

Proposed Registered Nurse Competencies



Te Kaunihera Tapuhi o Aotearoa
Nursing Council of New Zealand

Proposed Registered Nurse Scope Statement

Registered Nurses in Aotearoa New Zealand reflect knowledge, concepts, and worldviews of both tangata whenua and tangata tiriti. Registered nurses uphold and enact Te Tiriti o Waitangi ngā mātāpono – principles, based on the Kawa Whakaruruhau framework for cultural safety, that promote equity, inclusion, diversity, and rights of Māori as tangata whenua.

Registered Nurses are accountable and responsible for their nursing practice, ensuring all health services they provide are consistent with their education, assessed competence, legislative requirements, and are supported by appropriate standards. This includes the right of Pacific peoples and other population groups to quality services that are culturally safe and culturally responsive.

The Registered Nurse works in partnership and collaboration with individuals, their whānau, communities, and the wider healthcare team to deliver equitable person/ whānau/ whakapapa-centred nursing care, advocacy, and health promotion across the life span in all settings. Registered nurses may practise in a variety of clinical contexts depending on their educational preparation and practice experience. Registered nurses may also use this expertise for leadership, management, teaching, evaluation, and research nursing practice.

Registered nurses utilise nursing knowledge and complex nursing judgment to assess health needs, provide care, and empower people to manage their health. Registered nurses practise independently, and in collaboration with other health professionals, perform general nursing functions and delegate and direct others involved in care. Registered nurses provide comprehensive assessments to develop differential diagnoses, provide an integrated plan of health care, implement interventions that require substantial scientific and professional knowledge, skills and clinical decision making, and evaluate care outcomes. This occurs in a range of settings in partnership with individuals, whānau, and communities.

Conditions may be placed on the scope of practice of some registered nurses according to their qualifications or experience limiting them to a specific area of practice. Some nurses who have completed the required additional experience, education and training will be authorised by the Council to prescribe some medicines within their competence and area of practice.

Proposed Registered Nurse Competencies

Pou (Domains) of Competence

There are six pou of competence for the registered nurse scope of practice. Evidence of safety to practise as a registered nurse is demonstrated when the applicant meets the competencies in the following domains:

Pou One: Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Ōritetanga and social justice

This pou requires evidence of critical consciousness and nursing practice which gives effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and human rights advocacy. Nurses have an ethical responsibility to lead in the elimination of health inequities and the achievement of a health care system that delivers appropriate and equitable healthcare for all.

Pou Two: Kawa Whakaruruhau and Cultural Safety

This pou supports the provision of holistic care, and ensures the nurse reflects on their own values, biases and beliefs, and understands the impact of these on care provision.

Pou Three: Pūkengatanga and Excellence in Nursing Practice

This pou addresses critical thinking and analysis; use of evidence based and scientific knowledge to underpin practice; and being accountable and taking responsibility for own practice. This includes the use of a range of assessment tools appropriate to the practice environment and diverse populations.

Pou Four: Manaakitanga and People Centredness

This pou refers to building trusting, compassionate, collaborative relationships with people and whānau facilitating holistic care focused on collective wellbeing. This includes caring for others to uphold the mana of all concerned (nurse, service, profession, organisation).

Pou Five: Whakawhanaungatanga and Communication

This pou focuses on establishing relationships through the use of effective and appropriate interpersonal skills and communication strategies.

Pou Six: Rangatiratanga and Leadership

This pou focuses on leadership, professionalism, advocacy, teamwork and nurses as change agents. Rangatiratanga in the context of nursing practice refers to the inherent potential of all nurses to act as change agents, regardless of seniority or formal leadership positions. Rangatiratanga is exercised when nurses act as independent thinkers, intervene, speak out, advocate and follow processes to escalate concerns. Rangatiratanga is further demonstrated when nurses are proactive in offering solutions and leading innovative change for improvement.

Pou One: Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Ōritetanga and social justice

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<i>Competency 1.1</i>	Gives effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi in everyday practice by demonstrating advocacy, professional and ethical responsibility to question practice and take appropriate action.
<i>Competency 1.2</i>	Challenges racism, discrimination, exclusion, prejudice and stigma as barriers to equitable healthcare.
<i>Competency 1.3</i>	Recognises that people are experts in their own lives and actively promotes self-determination.
<i>Competency 1.4</i>	Promotes an environment that ensures health consumer safety, independence, quality of life, and health.
<i>Competency 1.5</i>	Engages in continuous professional development that ensures the healthcare team gives effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi in practice.

