

Nursing Council of Hong Kong
Core-Competencies of an Advanced Practice Nurse for Mental Health 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 (Mental Health) 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 to clients with mental health issues;</p> <p>(2) Manage complex care for clients with complicated mental health conditions;</p> <p>(3) Deliver case management services to meet multidisciplinary and multiple health care needs of clients with mental health issues;</p>	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Mental Health) needs to have knowledge of:</p> <p>A. Social and life sciences relevant to advanced mental health practice in different settings including in-patient services, out-patient units, day services, nurse-led clinics, and community services;</p> <p>B. Human rights and responsibilities in relation to advanced mental health nursing practice;</p> <p>C. Macroscopic views of mental health care systems and models of mental healthcare;</p> <p>D. Legal and ethical issues pertaining to advanced mental health nursing practice;</p>	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Mental Health) needs to have skills in:</p> <p>A. Health assessment, examination, differential diagnosis, intervention and evaluation in advanced mental health nursing practice;</p> <p>B. Analysis of complex situations in the unstable / complicated context of mental health specialty areas requiring high level professional judgements and critical judgements;</p> <p>C. Problem solving in volatile / complicated / ambiguous mental health environments requiring critical thinking;</p>	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Mental Health) needs to have the following attitudes:</p> <p>A. Proactive in adopting and exploring advanced nursing practice;</p> <p>B. Open-minded and willing to adopt new models in advanced care practice;</p> <p>C. Innovative and creative in attempting to introduce breakthroughs in advanced nursing practice;</p> <p>D. Assertive and enthusiastic in constantly striving for excellence in the professional role and safeguarding good practice;</p>

Competence area 1: Professional, Legal and Ethical Nursing Practice

Ability	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
<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 rapport and care giving to the clients;</p> <p>(7) Act as a role model and set exemplary standards of professional behaviour and accept accountability in accordance with mental health nursing practice;</p> <p>(8) Conduct timely risk assessments and crisis interventions to minimise / prevent any harm to clients, families, carers and public;</p> <p>(9) Identify clients' health care needs, prioritise services, devise treatment plans, and implement care programmes;</p> <p>(10) Monitor clients' mental stability, facilitate their optimal functioning; provide therapeutic interventions to clients, their families/carers; and evaluate outcomes;</p>	<p>E. Professional regulation of advanced mental health nursing practice;</p> <p>F. Professional nursing practice and expertise on par with international standards in relation to the advanced mental health practice areas of different sub-specialties including psychiatric emergency, acute, sub-acute, long stay, rehabilitation and community care;</p> <p>G. Contemporary case management theories and concepts of preventive care, recovery, rehabilitation, and resilience relevant to advanced mental health nursing practice;</p> <p>H. Health / information technologies in relation to advanced mental health nursing; and</p> <p>I. Principles and practice of advanced mental health nursing in case formulation, psychotherapeutic interventions, medication management and crisis intervention.</p>	<p>D. Undertaking advanced mental health nursing therapeutics relevant to the needs of clients including medication management, crisis intervention, psycho-education, individual / group counselling, family nursing, supportive therapy, cognitive behavioural interventions;</p> <p>E. Client engagement;</p> <p>F. Interprofessional / Intersectoral collaboration; and</p> <p>G. Application and adoption of health technology and information technology in health care.</p>	<p>E. Client-centred, holistic, non-judgemental, and empathic throughout the caring processes;</p> <p>F. Decisive when facing complex practice situations; and</p> <p>G. Accountable and responsible for advanced nursing practice.</p>

Competence area 1: Professional, Legal and Ethical Nursing Practice

Ability	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
<p>(11) Review clients' medication regimes, treatment plans and make necessary adjustments for continuous management of their health status;</p> <p>(12) 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>(13) Practice in accordance with professional and relevant ordinance / regulations applicable to advanced mental health nursing;</p> <p>(14) Advocate and protect the autonomy, dignity, rights, values, beliefs of the mental health care practitioners, clients, their families / carers, and the community; and</p> <p>(15) Promote clients' recovery and re-integration back into the community.</p>			

Competence area 2: Health Promotion and Health Education

Ability	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
<p>An advanced practice nurse (Mental Health) 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 in all settings (in-patient, out-patient and community) to raise awareness and address issues of mental health stigma and discrimination; (2) Appropriately adopt and use the media, advanced technologies and community network to promote mental health/well-being for different clientele with mental health issues/clients` families and carers/the general public; (3) Organise, implement and evaluate health promotion interventions (in primary, secondary and tertiary care settings) according to priority health problems or needs assessment results; (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 (Mental Health) needs to have knowledge of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Health screening, learning model, social determinants of health and high risk health behaviours in primary, secondary and tertiary prevention; B. Epidemiology of mental disorders; mental disorder prevention and de-stigmatisation; mental health literacy and physical / mental well-being across the lifespan; C. Stress and stress coping mechanisms and resilience building; D. Health informatics, information and communication technology; E. Local and cross-territory promotion and disease prevention strategies in the advanced practice area and their impacts; F. Approaches and strategies for social marketing, health promotion and disease prevention taking into account the latest evidence, behavioural, social, environmental and cultural factors; and G. Knowledge of public health policy and management. 	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Mental Health) 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 interview, 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 prevention and health promotion programs targeting issues relevant to the advanced practice area; F. Using advanced information technology to design and deliver health education and health promotion to individuals and/or groups; and G. Devising de-stigmatisation, equal opportunity programmes in mental health care. 	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Mental Health) needs to have the following attitudes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Committed to advocating health; B. Proactive in identifying clients` health and learning 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; and G. Role modelling for health optimisation.

