

Nursing Council of Hong Kong
Core-Competencies of an Advanced Practice Nurse for Critical Care Nursing
Developed by The Hong Kong Academy of Nursing under
the Voluntary Scheme on Advanced and Specialised Nursing Practice

The scope of core-competencies of an **Advanced Practice Nurse** builds on the 5 competence areas required of Registered Nurses:

Competence area 1: Professional, Legal and Ethical Nursing Practice

Competence area 2: Health Promotion and Health Education

Competence area 3: Management and Leadership

Competence area 4: Evidence-based Practice and Research

Competence area 5: Personal and Professional Development

Competence area 1: Professional, Legal and Ethical Nursing Practice			
Ability	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
<p>An advanced practice nurse (Critical Care) is able to:</p> <p>(1) Apply nursing theories, evidence-based nursing knowledge, problem solving skills and therapeutic techniques to perform the advanced practice nursing role safely, legally, ethically and effectively;</p> <p>(2) Manage complex care for patients with complicated health conditions by rapidly identifying clients' problems that lead to shock, multiple organ dysfunction syndrome and/or life-threatening conditions through synthesis and prioritisation of past and immediately derived clinical data;</p>	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Critical Care) needs to have knowledge of:</p> <p>A. Social and life sciences relevant to advanced nursing practice;</p> <p>B. Human rights and responsibilities in relation to advanced nursing practice;</p> <p>C. Macroscopic views of health care systems and models of healthcare;</p> <p>D. Legal and ethical issues pertaining to advanced critical care nursing practice; triage of critical care services, rationing resources for critically ill clients during a pandemic, end-of-life care and palliation, family support and interventions;</p>	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Critical Care) needs to have skills in:</p> <p>A. Assessment, collection and integration of clinical data from a variety of sources to identify clients' complex health care needs; differential diagnosis, interventions and evaluation in advanced nursing practice;</p> <p>B. Analysis of clinical data, radiological and biochemical test results for complex situations in unstable / complicated contexts, recognising disease progression and associated complications that require high level professional judgments;</p>	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Critical Care) needs to have the following attitudes:</p> <p>A. Proactive in adopting and exploring advanced nursing practice to ensure client safety and comfort;</p> <p>B. Open-minded and willing to adopt new models and advanced care practice;</p> <p>C. Innovative in attempting to introduce breakthroughs in nursing practice and in delivering care for complex health conditions;</p> <p>D. Assertive in constantly striving for excellence in the professional role;</p> <p>E. Client-centered and holistic in caring processes;</p>

Competence area 1: Professional, Legal and Ethical Nursing Practice

Ability	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
<p>(3) Conduct case management services to meet multidisciplinary and multiple health care needs;</p> <p>(4) Act as a resource person and accept referrals for their clinical expertise;</p> <p>(5) Identify service gaps: design and implement care programmes and monitor outcomes;</p> <p>(6) Provide expert level support and guidance to nurses in their establishment of therapeutic and caring relationships with the client</p> <p>(7) Participate in the development of nursing care delivery systems in collaboration with the client and multidisciplinary health care teams to achieve optimal outcomes;</p> <p>(8) Execute independent practice in critical care specialty;</p> <p>(9) Articulate the obligations and rights of clients of advanced nursing practice;</p> <p>(10) Integrate data from comprehensive client assessments and apply interpretative skills to anticipate the medical diagnoses in order to guide nursing care planning, interventions and potential need for resuscitation;</p>	<p>E. Professional regulation of advanced nursing practice;</p> <p>F. Professional nursing practice and expertise on par with international standards; critical care nursing models, outreach services and rapid response systems to achieve optimal client outcomes regardless of the care setting;</p> <p>G. Advanced nursing therapeutics and communication skills;</p> <p>H. Health / information technologies in relation to advanced critical care nursing practice to review effectiveness of interventions and client outcomes;</p> <p>I. Pathophysiology and the clinical manifestations of complex health conditions associated with shock, multiple organ dysfunction syndromes and/or life threatening conditions;</p> <p>J. Diagnostic methodologies, management strategies and nursing interventions required for acutely / critically ill or injured clients at high risk of deterioration or developing actual or potential life-threatening complications;</p>	<p>C. Recognising and responding promptly to rapid physiological deterioration or life-threatening conditions;</p> <p>D. Problem solving in volatile / complicated / ambiguous environments requiring critical thinking;</p> <p>E. Adjusting advanced therapeutics nursing interventions according to clients' ongoing responses in different stages of the disease process aiming to optimise outcomes;</p> <p>F. Client engagement;</p> <p>G. Interprofessional / Intersectoral collaboration in facilitating the implementation of interdisciplinary management plans and care pathways to maximise efficacy in care provision;</p> <p>H. Application and adoption of health technology and information technology in critical care for detection, monitoring and management of diseases or injuries, and employing modalities for organ support;</p>	<p>F. Decisive when facing complex practice situations and in managing emergency and disaster situations;</p> <p>G. Accountable and responsible for advanced nursing practice;</p> <p>H. Sensitive to clients' and their family's changing needs and values; and</p> <p>I. Resilient when responding to emergency or disaster situations.</p>