Pou Two: Kawa Whakaruruhau and Cultural Safety

This pou supports the provision of holistic care, and ensures the nurse reflects on their own values, biases and beliefs, and understands the impact of these on care provision.

<i>Competency 2.1</i>	Maintains awareness and seeks to mitigate the impact of own culture and bias on care provision and accesses supports available when required.
<i>Competency 2.2</i>	Practises culturally safe care (as determined by people receiving care). This supports Māori, Pacific peoples, disabled people, rainbow community and other priority groups to meet their health and wellness goals.
<i>Competency 2.3</i>	Takes action to support the integration of tikanga and te ao Māori in practice where appropriate.

Pou Three: Pūkengatanga and excellence in Nursing Practice

This pou addresses critical thinking and analysis; use of evidence based and scientific knowledge to underpin practice; and being accountable and taking responsibility for own practice. This includes the use of a range of assessment tools appropriate to the practice environment and diverse populations.

<i>Competency 3.1</i>	Undertakes comprehensive and accurate nursing assessments of people, whānau or communities to develop differential diagnoses and inform the plan of care.
<i>Competency 3.2</i>	Demonstrates critical thinking and the use of scientific knowledge to provide care that is safe, well-reasoned, ethical, evidence informed, timely and based on the best available information.

<i>Competency 3.3</i>	Integrates clinical and cultural expertise with evidence to plan care that incorporates people's unique values and circumstances.
<i>Competency 3.4</i>	Demonstrates the knowledge, skills, ability and understanding of digital health and artificial intelligence technologies to perform a range of nursing procedures including undertaking health assessments, to provide safe effective person and whānau centred care.
<i>Competency 3.5</i>	Administers interventions and medications within legislation, policy and scope of practice.
<i>Competency 3.6</i>	Maintains infection prevention and control principles to ensure safety.
<i>Competency 3.7</i>	Makes appropriate decisions when assigning care, delegating activities and providing direction to others.
<i>Competency 3.8</i>	Evaluates effectiveness of care interventions and modifies the plan accordingly.
<i>Competency 3.9</i>	Promotes a culture of safety and continuous quality improvement to achieve equitable safe healthcare.
<i>Competency 3.10</i>	Recognises and responds to unexpected or changing situations, adjusts priorities and takes appropriate action.
<i>Competency 3.11</i>	Demonstrates understanding of professional responsibilities and adheres to the code of conduct, relevant legislation and organisational policies and procedures in the area of practice.
<i>Competency 3.12</i>	Reflects on own practice, seeks feedback to identify learning needs, and takes responsibility for professional development to maintain and enhance competence.
<i>Competency 3.13</i>	Manages self-care to maintain and promote own health and wellbeing.

Pou Four: Manaakitanga and People Centredness

This pou refers to building trusting, compassionate, collaborative relationships with people and whānau facilitating holistic care focused on collective wellbeing. This includes caring for others to uphold the mana of all concerned (nurse, service, profession, organisation).

<i>Competency 4.1</i>	Places people and whānau at the centre of practice and ensures integrated relational holistic care to meet the needs of people and whānau.
<i>Competency 4.2</i>	Adopts a compassionate and empathetic approach to practice.
<i>Competency 4.3</i>	Practises with professionalism, trust, and respect for the other person which leads to a therapeutic caring relationship that includes the whānau.

Pou Five: Whakawhanaungatanga and Communication

This pou focuses on establishing relationships through the use of effective and appropriate interpersonal skills and communication strategies.

<i>Competency 5.1</i>	Maintains an approach to communication characterised by calmness, compassion, empathy, respect, sensitivity, and tact.
<i>Competency 5.2</i>	Establishes effective therapeutic relationships with people and whānau, recognising the importance of collective wellbeing.
<i>Competency 5.3</i>	Assesses language and communication needs (verbal and non-verbal) and uses appropriate professional and cultural communication strategies in all interactions and contexts.
<i>Competency 5.4</i>	Develops and uses knowledge of the appropriate pronunciation of Māori words and names and observes tikanga where appropriate.
<i>Competency 5.5</i>	Uses plain language to communicate in a professional way that builds shared understanding and promotes health literacy.
<i>Competency 5.6</i>	Ensures documentation is relevant, accurate, professional and timely (using the designated health record as determined by the health care service).
<i>Competency 5.7</i>	Maintains privacy and confidentiality while accessing or providing information to others.
<i>Competency 5.8</i>	Complies with ethical, legal and organisational requirements for obtaining, recording, sharing, retaining and destroying information acquired in practice.
<i>Competency 5.9</i>	Provides and receives professional, constructive, timely and respectful feedback.
<i>Competency 5.10</i>	Acts with integrity and addresses conflict and tension as they arise.

