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COMPETENCIES FOR PRACTICING AS AN OCCUPATIONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH NURSE IN NEW ZEALAND NZOHNA, September 2004

INTRODUCTION

The climate of health care in New Zealand is undergoing change. Expectations on the part of employers, consumers, and regulatory bodies for health care providers to demonstrate high-quality, cost-effective and competent care are growing. This is shown by the passing of new legislation such as the Health Practitioners Competency Assurance Act, and changes in health delivery models such as Primary Health Organisations. The effect of this for Occupational and Environmental Health Nurses (OHNs) is that they will be increasingly held accountable for possessing the skills and knowledge necessary to provide competent care and produce desired outcomes. The NZOHNA, as a professional association, has the responsibility to not only determine relevant competencies in the specialty of Occupational and Environmental Health Nursing, but also to take leadership in developing strategies for verification of OHN practice against those competencies.

Occupational and Environmental Health Nursing is a specialty practice delivering health and safety services to employees, employee populations, and community groups. The practice focuses on promotion and restoration of health, prevention of illness and injury, and protection from occupational and environmental hazards. Occupational and Environmental Health Nurses make independent nursing judgments in providing health care services within this autonomous specialty.

The foundation for Occupational and Environmental Health Nursing is research based. The specialty practice derives its theoretical, conceptual and factual framework from a multidisciplinary base including but not limited to

- nursing science
- medical science
- public health sciences such as toxicology, safety, industrial hygiene and ergonomics
- social and behavioral sciences
- business principles
- management and administration principles
- environmental science

Occupational and Environmental Health Nurses encourage and enable individuals to make informed decisions about health care concerns. Confidentiality of health information is integral and central to the practice. Occupational and Environmental Health Nurses are advocates for employees and community groups, fostering equitable



and quality health care services and a safe and healthy environment in which to work and live. Occupational and Environmental Health Nurses have the responsibility to be informed about the latest technological developments that enhance service delivery and to develop effective communication skills.

FRAMEWORK

The framework for practice in Occupational and Environmental Health Nursing is found in:

- NZOHNA Code of Ethics
- Standards for Occupational and Environmental Health Nursing in New Zealand
- Guidelines for the Employment of Occupational and Environmental Health Nurses in New Zealand
- NZOHNA Competencies in Occupational and Environmental Health Nursing
- Cultural guidelines

COMPETENCIES

Competencies are guidelines applicable to every Occupational and Environmental Health Nurse in every practice role. The competencies address the continuum of practice experience and are measurable and stated in behavioral terms. Competencies required for one work setting can be very different from those required for another. The following are examples of factors that may influence the role and function of the OHN, the types of occupational health programmes to be provided, and the competencies required by the OHN to deliver such programmes:

- Size of the organisation.
- Nature and type of the organisation including physical facilities, the process or service, the mission, and the demographics and culture of the people who work there.
- The degree of hazard associated with the process or service
- The philosophy of management
- Legislated requirements
- Access to community resources.

Occupational and Environmental Health Nurses have responsibility to:

- Practice in accordance with the professional standards of practice
- Understand their role in the context of the work setting
- Take action in unsafe practice situations
- Keep professional responsibility to the client(s) as the highest priority
- Engage in self-assessment and reflection of their own competence



- Maintain cultural safety

ASSUMPTIONS

The development of these competencies is based on the following assumptions:

1. The OHN is a registered nurse who meets national nursing practice standards and criteria for registration in accordance with relevant nursing legislation, codes of ethics, practice standards, workplace policies and procedures, human rights legislation, privacy legislation and other legislation applicable to the workplace.
2. The OHN provides Occupational and Environmental Health Nursing services to workers and worker groups within the context of the organisation.
3. The area of practice for an Occupational Health Nurse in New Zealand includes providing health services to individuals and work groups within the work environment as well as nursing care, management and advice provided on health promotion, health maintenance, injury prevention and rehabilitation. Occupational and Environmental Health Nurses demonstrate specialist knowledge and skills in health risk assessment, including the physical, environmental, psychological, social and cultural aspects of work. Occupational and Environmental Health Nurses collaborate with and refer to other health professionals to promote optimal health outcomes for the working population.
4. The OHN maintains professional standards by participating in continuing education activities, participating in professional association activities, participating in performance evaluation activities and engaging in quality assurance and quality improvement activities.
5. The OHN understands and maintains confidentiality of employee health data.

(Adapted from Alberta Occupational and Environmental Health Nurses Association (1997))

GENERAL NURSING COMPETENCY



The competent level referred to in this document reflects core competencies for the specialty of Occupational and Environmental Health Nursing only. It is not intended to be used to measure competency in general nursing or any other nursing field. Competency in general nursing is covered and monitored through registration with the Nursing Council of New Zealand. An Occupational Health Nurse must maintain general nursing registration with the Nursing Council of New Zealand to practice as an Occupational Health Nurse.

