

**Nursing Council of Hong Kong**  
**Core-Competencies of an Advanced Practice Nurse for Surgical 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

<b>Competence area 1: Professional, Legal and Ethical Nursing Practice</b>			
Ability	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
<p>An advanced practice nurse (Surgery) 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 for surgical clients;</p> <p>(2) Manage complex care for surgical clients with complicated health conditions and refer aspects of care to other members of the health care team where appropriate;</p> <p>(3) Conduct case management services to meet multidisciplinary and multiple health care needs;</p>	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Surgery) needs to have knowledge of:</p> <p>A. Social and life sciences relevant to advanced surgical nursing practice in different sub-specialties including periods before and after operations, during hospitalisation, home care after discharge and end-of-life care;</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 nursing practice;</p> <p>E. Professional regulation of advanced nursing practice;</p>	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Surgery) needs to have skills in:</p> <p>A. Assessment, examination, differential diagnosis, intervention and evaluation in advanced nursing practice in relation to acute / chronic surgical diseases, signs and symptoms / non-surgical intervention side effects / surgical complications management, nurse-led services;</p> <p>B. Analysis of complex situations in unstable / complicated contexts of congenital / traumatic / acute / chronic surgical diseases requiring high level professional judgements;</p>	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Surgery) 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 in attempting to introduce breakthroughs in nursing practice;</p> <p>D. Assertive in constantly striving for excellence in the professional role;</p> <p>E. Client-centred, humanistic and holistic in caring processes;</p> <p>F. Decisive when facing complex practice situations;</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 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 through expediting recovery after surgery, shortening the clients' length of stay in hospital and minimising clients' hospital acquired infection rates and surgical site infection;</p>	<p>F. Professional nursing practice and expertise on par with international standards in relation to the advanced surgical practice area, treatment modalities, interventional technology, survivorship, rehabilitation, measures to prevent recurrence; palliative and end-of-life care;</p> <p>G. Advanced nursing therapeutics and communication skills;</p> <p>H. Health / information technologies in relation to advanced nursing practice;</p> <p>I. Etiology, signs and symptoms, surgical interventions and non-surgical interventions such as chemotherapy, hormone therapy, immunotherapy, radiotherapy, pharmacologic management and behavioural modifications concerning surgical diseases, symptoms, and treatment-related acute and long term complications; and</p> <p>J. Updated surgical related surveillance reports and preventive infection control measures for pandemic diseases.</p>	<p>C. Problem solving in volatile / complicated / ambiguous environments requiring critical thinking;</p> <p>D. Undertaking advanced nursing therapeutics and communication particularly in the provision of different treatment options of surgical and non-surgical interventions;</p> <p>E. Client engagement throughout the treatment journey for clients with complex surgical diseases and post treatment complications;</p> <p>F. Interprofessional / Intersectoral collaboration;</p> <p>G. Application and adoption of health technology and information technology in health care; and</p> <p>H. Early identification and appropriate management of surgical clients to prevent complications, crises and deterioration of their conditions.</p>	<p>G. Accountable and responsible for advanced nursing practice; and</p> <p>H. Non-judgmental when caring for surgical clients with special needs.</p>

**Competence area 1: Professional, Legal and Ethical Nursing Practice**

Ability	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
<p>(8) Execute independent practice in the surgery sub-specialty areas of burn and plastic, breast, cardiothoracic, colorectal, ear, nose and throat, hepatobiliary and pancreatic, gynaecology, neurosurgery, ophthalmology, organ transplant, urology, vascular, stoma and wound, and managing clients with specific needs including complex wounds, special drains and catheters, surgical complications, pain and end-of-life care;</p> <p>(9) Articulate the obligations and rights of clients requiring advanced surgical nursing practice;</p> <p>(10) Rapidly assess client emergent surgical situations and complex diseases requiring surgical intervention through critical analysis, evaluation and data interpretation; and</p> <p>(11) Interpret surveillance and diagnostic tests and work in a timely manner with the multidisciplinary health care team to devise individual management plans.</p>			

## Competence area 2: Health Promotion and Health Education

Ability	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
<p>An advanced practice nurse (Surgery) is able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Integrate health status, disease prevalence, and scientific information to tailor make health education and health promotion activities for various target client groups in advanced surgical nursing;</li> <li>(2) Appropriately adopt and use the media, advanced technologies and community networks to promote health for different clients or target groups in advanced surgical nursing;</li> <li>(3) Organise, implement and evaluate health promotion interventions, particularly in relation to cancer awareness, surgical diseases, trauma prevention, medication compliance according to priority health problems or needs assessment results;</li> <li>(4) Collaborate with different stakeholders and service providers to address surgical related community health issues of individuals and contribute to policy development;</li> <li>(5) Appraise critically the effectiveness of health education and health promotion activities;</li> </ol>	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Surgery) needs to have knowledge of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Assessment of health status, social determinants of health and high risk health behaviours;</li> <li>B. Epidemiology and disease prevalence;</li> <li>C. Health informatics, information and communication technology;</li> <li>D. Local and cross-territory health promotion, disease prevention and early detection strategies in the practice area and their impacts;</li> <li>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</li> <li>F. Early sign and symptoms of different non-cancerous and cancerous surgical diseases including breast, cardiothoracic, colorectal, ear nose and throat, hepatobiliary and pancreatic, gynaecology, neurosurgery, ophthalmology, urology and vascular conditions.</li> </ol>	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Surgery) needs to have skills in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Community health and needs assessment of clients;</li> <li>B. Adopting and using advanced communication approaches in individual client interviewing, counselling, and empowerment, as well as in public speaking and presentation;</li> <li>C. Advocacy, influencing, negotiation and lobbying;</li> <li>D. Data analysis in health and epidemiology, needs assessments and evaluations;</li> <li>E. Planning and implementing surgical disease prevention and health promotion programmes targeting issues relevant to improve drug compliance and clinical outcomes; and</li> <li>F. Using advanced information technology to design and deliver health education and health promotion.</li> </ol>	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Surgery) needs to have the following attitudes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Committed to advocating health;</li> <li>B. Proactive in identifying clients' health and learning needs;</li> <li>C. Positive and innovative in meeting identified needs;</li> <li>D. Concerned about contemporary health issues affecting the individual and the community;</li> <li>E. Active in participating in activities for health education and health promotion at local, national and ecological levels;</li> <li>F. Committed to protecting the health of the individual and community; and</li> <li>G. Role modelling for health optimisation.</li> </ol>