Pou Six: Rangatiratanga and Leadership

This pou focuses on leadership, professionalism, advocacy, teamwork and nurses as change agents. Rangatiratanga in the context of nursing practice refers to the inherent potential of all nurses to act as change agents, regardless of seniority or formal leadership positions. Rangatiratanga is exercised when nurses act as independent thinkers, intervene, speak out, advocate and follow processes to escalate concerns. Rangatiratanga is further demonstrated when nurses are proactive in offering solutions and leading innovative change for improvement.

<i>Competency 6.1</i>	Contributes to, and leads where appropriate, a collaborative team culture of respect, support, inclusion, advocacy and trust to achieve safe care.
<i>Competency 6.2</i>	Influences the development of healthcare systems, valuing all roles and their importance within the healthcare system.
<i>Competency 6.3</i>	Identifies opportunities and undertakes a leadership role whenever possible.
<i>Competency 6.4</i>	Demonstrates sustainability practices and advocates to minimise impact on te taiao.
<i>Competency 6.5</i>	Maintains awareness of national and global trends impacting health and wellbeing.
<i>Competency 6.6</i>	Advocates and escalates appropriately to ensure people's safety and upholds people's right to excellence in care.
<i>Competency 6.7</i>	Responds in emergencies and other challenging or unexpected situations to maintain care and reduce risk.

Glossary of Terms

Accountability	Being answerable for your decisions and actions.
Appropriate	Matching the circumstances of a situation or meeting the needs of the individual or group.
Assessment	(of skill or competence) A systematic procedure for collecting qualitative and quantitative data to describe progress and ascertain deviations from expected outcomes and achievements.
Carers	Carers are individuals, family, whānau and āiga providing care for someone close to them who needs additional assistance with their everyday living because of a disability, health condition, illness or injury. ¹
Collaborate	Work together, co-operate with each other.
Competence	The combination of skills, knowledge, attitudes, values and abilities that underpin effective performance as a nurse.
Competency	A defined area of skilled performance.
Competent	The person has competence across all domains of competencies applicable to the nurse, at a standard that is judged to be appropriate for the level of nurse being assessed.
Cultural Safety	Cultural safety relates to the experience of the recipient of nursing service and extends beyond cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity. It provides consumers of nursing services with the power to comment on practices and contribute to the achievement of positive health outcomes and experiences. It also enables them to participate in changing any negatively perceived or experienced service. ²
Domain	An organised cluster of competencies in nursing practice.
Health Care Assistant	A person employed within a healthcare, residential or community context who undertakes a component of direct care and who is not regulated in law by a regulatory authority.
Health consumer	An individual who receives nursing care or services. The term represents patient, client, resident or disability consumer. This term is used in the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act (2003).
Health inequity	Health inequities are systematic differences in the health status of different population groups. These inequities have significant social and economic costs both to individuals and societies. ³
Kaiāwhina	Kaiāwhina is the over-arching term to describe non-regulated roles in the health and disability sector. The term does not replace specific role titles such as healthcare assistant, orderly, mental health support worker. ⁴

1 <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/carers-in-new-zealand>

2 <https://online.flippingbook.com/view/960779225/>

3 <https://www.who.int/news-room/facts-in-pictures/detail/health-inequities-and-their-causes>