Competence area 1: Professional, Legal and Ethical Nursing Practice

Ability	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
<p>(11) Demonstrate proficiency in managing the full range of pathological conditions, integrating scientific knowledge and expert clinical judgment to assess and provide care to clients in complex and unpredictable situations, such as sepsis, multiple trauma and environmental injuries;</p> <p>(12) Adopt a case management model of care to meet clients’ complex and rapidly changing health care needs and to vary practice according to contextual, cultural, social or religious factors;</p> <p>(13) Monitor clients’ responses to drug regimens when titrating medication according to established protocols based upon accurate knowledge of the clients’ condition and concurrent therapies, counsel clients and families concerning drug regimens, side effects, and interactions;</p> <p>(14) Communicate a sense of “being present” with the client along the critical illness journey; and</p> <p>(15) Participate in the establishment and management of response systems for emergency and disaster situations.</p>	<p>K. Pharmacology, pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics in critical care practice related to complicated disease conditions and organ dysfunction; and</p> <p>L. Strategies to support collaboration in interdisciplinary teams and/or organisations during transport, clinical emergency situations or civil disasters associated with chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive agents.</p>	<p>I. Anticipating and preventing / minimising potential clinical risks and iatrogenesis; implement nursing interventions to manage them and monitor effectiveness of such interventions; and</p> <p>J. Facilitating resolution of ethical conflicts and moral distress, and ethical decision making in end-of-life care.</p>	

Competence area 2: Health Promotion and Health Education

Ability	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
<p>An advanced practice nurse (Critical Care) is able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Integrate health status, disease prevalence, and scientific information to tailor make health education and health promotion activities for various target client groups in critical care; (2) Appropriately adopt and use the media, advanced technologies and community networks to promote and educate about disease and symptom management for different clients or target groups related to critical care; (3) Organise, implement and evaluate health promotion interventions according to the priority health problems or needs assessment results and evaluate clients' learning outcomes by monitoring behaviour changes related to learning; (4) Collaborate with different stakeholders and service providers to address health issues of individuals and communities and contribute to policy development; (5) Appraise critically the effectiveness of health education and health promotion activities; 	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Critical Care) needs to have knowledge of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Assessment of health status, social determinants of health and high risk health behaviours; B. Epidemiology and disease prevalence to prevent development of critical illnesses, trauma injuries and chronic health conditions leading to end stage organ failure requiring advanced treatment modalities; C. Health informatics, information and communication technology; D. Local and cross-territory health promotion and disease prevention strategies in the advanced practice area and their impacts; E. Approaches and strategies for social marketing, health promotion and disease prevention taking into account the latest evidence, behavioural, social, environmental and cultural factors; and F. Local and cross-territory strategies of health promotion and creation of an atmosphere in the community conducive to organ donation. 	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Critical Care) needs to have skills in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Community health and needs assessment; B. Adopting and using advanced communication approaches in individual client interviewing, counselling, and empowerment, as well as in public speaking and presentation; C. Advocacy, influencing, negotiation and lobbying; D. Data analysis in health and epidemiology, needs assessments and evaluations; E. Planning and implementing disease / injury prevention and health promotion programmes targeting issues relevant to the development of critical illnesses, trauma injury and chronic health conditions; F. Using advanced information technology to design and deliver health education and health promotion; and G. Delivering end-of-life care for dying patients and addressing the needs of their significant others during the loss, grief and bereavement process, including sudden and unexpected death. 	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Critical Care) needs to have the following attitudes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Committed to advocating health; B. Proactive in identifying clients' conditions and being sensitive to their needs; C. Positive and innovative in meeting identified needs; D. Concerned about contemporary health issues affecting the individual and the community; E. Active in participating in activities for health education and health promotion at local, national and ecological levels; F. Committed to protecting the health of the individual and community; G. Role modelling for health optimisation; and H. Take an active interest in contemporary critical care and health issues affecting individuals and the community.