<b>Competence area 2: Health Promotion and Health Education</b>			
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; and</p> <p>(8) Coordinate, collaborate and communicate with individual district health care institutes to provide appropriate, acceptable and accessible care to clients with surgical diseases.</p>			

<b>Competence area 3: Management and Leadership</b>			
Ability	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
<p>An advanced practice nurse (Surgery) 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) Assess the need for change and lead changes to make an impact on patient care and service delivery systems;</p> <p>(3) Participate in health care policy formulation in partnership with other health care team members and community sectors;</p>	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Surgery) needs to have knowledge of:</p> <p>A. Advanced management and leadership in health care;</p> <p>B. Concepts associated with the vision, goals, objectives, strategies and governance, and their implications for management to ensure best surgical outcomes;</p> <p>C. Policy development, implications and review processes in relation to advanced surgery;</p> <p>D. Politics in health care and advanced surgical nursing;</p> <p>E. Resource management; and</p>	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Surgery) needs to have skills in:</p> <p>A. Applying advanced management and leadership in health care and advanced surgical care;</p> <p>B. People and resource management;</p> <p>C. Project management;</p> <p>D. Building cultures for positive work environments, morale and performance to support advanced surgical nursing practice;</p> <p>E. Political astuteness in influencing and lobbying;</p> <p>F. Conflict resolution, negotiation and mediation; and</p>	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Surgery) needs to have the following attitudes:</p> <p>A. Positive towards challenges;</p> <p>B. Proactive and assertive with new challenges;</p> <p>C. Supportive and facilitative to colleagues and clients;</p> <p>D. Open-minded and objective, adopting a broad vision and global view;</p> <p>E. Collaborative in building collegiality and team optimisation;</p> <p>F. Fair in addressing equity;</p>

**Competence area 3: Management and Leadership**

Ability	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
<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 and facilitate the provision of an accessible, effective and efficient service; and</p> <p>(8) Enhance staff development and contribute to manpower planning to ensure smooth service operations.</p>	<p>F. Risk management and quality improvement in advanced surgical nursing practice.</p>	<p>G. Risk management and quality improvement for advanced surgical nursing practice.</p>	<p>G. Decisive in management decisions; and</p> <p>H. Accountable and responsible.</p>

### Competence area 4: Evidence-based Practice and Research

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

### Competence area 5: Personal and Professional Development

Ability	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
<p>An advanced practice nurse (Surgery) is able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Accept accountability for increased responsibility in the advanced surgical practice area;</li> <li>(2) Maintain competence as an advanced practice nurse, identify their own professional strengths and limitations, and promote continuous development in the advanced surgical practice area;</li> <li>(3) Uphold nursing as a profession and act as a key member of the health care team;</li> <li>(4) Supervise, educate and support the socialisation of nurses, act as a role model and set exemplary standards for professional behaviours; and</li> <li>(5) Articulate and promote the image and roles of advanced practice nurses to facilitate collaboration and referrals in professional and community contexts.</li> </ol>	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Surgery) needs to have knowledge of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Philosophy and scope of practice in the advanced surgical nursing practice area;</li> <li>B. Professional organisations facilitating the growth of the profession and their members; and</li> <li>C. Healthcare landscape, legislation and political climate for maximising advanced surgical nursing practice.</li> </ol>	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Surgery) needs to have skills in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Maintaining their own holistic well-being;</li> <li>B. Critical self-reflection for continuous improvement;</li> <li>C. Coaching and mentorship to nurture and prepare the next generation of nurses;</li> <li>D. Public speaking and presentation; and</li> <li>E. Professional networking and exploration of potential opportunities for intra- and inter-disciplinary collaboration.</li> </ol>	<p>An advanced practice nurse (Surgery) needs to have the following attitudes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Enthusiastic and positive towards life, human beings, society and health, safeguarding optimal health and promoting quality of life;</li> <li>B. Visionary and passionate towards advanced nursing practice;</li> <li>C. Open to learning and extending their horizons;</li> <li>D. Committed to continuous learning in advanced surgical nursing practice; and</li> <li>E. Supportive of professional organisations which develop advanced nursing practice.</li> </ol>