USES FOR COMPETENCIES

The NZOHNA competencies in Occupational and Environmental Health Nursing should be viewed as a resource for developing:

- Self assessment tools
- Curricula for academic and professional education
- Curricula for independent learning
- Accreditation for educational programmes
- Certification processes
- Occupational and environmental Health public policy

They also may be a resource to help with:

- Career planning
- Recruiting professionals into the specialty
- Planning and evaluating occupational and environmental health services
- Hiring and evaluating job performance
- Linking with other domestic and international organisations



CATEGORIES OF COMPETENCY

The NZOHN has followed the lead of the AAOHN in describing nine categories of competency in occupational and environmental Health nursing.

They are:

1. Clinical and Primary Care
2. Case Management
3. Work Force, Workplace, and Environmental Issues
4. Regulatory/Legislative
5. Management
6. Health Promotion and Disease Prevention
7. Occupational and Environmental Health and Safety Education and Training
8. Research
9. Professionalism

Core curriculum refers to the core education required for practice as an Occupational Health Nurse. (AAOHN Journal, July 2003, Vol. 51, No. 7, pp 290-302).

LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT

There are three levels of achievement or competence in each category: competent, proficient and expert. Codes of ethics, standards of practice, competencies and core curriculum provide the basis for scope of practice, knowledge, skill and legal and ethical framework in Occupational and Environmental Health Nursing.

The "competent" level is the core for practice in the specialty. Because the level of achievement depends on work experience, certification, educational preparation, opportunity and continuing education, it is likely that practitioners could be at different levels for specific elements within each competency.

Competent

Describes the nurse whose confidence has increased and whose perception of the role is one of mastery and an ability to cope with specific situations. There is less of the need to rely on the judgments of peers and other professionals. Work habits tend to stress consistency rather than routinely tailoring care to encompass individual differences (Benner, 1984).



OHN example: The competent OHN has sufficient experience to recognize a range of practice issues and function comfortably in such roles as clinician, occupational health services coordinator, and case manager. This nurse follows company procedures and relies on assessment checklists and clinical protocols to provide treatment (Rees, 1996).

Proficient

Describes the nurse who has an increased ability to perceive client situations as a whole and, based on past experience, focuses on the relevant aspects of the situation. The nurse is able to predict the events to expect in a particular situation and can recognize that protocols sometimes must be altered to meet the needs of the client (Benner, 1984).

OHN example: A proficient OHN is able to obtain quickly the information needed for accurate assessment and move quickly to the critical aspects of a problem. Structured goals are replaced by priority setting in response to the situation. This nurse usually possesses sophisticated clinical or management skills in the occupational health setting (Rees, 1996).

Expert

Describes a nurse who has extensive experience and a broad knowledge base and is able to grasp the situation quickly and initiate appropriate action. The nurse has a sense of salience grounded in practice guiding actions and priorities (Benner, 1984).

OHN example: An expert OHN provides leadership in developing occupational and environmental health policy within an organisation; functions in upper executive or management roles; serves as consultant to business and government; and/or designs and conducts significant research in the field (Rees, 1996).

The NZOHNA wishes to acknowledge the assistance of the AAOHN and the AOHNA in the development of these Competencies.



Competencies and Performance Criteria in Occupational and Environmental Health Nursing

Category 1: Clinical and Primary Care

COMPETENT

1. Uses and documents the nursing process in care management.
 - (a) Acquires general, occupational and environmental Health histories.
 - (b) Assesses and identifies occupational and non-occupational injuries and illnesses.
 - (c) Develops a plan of care.
 - (d) Implements direct care and treatment.
 - (e) Maintains current knowledge of treatment modalities.
 - (f) Evaluates care effectiveness.
 - (g) Documents all aspects of assessment in care management.
 - (h) Communicates findings to the client and, as appropriate within legal/ethical parameters, other individuals.
 - (i) Educates clients with consideration for literacy and culture to enhance compliance with treatment plan.
 - (j) Follows up with client to assure compliance with treatment plan and modifies plan as needed.
 - (k) Maintains a list of referral providers and monitors provider arrangements for quality, timely access, customer services and outcomes.
 - (l) Refers client to health care provider(s) as indicated.
 - (m) Provides consultation when appropriate.

2. Assesses, diagnoses, and treats clients consistent with appropriate standards and laws.
 - (a) Functions within the scope of nursing practice.
 - (b) Functions within the scope and standards of occupational and environmental health nursing practice.
 - (c) Distinguishes between the scope of nursing practice and the scope of practice for both paraprofessionals and other professionals providing care and consultation with the site.
 - (d) Identifies components of other practice acts that impact nursing practice.