Competence area 2: Health Promotion and Health Education			
Ability	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
<p>(6) Contribute to best practice and goals of health promotion;</p> <p>(7) Provide leadership in developing health promotion capacities of individuals and teams;</p> <p>(8) Demonstrate positive attitudes to participation in hospital and community health education, as well as professional activities; and</p> <p>(9) Act as an advocate for vulnerable client groups (including children, women, individuals with mental or physical disabilities, senior citizens and other similar groups) both in hospital and in the community.</p>			

Competence area 3: Management and Leadership			
Ability	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
<p>An advanced practice nurse (Critical Care) is able to:</p> <p>(1) Demonstrate effective managerial and leadership skills in the promotion of high quality standards and quality improvement;</p> <p>(2) Apply critical thinking and assess the need for change and lead changes to make an impact on patient care and service delivery systems;</p>	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Critical Care) needs to have knowledge of:</p> <p>A. Advanced management in people and resource utilisation, change management and leadership in health care;</p>	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Critical Care) needs to have skills in:</p> <p>A. Applying advanced management and leadership in health care;</p> <p>B. People and resource management skills in response to the rapidly changing local and global healthcare environment in order to enhance service effectiveness in critical care;</p>	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Critical Care) needs to have the following attitudes:</p> <p>A. Positive and assertive towards new challenges to create a healthy work environment;</p> <p>B. Supportive and facilitative to colleagues and clients;</p> <p>C. Open-minded and objective, adopting a broad vision and global view;</p>

Competence area 3: Management and Leadership

Ability	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
<p>(3) Actively participate in health care policy formulation in partnership with other health care team members and community sectors;</p> <p>(4) Manage risks and crises, and emergency situations specific to the advanced practice area;</p> <p>(5) Build the culture and systems to ensure safe and effective care delivery and work environments;</p> <p>(6) Lead the team to facilitate team processes and work across sectors and professions to cultivate a caring and supportive culture;</p> <p>(7) Optimise resource utilisation within and outside healthcare system and facilitate the provision of an accessible, effective and efficient service;</p> <p>(8) Enhance staff development and contribute to manpower planning to ensure smooth service operations;</p> <p>(9) Resolve conflict(s) with a range of appropriate measures and enhance mutual respect and teamwork among team members;</p> <p>(10) Benchmark care programs with relevant outcome measures and participate in reviewing interventions as indicated;</p>	<p>B. Concepts associated with the vision, goals, objectives, strategies and governance, and their implications in critical care service provision to support organisational goals, objective and strategic plans relevant to critical care outreach services, early warning systems and rapid response teams for ward settings, rehabilitation programmes and post discharge follow up services;</p> <p>C. Policy development, implications and review processes in critical care service networking, patient referral and resource allocation;</p> <p>D. Politics in health care and nursing;</p> <p>E. Resource management;</p> <p>F. Risk management and quality improvement in advanced nursing practice; and</p> <p>G. Evaluation of the structures, processes and outcomes associated with care delivery, with particular focus on patient safety, care efficacy, and cost-effectiveness.</p>	<p>C. Promoting the role of the advanced practice nurse (critical care) in clinical and professional contexts through goal-directed project management;</p> <p>D. Building cultures for positive work environments, morale and performance to support advanced practice;</p> <p>E. Political astuteness in influencing and lobbying;</p> <p>F. Conflict resolution, negotiation and mediation;</p> <p>G. Risk management and quality improvement for advanced nursing practice;</p> <p>H. Creating an atmosphere to facilitate execution of changes through inspiration and mobilisation of team members;</p> <p>I. Coordinating holistic care for clients with appropriate interventions, resource mobilisation, and timely referrals;</p> <p>J. Directing the coordination of care for clients with complex health conditions and maintaining effective communication and collaborative relationships with members in inter-professional teams; and</p>	<p>D. Collaborative in building collegiality with members of relevant committees, professional organisations and inter-professional teams;</p> <p>E. Fair in addressing equity;</p> <p>F. Decisive in management decisions;</p> <p>G. Accountable and responsible in decision making about project management; and</p> <p>H. Broad vision and possess a global view and awareness of legislation and policy making processes which influence advanced nursing practice and healthcare services.</p>

Competence area 3: Management and Leadership			
Ability	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
<p>(11) Provide consultation for relevant stakeholders in addressing conflict situations; and</p> <p>(12) Devise detailed implementation schedules, resource planning, and track performance indicators as well as supervise the mechanisms to support departmental or hospital service development plans.</p>		<p>K. Developing, refining and evaluating organisational action plans including disaster preparedness plans and contingency plans for pandemics.</p>	

