

Proposed NP standards of competence

Board-approved nurse practitioner scope statement

The nurse practitioner scope of practice is built on the platform of the [registered nurse scope of practice](#). Nurse practitioners are leaders in the development and delivery of health care services. They are advanced practitioners, educated at a master's or doctoral level, and have the required competence to provide clinical leadership, and lead and manage care. NPs work autonomously and in collaboration with the health care team to provide a wide range of comprehensive assessment and treatment interventions. The nurse practitioner has advanced skills, knowledge, expertise and legal authority to practise in this scope.

Nurse practitioners combine advanced scientific knowledge, diagnostic reasoning and critical analysis to diagnose and develop comprehensive therapeutic treatment plans, including prescribing medicines within their area of competence. They are accountable for ensuring evidence and research informs their decision-making. This is done in partnership with health consumers and whānau.

Nurse practitioners lead and role model commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Kawa Whakaruruhau and cultural safety and promote equity, inclusion, diversity, and rights of Māori as tangata whenua. Nurse practitioners must also meet the regulatory and professional requirements set by the Nursing Council of New Zealand.

Nurse practitioners lead or contribute to research, health care design, policy and education, at local, regional, national and international levels.

Standards of competence for nurse practitioners

The standards of competence are structured to identify the key areas of competence across all practice settings and build on the six registered nurse pou. Nurse practitioners must continue to meet the six registered nurse pou in their practice. While nurse practitioners' roles and responsibilities may vary by area of practice, this document outlines the standards that all nurse practitioners must meet to be competent.

There are four pou (standards) for the nurse practitioner standards of competence. These pou describe the competence required to practise safely as a nurse practitioner in New Zealand. Each pou is interrelated and demonstrated in practice simultaneously. Evidence of safety to practise as a nurse practitioner is demonstrated when the following pou are met:



Pou 1: Tika and safe and accountable advanced practice

Nurse practitioners demonstrate a high level of accountability and responsibility as autonomous health practitioners, ensuring care is delivered safely and effectively. They practise within established ethical, legislative and professional standards while delivering evidence-informed clinical care. They ground their practice in a philosophy of nursing and centre care on individuals, whānau and communities. Nurse practitioners actively engage in timely consultation, referral, and interdisciplinary collaboration to optimise patient outcomes. Continuous professional development underpins their practice, enabling them to manage complex and evolving population health needs. Nurse practitioners lead and role model commitment to Māori health, population health, Kawa Whakaruruhau and cultural safety, and uphold equity, inclusion and diversity.

Descriptor 1.1	Demonstrates accountability and responsibility for professional practice as a lead health practitioner.
Descriptor 1.2	Consistently practises within relevant ethical, legislative and professional standards.
Descriptor 1.3	Understands limitations of personal knowledge and expertise and engages in timely referral and collaboration to ensure safe practice.
Descriptor 1.4	Maintains continuous professional development as a fundamental component of practice, ensuring knowledge and skills are updated to meet complex and rapidly changing population health needs.
Descriptor 1.5	Advocates and demonstrates leadership in Māori health, population health, Kawa Whakaruruhau and cultural safety in practice, and actively promotes equity and the rights of Māori as tangata whenua.
Descriptor 1.6	Undertakes regular professional supervision, collaborative case review and self-audit to support safe and competent practice.

Pou two: Pūkengatanga and evidence-informed nurse practitioner practice

Pūkengatanga and evidence-informed nurse practitioner practice requires nurse practitioners to apply advanced scientific knowledge and knowledge of mātauranga Māori and other world views to inform comprehensive assessment, advanced clinical judgement, diagnostic reasoning and therapeutic decision-making. Evidence-informed practice requires the nurse practitioner to diagnose, develop, implement and evaluate culturally safe therapeutic treatment plans across the full episode of care.



The descriptors below identify the requirements for the nurse practitioner to autonomously coordinate, manage, lead and evaluate the full episode of care in the development and delivery of health care services.