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) Provide guidance and counselling regarding symptom management;</p> <p>(9) Provide emotional and informational support to clients and their families;</p> <p>(10) Use human skills to enhance effectiveness of relationships;</p> <p>(11) Apply principles of self-efficacy / empowerment in promoting behaviour change; and</p> <p>(12) Promote and foster ethical practice and advocacy for clients.</p>			

Competence area 3: Management and Leadership

Ability	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
<p>An advanced practice nurse (Mental Health) is able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Liaise effectively with various team members and stakeholders in order to uphold the professional image; (2) Demonstrate effective managerial and leadership skills in the promotion of high quality standards and quality improvement in mental health care; (3) Assess the need for change and lead changes to make a positive impact on patient care and service delivery systems; (4) Participate in health care policy formulation in partnership with other health care team members and community sectors; (5) Manage risk and crises, and emergency situations specific to the advanced practice area; (6) Build the culture and systems to ensure safe and effective care delivery and work environments; (7) Lead the team to facilitate team processes and work across sectors and professions to cultivate a caring and supportive culture; 	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Mental Health) needs to have knowledge of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Advanced management and leadership in mental health care delivery/services; B. Concepts associated with the vision, goals, objectives, strategies and governance, and their implications for management; C. Policy development, implications and review processes; D. Politics in health care and mental health nursing; E. Financial and economic evidence relating to mental health care; F. Resource management; and G. Risk management and quality improvement in advanced mental health nursing practice. 	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Mental Health) needs to have skills in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Applying advanced management and leadership in mental health care delivery/ services; B. People and resource management; C. Project management; D. Building cultures for positive work environment, morale and performance to support advanced mental health nursing practice; E. Political astuteness in influencing and lobbying; F. Conflict resolution, negotiation and mediation; and G. Risk management and quality improvement for advanced mental health nursing practice. 	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Mental Health) needs to have the following attitudes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Positive and assertive towards challenges; B. Proactive in maintaining and promoting quality mental health service provision; C. Supportive and facilitative to colleagues and clients; D. Open-minded and objective, adopting a board vision and global view; E. Collaborative in building collegiality and team optimisation; F. Fair in addressing equity; G. Decisive in management decision; and H. Accountable and responsible.

Competence area 3: Management and Leadership

Ability	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
<p>(8) Optimise resource utilisation and facilitate the provision of an accessible, effective and efficient service to manage rapidly changing situations;</p> <p>(9) Enhance staff development and contribute to manpower planning to ensure smooth service operations;</p> <p>(10) Manage complaints / feedback and give suggestions for improvement in service;</p> <p>(11) Establish detailed implementation schedules, resource planning, achievement indicators, and monitoring mechanisms to support service development plans; and</p> <p>(12) Analyse situations critically and identify relationships among issues.</p>			

Competence area 4: Evidence-based Practice and Research

Ability	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
<p>An advanced practice nurse (Mental Health) is able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Utilise research findings to evaluate current practice and to identify service and practice areas for further improvement in mental health nursing care; (2) Appraise critically and reflectively health care research findings to support evidence-based practice in primary, secondary and tertiary mental health care; (3) Identify issues to initiate and participate in nursing research and clinical audit; (4) Lead and support the review and development of evidence-based guidelines, protocols and clinical pathways; (5) Use best evidence to enable practice innovation, adoption of advanced technology and shape decision making; and (6) Benchmark various mental health care programmes with evaluative outcome measures for improvement in clinical management. 	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Mental Health) needs to have knowledge of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Best available evidence and new knowledge in mental health practice; B. Relevance and appropriateness of various research designs in relation to the study objectives to generate evidence to inform mental health practice; and C. Implementation science to translate evidence into mental health nursing practice. 	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Mental Health) needs to have skills in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Critical analysis and interpretation of research findings, and dissemination of research outcomes; B. Application of evidence to substantiate/ negotiate/ influence advanced health care interventions in mental health practice; C. Using evaluation tools to assert and facilitate evidence-based changes; and D. Conducting clinical research and evidence-based practice. 	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Mental Health) needs to have the following attitudes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Proactive in initiating evidence-based practice and research; B. Inquisitive in identifying knowledge/practice gaps and new horizons for care processes; C. Creative and innovative; and D. Scientific in critically reviewing and adopting evidence-based findings.

Competence area 5: Personal and Professional Development

Ability	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
<p>An advanced practice nurse (Mental Health) is able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Monitor and reflect on their own emotional responses to client interactions and use this to further therapeutic interactions; (2) Accept accountability for increased responsibility in the advanced mental health care; (3) Maintain competence as an advanced practice nurse, identify their own professional strengths and limitations, and promote continuous development in mental health care; (4) Uphold nursing as a profession and act as a key member of the health care team; (5) Supervise, educate and support the socialisation of nurses, act as a role model and set exemplary standards for professional behaviours; (6) Articulate and promote the image and role of advanced mental health practice nurses to the public and other health care professionals; and facilitate collaboration and referrals in professional and community contexts; 	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Mental Health) 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 facilitating the growth of the profession and their members; C. Healthcare landscape, legislation and political climate for maximising advanced nursing practice; D. Government policy and strategies for mental health planning and development of mental health services; and E. Strategies in initiating change and quality improvement in mental health care delivery systems. 	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Mental Health) 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 (Mental Health) 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 nursing practice; C. Open to learning and extending their horizons; D. Committed to continuous learning in advanced nursing practice; and E. Supportive of professional organisations which develop advanced nursing practice.

Competence area 5: Personal and Professional Development

Ability	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
(7) Participate in legislative and policy-making activities which influence advanced mental health nursing practice and mental health services; and (8) Maintain active membership in professional organisations.			