Competence area 4: Evidence-based practice and Research			
Ability	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
<p>An advanced practice nurse (Critical Care) is able to:</p> <p>(1) Utilise research findings to evaluate current practice and to identify service and practice areas in critical care for further improvement;</p> <p>(2) Appraise critically and reflectively health care research findings to support evidence-based practice (“EBP”);</p> <p>(3) Identify issues and opportunities in clinical settings to initiate and participate in nursing and clinical research;</p>	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Critical Care) needs to have knowledge of:</p> <p>A. Best available evidence and new knowledge in critical care practice;</p> <p>B. Relevance and appropriateness of various research designs and methodologies in relation to the study objectives, including types and phases of clinical trials in critical care interventions, to generate evidence to inform practice;</p> <p>C. Implementation science to translate evidence into practice;</p> <p>D. Means of integrating evidence into policy, procedures, guidelines and practice;</p>	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Critical Care) needs to have skills in:</p> <p>A. Critical analysis and interpretation of published literature in medical and nursing science, and adoption of the best available evidence in critical care practice;</p> <p>B. Application of evidence to substantiate / negotiate / influence advanced health care interventions in critical care;</p> <p>C. Using evaluation tools to assert and facilitate evidence-based changes into the healthcare system, with the aim to improve patient safety, workflow efficiency and service quality;</p>	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Critical Care) needs to have the following attitudes:</p> <p>A. Proactive in initiating evidence-based practice and research and accepting new ideas;</p> <p>B. Inquisitive in identifying knowledge/practice gaps and new horizons for care processes;</p> <p>C. Creative and innovative in advancing the science of nursing practice;</p> <p>D. Scientific in critically reviewing EBP and considering clinical benefits in adoption of evidence-based findings;</p>

Competence area 4: Evidence-based practice and Research

Ability	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
<p>(4) Lead and support the review and development of evidence-based guidelines, protocols and clinical pathways;</p> <p>(5) Use the best available scientific evidence to enable practice innovation; adoption of advanced technology and shape decision making;</p> <p>(6) Benchmark various care programmes with evaluative outcome measures of evidence-based decisions and practice changes;</p> <p>(7) Participate in strategic planning and promotion activities conducive to building a sustainable culture in EBP; and</p> <p>(8) Demonstrate knowledge of research processes and be able to critically appraise published literature and participate in the translation of the best available evidence into clinical practice.</p>	<p>E. Methods of disseminating information about best practice supported by evidence; and</p> <p>F. Implementing practice changes based on evidence, clinical expertise, and patient preference.</p>	<p>D. Research appraisal and EBP processes, particularly in analysis and interpretation of data and dissemination of findings; and</p> <p>E. Communicating and collaborating with other health care professionals in clinical research activities.</p>	<p>E. Passionate about promoting an EBP and learning culture within organisations; and</p> <p>F. Self-motivated in advancing professional knowledge in EBP and research activities.</p>

Competence area 5: Personal and Professional Development

Ability	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
<p>An advanced practice nurse (Critical Care) is able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Accept accountability for increased responsibility for complex patient care with delegation, support and supervision in critical care; (2) Maintain competence as an advanced practice nurse, identify their own professional strengths and limitations, and promote continuous development in the advanced practice area; (3) Uphold nursing as a profession and act as a key member of the health care team; (4) Take an active role in clinical supervision, education, mentorship programmes and support socialisation, training of novice critical care practitioners. Act as a role model, mentor and set exemplary standards for professional behaviours; (5) Articulate and promote the image and roles of advanced practice nurses to facilitate collaboration and referrals in professional and community contexts; (6) Keep abreast of current knowledge and technological advancements of health care systems; 	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Critical Care) needs to have knowledge of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Philosophy and scope of practice in the advanced practice area; B. Professional organisations for facilitating the growth and learning opportunities in advanced critical care nursing practice; C. Healthcare landscape, legislation and political climate for maximising advanced nursing practice; and D. Strategies in achieving professionalism in advanced critical care nursing practice; and improving patient outcomes and professional performance. 	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Critical Care) needs to have skills in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Maintaining their own holistic well-being; B. Critical self-reflection for continuous improvement; C. Coaching and mentorship to nurture and prepare the next generation of nurses; D. Public speaking and presentation; and E. Professional networking and exploration of potential opportunities for intra- and inter-disciplinary collaboration. 	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Critical Care) needs to have the following attitudes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Enthusiastic and positive towards life, human beings, society and health, safeguarding optimal health and promoting quality of life; B. Visionary and passionate towards advanced critical care nursing practice for safeguarding optimal health and promoting quality of life; C. Open to learning especially when addressing new ideas and extending their horizons; D. Committed to continuous learning in advanced nursing practice; E. Supportive of professional organisations which develop advanced critical care nursing practice; F. Engagement in lifelong learning in formal and informal educational activities related to professional and clinical practice; G. A role model for the team, being positive, and willing to teach and coach junior or new staff; and H. Self-reflective to support continuous improvement.

Competence area 5: Personal and Professional Development

Ability	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
<p>(7) Ensure consistency in attaining and maintaining competencies;</p> <p>(8) Enhance knowledge exchange among healthcare disciplines regarding critical care; and</p> <p>(9) Embrace change through continually evaluating current practice at individual and system levels.</p>			