Descriptor 2.1	Conducts comprehensive and systematic advanced assessments using evidence-based frameworks.
Descriptor 2.2	Assesses, integrates and applies advanced scientific knowledge and knowledge of mātauranga Māori and other world views from diverse sources to inform advanced clinical decision-making and diagnostic reasoning.
Descriptor 2.3	Demonstrates advanced skills and knowledge in ordering, performing and interpreting diagnostic investigations to inform clinical decision-making.
Descriptor 2.4	Demonstrates advanced clinical judgement, reasoning and problem solving to develop differential and definitive diagnoses of common and complex presentations.
Descriptor 2.5	Identifies urgent, emergent or life-threatening situations and takes appropriate action.
Descriptor 2.6	Develops, implements and evaluates comprehensive, culturally safe and evidence-informed plans of care and therapeutic interventions.
Descriptor 2.7	Prescribes medicines and other therapeutic products safely and accurately using comprehensive knowledge of pharmacology, best practice and following legal and regulatory guidelines including the principles of quality and safe prescribing practice.

Pou three: Rangatiratanga and leadership

Nurse practitioners proactively lead and contribute to health care system development, design, and innovation to improve the provision of care. Nurse Practitioners provide advanced leadership across clinical practice, Māori health, cultural safety, equity and research influencing practice, services and systems to improve health outcomes.

The descriptors below identify the leadership requirements for nurse practitioners to work effectively across the system and as part of the interprofessional healthcare team.



Descriptor 3.1	Provides leadership in the interpretation and implementation of new knowledge to improve quality of care and health equity.
Descriptor 3.2	Demonstrates clinical leadership by using systems thinking and critical inquiry to evaluate outcomes.
Descriptor 3.3	Leads quality improvement activities that improve health services and inform guidelines and policies to address population health need and equitable health outcomes.
Descriptor 3.4	Critically appraises scientific knowledge, contributes to research and integrates and disseminates new knowledge. Demonstrates understanding of data sovereignty.
Descriptor 3.5	Leads and contributes to health care design, evaluation, policy and education at local, regional, national or international levels.
Descriptor 3.6	Leads or is an active member of the interdisciplinary team.
Descriptor 3.7	Leads and is actively engaged in the education, development and mentoring of registered nurse prescribers and nurse practitioner candidates, and colleagues.
Descriptor 3.8	Actively promotes the role of nurse practitioner across the healthcare system.

Pou four: Manaakitanga and whānau-centred care

Nurse practitioners role model collaboration and partnership, building trust and shared understanding with people, whānau and communities. Nurse practitioners incorporate whanaungatanga and advanced communication strategies to improve health outcomes, address health equity and provide culturally safe care.

The descriptors below identify the requirements for ensuring person and whānau-centred care.

Descriptor 4.1	Demonstrates whānau-centred care through whanaungatanga, partnership and shared decision-making to meet the needs of people, whānau and communities.
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Descriptor 4.2	Understands and role models the integration of trauma informed care in practice.
Descriptor 4.3	Monitors, critically evaluates and comprehensively documents treatments/interventions to meet individual and whanau determined goals, and achieve health outcomes.
Descriptor 4.4	Ensures health equity, Kawa Whakaruruhau and cultural safety are considered in clinical decisions.
Descriptor 4.5	Demonstrates effective, comprehensive and culturally appropriate face to face or virtual communication that supports whanaungatanga, partnership and ensures shared understanding and informed decision-making.
Descriptor 4.6	Communicates and refers appropriately, in a timely manner to members of the inter-disciplinary team.
Descriptor 4.7	Assesses individual or whānau health-related knowledge and applies advanced clinical judgement in partnership to strengthen health literacy.
Descriptor 4.8	Understands the risks and benefits of new and emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI) and telehealth. Applies technology appropriately while ensuring patient safety.

