with knowledge to assess, plan, manage, document, and critically analyse the care of the critically ill patient and their family	

	2.5	Practical content is designed to complement and reinforce the programme's theoretical knowledge component
	2.6	Enables the participant to demonstrate knowledge in relation to Te Tiriti O Waitangi, and the impact of services on the delivery of nursing care for Māori and Māori health
	2.7	Is based on current best evidence and practice guidelines
	2.8	Is reviewed annually to ensure congruity with the programme content, and ongoing responsiveness to changes in healthcare

3. Student Responsibilities

STANDARD THREE	Student responsibilities in critical care nursing education programmes are explicit, fair and equitable.	
	<i>This standard is being met when the student:</i>	
	3.1	Has current registration with the Nursing Council of New Zealand
	3.2	Is a Registered Nurse working in an area providing critical care
	3.3	Has completed a unit specific critical care orientation programme
	3.4	Is deemed to have adequate prior knowledge and experience and therefore receives the support of their manager
	3.5	Completes a minimum of 600 hours working in the critical care area for the duration of the programme to ensure the integration of theoretical and clinical learning
3.6	Ensures they comply with the education provider attendance requirements	

4. Education Provider Responsibilities

STANDARD FOUR	Education providers must ensure the quality and credibility of the critical care education they provide.	
	<i>This standard is being met when education providers:</i>	
	4.1	Ensure programme co-ordinators are qualified critical care nurses with proven skill in teaching nursing education
	4.2	Ensure programme co-ordinators are proficient in theory, research and evidence based practice
4.3	Ensure programme co-ordinators are clinically credible with relevant practical	

	expertise
4.4	Support clinical placement to facilitate learner development and achievement of learning outcomes
4.5	Support preceptors and/or assessors to facilitate learner development and achievement of learning outcomes
4.6	Ensure preceptors and/or assessors are appropriately qualified critical care nurses
4.7	Establish strategies to reduce the financial burden faced by nurses undertaking critical care education
4.8	Ensure adequate access to resources including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Formal learning time ▪ Educators with current specialist knowledge in critical care ▪ Library services
4.9	Ensure education programmes are provided in partnership with health care institutions to enable the integration of theoretical and clinical learning as described in Standard 3.5

5. Assessment Processes

STANDARD FIVE	<p>Participants will be assessed throughout and on completion of the programme to ensure learning outcomes have been achieved.</p> <p><i>This standard is being met when:</i></p>	
	5.1	The programme assesses both theoretical knowledge and practical competence
	5.2	Practical competencies are developed by critical care qualified nurses (A framework to be developed in phase three will provide guidance on the specific skills and knowledge expected of qualified critical care nurses)
	5.3	Course participants are evaluated by clinical assessors who possess a post-registration critical care qualification and/or have appropriate experience
	5.4	Clinical assessors are responsible for ensuring practical assessment criteria are met
	5.5	Assessment criteria may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Exams ▪ Exemplars ▪ Case Studies ▪ Assignments ▪ Presentations ▪ Research ▪ Oral Structured Clinical Exams (OSCE) ▪ Clinical Audit

	5.6	The programme includes robust strategies that address issues related to failure and the appeals process
	5.7	At the end of the programme, the student receives documented evidence of successful completion of the critical care nursing qualification

6. Quality Monitoring

STANDARD SIX	Critical care nursing education courses will be subject to quality monitoring and assurance practices.	
	<i>This standard is being met when:</i>	
	6.1	Education providers review and evaluate course outcomes annually
	6.2	Education providers hold local stakeholder meetings to evaluate course content and to explore and support ongoing workforce development
	6.3	Education providers are expected to assess the suitability of the learning environment and ensure appropriate clinical placement of students in order to meet Standard 2.3
6.4	Feedback is sought from students following completion of their study and is used in the annual course evaluation	

REFERENCES

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Mission statement

NZNO is committed to the representation of members and the promotion of nursing and midwifery. NZNO embraces Te Tiriti o Waitangi and works to improve the health status of all peoples of Aotearoa/ New Zealand through participation in health and social policy development.

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