4 <https://kaiawhinaplan.org.nz/>

Kawa Whakaruruhau	While Kawa Whakaruruhau is primarily focused on the importance of cultural safety, at its heart are Māori people their whanau, hapū and iwi. At its best, Kawa Whakaruruhau provides for a holistic model of Māori health care that moves beyond an individual patient's treatment and acknowledges the interaction between physical, mental, spiritual and whanau wellbeing. It reinforces that Māori concepts and epistemologies of health care matter and have a place in today's health system. ⁵
Legislated	Those requirements laid down by New Zealand Acts and Regulations.
Manaakitanga	Manaakitanga is a powerful way of expressing how Māori communities care about each other's wellbeing, nurture relationships, and engage with one another. Manaakitanga also extends to the whenua that needs care in order to ensure sustainability for future generations. The value of Manaakitanga is often expressed through the responsibility to provide hospitality and protection. Manaakitanga derives from two words - 'mana' and 'aki'. Mana is a condition that holds everything in the highest regard. Aki means to uphold or support. Extending Manaakitanga requires respect, humility, kindness and honesty. ⁶
Pou	A pou is a carved wooden post or pillar that serves as a symbol of strength and support. ⁷
Preceptor	A preceptor is an experienced practitioner who provides supervision during clinical practice and facilitates the application of theory to practice for students and staff learners. Preceptorship is a clinical educational strategy where both the preceptor and preceptee work together for a specified period of time. The process of preceptorship involves teaching, learning and orientation to the clinical area.
Priority Groups	Māori, Pacific, disabled people, and rainbow community. ⁸
Registered Health Practitioner	A person who is registered under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act, e.g. midwife, medical practitioner, occupational therapist.
Responsibility	A charge or duty that arises from one's role or status in a profession or organisation.
Self-determination	Mana Motuhake (Article II – Unique and Indigenous) - enabling the right for Māori to be Māori and to exercise self-determination over their lives and to live on Māori terms according to Māori philosophies, values and practices, including tikanga Māori. ⁹
Social determinants	Social determinants of health are the circumstances in people's environments in which people are born, grow up, live, learn, work and age, that can affect their health, wellbeing, and quality of life. ¹⁰

5 Cultural Safety Guidelines (nursingcouncil.org.nz)

6 <https://www.imsb.maori.nz/maori-wellbeing-in-tamaki-makaurau/manaakitanga/>

7 <https://teara.govt.nz/en/te-waonui-a-tane-forest-mythology/page-4>

8 <https://www.tewhaturora.govt.nz/whats-happening/what-to-expect/nz-health-plan/>

9 <https://www.health.govt.nz/publication/whakamaua-maori-health-action-plan-2020-2025>

10 <https://healthify.nz/healthcare-providers/s/social-determinants-of-health/>

Tikanga	Māori customary practices or behaviours. The concept is derived from the Māori word 'tika' which means 'right' or 'correct' so, in Māori terms, to act in accordance with tikanga is to behave in a way that is culturally proper or appropriate. ¹¹
Te Tiriti o Waitangi	The founding document for Aotearoa New Zealand signed in 1840 by the Māori people and the British Crown.
Te Ao Māori	The Māori world, emphasises the importance of relationships between nature and people. It is a holistic worldview that focuses on interconnections and is grounded in tikanga customary values and lore and mātauranga knowledge. ¹²
Te Taiao	Te Taiao is the environment that contains and surrounds us. It refers to the interconnection of people and nature. It has four major components: Whenua (soil and land) Wai (all freshwater bodies and their connections) Āhuarangi (climate across time) and Koiora (living beings). ¹³
Nursing Practice	Using nursing knowledge in a direct relationship with clients or working in nursing management, nursing administration, nursing education, nursing research, nursing professional advice or nursing policy development roles, which impacts on public safety.
Whanaungatanga	Relationships and connections are central to Māori and Māori wellbeing. Whanaungatanga is about forming and maintaining relationships and strengthening ties between kin and communities. This value is the essential glue that binds people together, providing the foundation for a sense of unity, belonging and cohesion. ¹⁴
Whakawhanaungatanga	(noun) process of establishing relationships, relating well to others. ¹⁵
Whakapapa-centred	The meaning of "whakapapa-centred" care in the scope's use of this term is derived from whanau centred ¹⁶ - person, whanau, whakapapa centred care is collaborative health care focused on meeting the needs, values, and desired outcomes of individuals, whanau and future generations. It describes how this is referred to and acknowledges the longer term, multi-generational impacts, and outcomes (positive and negative) of nursing care and support. ¹⁷

11 <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/maori-hub/rauemi/tikanga-tips>

12 <https://www.otago.ac.nz/maori/world>

13 <https://www.taiaoora.nz/te-taiao>

14 <https://www.imsb.maori.nz/maori-wellbeing-in-tamaki-makaurau/whanaungatanga/>

15 <https://maoridictionary.co.nz/word/12711>

16 Families Commission. (2010)

17 Whānau Strategic Framework. (2009–2012).