Category 1: Clinical and Primary Care

3. Counsels clients on reduction of risks associated with occupational and environmental health and safety hazards.

- (a) Assesses the client's knowledge in relation to work-related hazards and potential exposures.
- (b) Assesses the client's knowledge in relation to hazards and potential exposures in the client home and community.
- (c) Advises the client in relation to exposures, risk reduction and measures available to protect client health and safety.
- (d) Encourages client responsibility for use of preventive and protective measures within the context of the organisation's duty to provide a safe and healthy work environment.

4. Uses and maintains an accurate, complete record-keeping system, while maintaining confidentiality.

- (a) Uses a record-keeping system that documents health information in the client health record.
- (b) Uses privacy policies and procedures to maintain confidentiality.
- (c) Maintains and practices according to the legal parameters governing documentation and record-keeping.

Proficient

1. Develops and evaluates clinical protocols and practice guidelines.

- (a) Identifies and evaluates current resources for development and modification of clinical guidelines in protocols.
- (b) Uses knowledge of disease management and advances in research in practice in developing protocols and guidelines.
- (c) Collaborates with other occupational and environmental health professionals in the development of guidelines and protocols.
- (d) Evaluates the effectiveness of protocols and guidelines.



Category 1: Clinical and Primary Care

Expert

1. Facilitates the clinical professional development of other occupational and environmental health providers.
 - (a) Provides clinical teaching and preceptorship to students and other health-care providers.
 - (b) Provides clinical mentoring.

Competencies and Performance Criteria in Occupational and Environmental Health Nursing

Category 2: Case Management

Competent

1. Identifies the need for case management intervention.
 - (a) Establishes criteria and uses case finding/screening to identify clients who are appropriate candidates for case management.
 - (b) Identifies cases for early intervention.
 - (c) Identifies gaps existing in the service continuum.

2. Conducts a thorough and objective assessment of the client's current status and case management needs.
 - (a) Assesses and documents a broad spectrum of client needs, including physical and psychosocial, using data from clients and families, other health providers, health records, environmental exposure data, etc.
 - (b) maintains awareness of cultural, economic and social issues that may impact health.
 - (c) Documents the client health status and case management needs.
 - (d) Assesses informal and formal support systems.
 - (e) Assesses workplace, community, professional and/or provider resources.
 - (f) Assesses essential functions of the job to facilitate hiring, proper placement, fitness for work, reasonable accommodation and return to work.
 - (g) Reassesses the health status of the worker periodically.
 - (h) Assesses benefit, insurance and ACC schemes and their relationship to client needs that may impact recovery.

3. Uses and evaluates available health-care resources to achieve an optimal health-care outcome.
 - (a) Provides occupational and non-occupational case management consistent with current laws and company benefit, insurance and ACC schemes.
 - (b) Facilitates the participation of the client in designated plans for desired outcomes.



Category 2: Case Management

- (c) Coordinates and monitors care and treatment from internal and external providers.
 - (d) Provides appropriate education for the worker, family, community and other resource providers.
 - (e) Coordinates administration of case management among benefit, insurance and ACC schemes using legal, labour and regulatory guidelines.
 - (f) Implements effective return to work and modified work programmes.
 - (g) Facilitates rehabilitation, job accommodation or alternate work for occupational and non-occupational illnesses/injuries.
 - (h) Evaluates and monitors the plan of care to ensure its quality, efficiency, timeliness and effectiveness.
4. Collaborates with the client and others to use a multidisciplinary and culturally appropriate approach to achieve desired outcome(s).
- (a) Establishes communication plans involving internal and external parties appropriate to the case management plan.
 - (b) Develops a comprehensive case management plan including client goals, objectives and actions to achieve desired outcomes.
 - (c) Identifies community resources and coordinates referrals as appropriate.
 - (d) Engages in multidisciplinary consultation for complex cases.
 - (e) Uses primary, secondary and tertiary prevention strategies in planning to optimize each client health status. Documents the plan and current status of the client in the health record.
 - (f) Communicates status and plans others involved in the case while maintaining confidentiality guidelines.
5. Uses and maintains an accurate, complete record-keeping system, while maintaining confidentiality.
- (a) Maintains and safeguards client's case management records in keeping with established code of ethics and legal or regulatory requirements to assure confidentiality of health information.
 - (b) Obtains written client consent to release health information for each specific health condition.
3. Identifies changes in case management practice to bring about appropriate care and cost-effective outcomes.
4. Ensures client awareness and understanding of the role of case management and their responsibility within it.



Category 2: Case Management

Proficient

1. Develops case management programmes.
 - (a) Conducts review of current research and other literature in case management.
 - (b) Uses appropriate research findings of the development of policies, procedures and guidelines.
 - (c) Defines jointly with management the goals and scope of the organisation's case management programmes.

