Frequently asked questions

FAQ sheet to accompany launch of the Career and Education Framework for CYP cancer nurses 2022 V3.0

This resource has been endorsed by the Royal College of Nursing until 23/08/23. Endorsement only applies to the professional content of the resource.

What is the Career and Education Framework for CYP cancer Nurses?

The career and education framework is a guide to the knowledge and skills you need at different levels of nursing practice in CYP cancer nursing. It has benefit on many levels from supporting professional development, through managers and educators supporting staff development, employers managing risk and quality, academic institutions for informing curricula, and patients and the public through consistency, quality and experience.

Is it new?

There has been a UK wide RCN competency document for CYP cancer nurses since 2005, although the earliest version focused primarily on chemotherapy competencies. There have been a number of updates and gradual expansion of the contents as the skills and knowledge needed in the specialty have grown alongside developments in treatment and care. This latest version has had a significant review and restructure to keep pace with modern cancer nursing.

Is it mandatory?

No but it would be good practice to encourage its use in your department, and some Trusts may choose to make the framework a mandatory part of assessment within their location. It may also be that defined sections of the framework are deemed mandatory in your location, such as the Systemic Anti-Cancer Treatment (SACT) competencies.

Where can I access the Framework documents?

www.cclg.org.uk/professionals/cyp-cancer-framework
These are open access documents.

Do I need to print all documents?

You shouldn't need to print any of the document. You can fill in your progress by using the 'form-fill' functions and drop-down menus in the Work Based Record Sheets.

If you repeat assessments and want additional pages, each section of the Work Based Record Sheets are offered individually so that you can download extra sheets as required. These are available on the url link above.

What do you mean by Levels of Practice

The Royal College of Nursing and Health Education England worked together to describe levels of practice that reflect modern nursing (and other non-medical roles). These are split into unregistered and registered nursing roles. Pre-registration (students), and Health Care Assistants / Support Workers are unregistered levels of practice. Nursing Associate, Nurse, Enhanced Nurse, Advanced Nurse Practitioner, and Consultant Nurse are all registrant levels of practice.

Why is it such a big document and how long will it take me to complete?

This is not the kind of document that you would be expected to 'complete' in a defined timeframe. It is a document to support your lifelong career in oncology nursing, helping to guide you through levels of practice relevant to your role for as far as you want to go. It is a big document because it describes the knowledge and skills that a CYP oncology nurse may achieve during a 30-40 year career.

What do you mean by levels of achievement of competence?

There are different ways of looking at whether competences have been achieved. For many things you can take a yes or no approach, but sometimes it is valuable to describe grades of progress. In the Framework we use Benner's 1984 Novice to Expert grading of the characteristics of competence. This approach values progress so that even when someone hasn't yet reached the competent level, they still have some idea of progress. After becoming competent many staff will have the opportunity or desire to take that practice to higher levels of proficiency, and this approach recognises ongoing development. These levels of achievement are Novice, Advanced Beginner, Competent, Proficient, and Expert.

If applied directly to nurses working in CYP cancer services, a student nurse rotating through the speciality may initially be a novice in the care of CYP with cancer. However, at the end of their placement, and having achieved some of the competencies in this, they may have achieved advanced beginner, competent or even proficient levels in some competencies. A student's previous experience in other placements should also be taken into account, as many skills are transferable across specialties. Alternatively, a nurse 'proficient' or 'expert' on a CYP cancer ward may move to a supra-specialist role e.g., research or late-effects and have new competencies to achieve. They may restart at 'novice' level and previous skills may be impacted by a temporary loss of confidence. Thus, students can be proficient, and consultants can be novices at different stages of career development, while working towards the desired level of achievement. Furthermore, nurses returning to CYP cancer care from parental leave or other long-term gaps in service may have to regain skills, knowledge and confidence, and this approach is supportive of assisting their gradual return to confidence and competence.

This framework aims to be sensitive and supportive, recognising how an individual will fluctuate through levels of competence in different circumstances. Supervisors will play a key role in ensuring nurses do not perceive a drop to an earlier level of competence as a negative step, using the change to guide action planning and offer support to assist development. Comparing self-assessment of achievements and supervisor assessments will help identify where individuals may need additional support.

Why is this a competency framework when other documents use the terms capability or proficiencies?

Competency deals with skills and knowledge, which are the topics covered in this Framework.

Capability includes having all the right tools and equipment. Capability refers to the extent to which a person can apply, adapt and synthesise new knowledge from experience and continue to improve performance. Fraser and Greenhalgh (2001). Nurses new in post or students may not yet have reached the higher levels of Benner's taxonomy to be able to adapt and synthesize, if they are acceptably at novice or beginner stages. This is why this framework uses competencies. Within CYP cancer nursing there is a companion Advanced Clinical Practitioners framework which uses 'capabilities' because nurses at that level of practice should be able to adapt and synthesize knowledge and skills, even when they are temporarily at novice or advanced beginner level when tackling a new skill.

Proficiency includes attributes (or people qualities and characteristics) such as being personable, warm, insightful or responsible, which this framework does not cover. **www.nmc.org.uk/standards/standards-for-nurses/standards-of-proficiency-for-registered-nurses/**

Do I need specific software to open the document?

This document is a PDF and works best when opened in Adobe Acrobat. You can download Acrobat DC for free from **www.adobe.com/uk/acrobat/pdf-reader.html**. However, you may need to contact your IT team in order to download and install it. You can also open the document in your browser (e.g. Google Chrome or Microsoft Edge), however this may result in some features of the document not displaying correctly.

What if I do need to print the document?

This document has been designed to be editable and the sections you can type in will scroll down to allow you to add more text. However, when you print the document you may not be able to see all of the text you've added. If you need to print the document, we would suggest that you print a blank version, complete by hand and use additional sheets to add evidence in WBRS (using the numbering system in the competencies to relate your evidence to the correct section).