

Wound Management Competencies for Nurses working in General Practice

The Wound Management Competencies for Nurses in General Practice were developed as part of the Nursing in General Practice Program at General Practice NSW and funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing

These Competencies align and should be read in conjunction with:

- *The Competency Standards for Nurses in General Practice* developed by the Australian Nursing Federation (ANF) funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing.
- *Standards for Wound Management*, 1st edition, May 2002 published by the Australian Wound Management Association Inc.

The Nursing in General Practice Competencies reflect the new Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council (ANMC) Competency Standards for Registered Nurses.

A project team, with representatives for the following organisations, developed these Wound Management Competencies. Members of the project team funded their own participation and time towards the development of the competencies.

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Wound Management Competency Standards for General Practice Nurses

Introduction

The General Practice NSW Nursing in General Practice Wound Management Working Party, Australian Practice Nurses Association and La Trobe University have developed Wound Management Competency Standards for Nurses working in General Practice. These competency standards have been designed to align with the Australian Wound Management Association Standards and the *Competency Standards for Nurses in General Practice* (which in turn align with the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council competency standards). The *Wound Management Competency Standards for General Practice Nurses* have been written for the Registered Nurse.

Background

Wound Management is a priority for general practice and the Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA). Wound management was endorsed as a priority when DoHA introduced a specific wound care item number (MBS item 10996) for nurses working in general practice, for and on behalf of a general practitioner, in March 2004.

To address the education and training of practice nurses in wound management, the Nursing in General Practice program (NiGP) at General Practice NSW (GP NSW) initiated and funded one day workshops for all General Practice Networks/Divisions across NSW.

In March 2007, the *NSW Nursing in General Practice Wound Management Education Working Party* met to develop wound management workshops for general practice nurses. The working party identified the need for general practice specific wound management workshops, as others offered were generally hospital focused, and not general practice specific.

The working party agreed that the wound management workshops should be available in three phases- each phase would build on the experience gained in the previous workshop, with the third phase designed as a skills acquisition package. The phase two and three workshops would provide opportunities for the presenters to tailor the session to meet specific needs of the practice nurses within their geographical locations.

In February 2008, GP NSW called a meeting of representatives from the Wound Management Working Party, the Australian Practice Nurses Association (APNA) and La Trobe University. This meeting was to discuss the feasibility of providing the three phase wound management workshops nationally through the APNA e-learning website. These representatives identified that there was a need to assess the competency levels of the practice nurses. As there were no nationally approved competency standards for wound management, including no standards for general practice, it was decided that the development of wound management competency standards for nurses working in general practice was a priority.

Wound Management Competency Standards for General Practice Nurses

The *Wound Management Competency Standards for General Practice Nurses* were submitted to and endorsed by the Australian Wound Management Association in February 2009. These competency standards are a guide for general practice nurses by which they could assess their need for ongoing professional development based on these standards.



The Wound Management Competency Standards for General Practice Nurses

The competency standards should be used as a framework to assess competence and should be read in conjunction with:

- the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council competency standards;
- the Competency Standards for Nurses in General Practice; and
- Australian Wound Management Association standards

Standard	Description	AWMA Standard
1.0	Professional practice	
1.1	Integrates principles of primary health care and wound prevention / early intervention, acknowledging the dignity, culture, values, beliefs, rights and comfort of the individual.	Standards 1, 2, 6, 7
1.2	Practises in accordance with nursing and general practice standards, code of ethics, guidelines, legislation and regulation.	
1.3	Actively seeks resources and opportunities to contribute to the enhancement of wound management in general practice and to address potential for professional isolation which may include regional, state, national wound association membership or networks to facilitate information sharing/ communication.	
1.4	Participates in regular, quality wound management education / professional development, developed and delivered to address specific requirements of the nurse in general practice.	
2.0	Provision of wound care	
2.1	Demonstrates knowledge and skills required to conduct initial and ongoing comprehensive assessment monitoring and documentation of the individual, region, skin and wound.	Standards 1, 2, 3, 4
2.2	Undertakes early risk assessment analysis identifying local, systemic and iatrogenic factors which may delay/ inhibit wound healing, and initiates, in collaboration with the general practice team, appropriate intervention strategies, referrals based on expected clinical outcome (healing, prevention, palliation).	
2.3	Demonstrates knowledge of investigations/ diagnostic tests, interpretation of results and communicates abnormalities to the general practice team, which is required for diagnosis, ongoing monitoring and evaluation.	
2.4	Provides evidence based information, resources (health promotion and education) to assist individuals groups and families to make health care decisions related to the impacts of wound care.	



Standard	Description	AWMA Standard
2.5	Modifies communication of findings and proposed wound management strategies/ interventions so as to be appropriate to the individual, groups and families.	
2.6	Facilitates collaborative decision making with the general practice team, individuals, groups and families relating to resources/ equipment required to provide wound care.	
3.0	Management of local systems	
3.1	Locates and utilises best available evidence to guide and inform wound management practice.	Standards 2, 5, 6, 7
3.2	Undertakes development, review and updates of practice systems including guidelines, protocols, documentation and templates at a minimum of every 2 years.	
3.3	Understands and uses information management technology and systems within the Practice for wound documentation, monitoring and evaluation to inform, guide and communicate clinical care management	
3.4	Manages resource availability and utilisation (including skin/ wound care products, dressings, equipment) to ensure optimal, cost effective local care with measurable outcomes.	
3.5	Collects information about practice population profiles and health shifts (local, community) - wound types, incidence, products used, time/ cost to heal.	
4.0	Collaborative practice	
4.1	Communicates nursing decisions regarding assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation of the individual and their wound to all members of the general practice team.	Standards 1, 2, 5
4.2	Collaborates with individual, groups, families, members of general practice team, in clinical decision making.	
4.2	Recognises limitations (of self/ and or general practice team) and supports/ initiates appropriate and timely referrals to other health service providers/ specialists.	
4.4	Liaises with relevant community and health care agencies in order to develop partnerships in the delivery of wound care that promote and maintain continuum of care.	