



Nursing Standards

Nursing practice today is different from a decade ago and we know it will change even more in the next ten years. Our new [standards of proficiency for registered nurses](#), published in May 2018, have been in use since January 2019 and are ambitious and focused on outcome-based requirements.

The standards were updated to take into account the changes taking place in society and health care, and what patients will need from nurses now and in the future as care needs become more complex.

We engaged extensively with professionals, educators, employers, patients and the public across the UK to help us develop these standards. In the two years since publication, we've quality assured 61 programmes at education institutions to teach the new standards.

Seven platforms

The standards are now grouped together under seven platforms:

- Being an accountable professional – providing safe and safe and compassionate person-centred care, acting professionally and taking responsibility
- Promoting health and preventing ill health – supporting people to manage their health, so they can have a good quality of life at every age. Getting involved in tackling the big issues that affect public health
- Assessing needs and planning care – monitoring a person's mental, physical, cognitive, behavioural, social and spiritual needs, and working with them and their family or carers to deliver care
- Providing and evaluating care – providing evidence-based, compassionate and safe nursing, ensuring care is person-centred and consistently of a high standard
- Leading and managing nursing care and working in teams – accountable for the appropriate delegation and supervision of care provided by others in the team, and playing an active and equal role in the interdisciplinary team
- Improving safety and quality of care – helping to monitor and improve the quality of care someone receives, identifying any risks to their safety and taking action to manage these
- Coordinating care – taking the lead to ensure the care someone receives is well coordinated

These platforms are important to understand because they:

- represent the knowledge, skills and attributes that all registered nurses must demonstrate when caring for people of all ages and across all care settings
- reflect what the public can expect nurses to know and be able to do in order to deliver safe, compassionate and effective nursing care
- provide a benchmark for nurses from the European Economic Area, EU and overseas wishing to join the register
- provide a benchmark for those who plan to return to practice after a period of absence.

Each of the platforms also apply across all four fields of nursing practice – adult, children, learning disabilities and mental health – and all care settings. This is because registered nurses must be able to meet the person-centred, holistic care needs of the people they encounter in their practice who may be at any stage of life and who may have a range of mental, physical, cognitive or behavioural health challenges. They must also be able to demonstrate a greater depth of knowledge and additional more advanced skills required to meet the specific care needs of people in their chosen fields of nursing practice.

The standards also include two annexes which list the skills nurses must have, and the procedures they must be able to do when they join our register. One focuses on communication and relationship skills and the other on nursing procedures. The level of expertise a nurse needs in each skill depends on what area of nursing they will register in.

What has changed?

The new standards have refined and improved on the previous set of nursing standards. The main changes are:

- A greater emphasis on being person centred
- More emphasis on relationship management and communication
- More emphasis on public health and leadership
- Ability to undertake whole body system assessment including chest auscultation
- Greater knowledge of pharmacology, pharmacokinetics, and prescribing practice
- A focus on mental, physical, cognitive and behavioural health across the life span
- Knowledge and ability to support and supervise of students
- Understanding of improvement methodologies, audit, health economics and greater political awareness.

For more information, please see www.nmc.org.uk