2. Manages the case management programme.
 - (a) Reviews case management process annually or more often if needed.
 - (b) Conducts comprehensive assessment of expenses and benefit, insurance and ACC utilization related to all cases being managed.
 - (c) Assesses and modifies workplace policies and programme protocols as needed.
 - (d) Determines and communicates role and responsibility of the client, supervisor/manager, case manager, human resources manager, benefit, insurance and ACC manager, health-care providers, third party administrators/insurers, and others in the case management process.
 - (e) Analyses and synthesizes quality monitoring and continuous improvement data to formulate modifications in the programme.
 - (f) Analyses trends and outcomes for success of case management programmes.
 - (g) Develops policies and procedures for the case management appeal process.
 - (h) Participates with internal and external groups/agencies to support or represent the case management programme.

Expert

1. Functions as the case management expert to internal and external parties.
 - (a) Functions as a specialist consultant for case management systems and on individual cases.
 - (b) Develops and conducts educational programmes to enhance the use of case management by health-care providers, management and clients.



Category 2: Case Management

- (c) Manages data and information systems for the purposes of research, trend analysis, programme redesigned and continuous quality improvement.
 - (d) Participates in marketing and research related to case management services and the programmes provided.
2. Designs integrated illness/injury case management systems.
- (a) Acts as a resource for the organisation in the design, implementation and evaluation of the case management systems.
 - (b) Develops illness/injury case management systems that consider client satisfaction; cultural implications, business needs of the organisation; client, employer and health professional desired outcome(s); and cost-effectiveness measures.
 - (c) Conducts outcomes research aimed at identifying best practices.
 - (d) Synthesizes knowledge of developing business trends and models to maintain integrity of case management systems.



Competencies and Performance Criteria in Occupational and Environmental Health Nursing

Category 3: Work Force, Workplace, and Environmental Issues

Competent

1. Coordinates client health screening and surveillance programmes and services.
 - (a) Conducts health screening and surveillance activities including occupational and environmental health histories and health assessments.
 - (b) Identifies the scope and distribution of occupational and environmental disease, illness, exposure and injury occurrences using individual health history assessments.
 - (c) Participates with others to develop prevention and control strategies designed to maintain client and community health and safety.
 - (d) Maintains appropriate documentation of health information according to regulatory requirements and company policies and procedures.
 - (e) Serves as member of committees.

2. Monitors the work environment to assure the health and safety of workers.
 - (a) Collaborates with other professionals to identify potential exposures for workers.
 - (b) Conducts and documents periodic worksite walk-throughs, focused inspections, records review, job hazard analyses and incident investigations.
 - (c) Identifies exposure monitoring techniques.
 - (d) Reviews exposure monitoring data, determines and documents appropriate action.
 - (e) Anticipates and assesses potential health hazards including review of resources such as Material Safety Data Sheets.
 - (f) Ensures availability and maintenance of appropriate control measures.



Category 3: Work Force, Workplace, and Environmental Issues

3. Promotes compliance with current laws and regulations governing work force and worksite safety, health and environmental issues.
 - (a) Identifies compliance issues consistent with local, and national laws, regulations and standards for environmental health and worker health and safety.
 - (b) Implements and evaluates mechanisms to address compliance requirements.
 - (c) Participates in providing worker and management training to reduce hazards and promote compliance.

4. Interacts with organisations in the community that provide health and safety resources.
 - (a) Identifies community resources available to assist with the company's occupational and departmental health and safety programmes and services.
 - (b) Develops relationships with community organisations to further occupational and environmental health and safety objectives.
 - (c) Participates in community and organisational functions relevant to occupational and environmental health and safety.

5. Identifies the internal resources, assets and capabilities which might be used in the event of a local or regional emergency and/or disaster incident.

Proficient

1. Analyses the risks associated with worksite hazards.
 - (a) Reviews documentation concerning production and quality control problems, illness/injury compensation claims, hazard management and control documentation, health and safety audits, inspection reports, accident/incident reports, exposure monitoring reports, health surveillance reports, and other relevant data to determine sources of risk.
 - (b) Performs risk assessments.
 - (c) Conducts trend analysis.
 - (d) Determines aggregate health risk patterns by reviewing scientific data and other informational sources.
 - (e) Serves as risk communicator to corporations, the workforce and government.



Category 3: Work Force, Workplace, and Environmental Issues

2. Develops, manages and evaluates population risk reduction and health surveillance programmes and services.
 - (a) Develops collaborative recommendations for prevention and control of occupational injuries and illnesses based on hazard identification and trend analysis.
 - (b) Develop site-specific control strategies based on hazard identification and trend analysis.
 - (c) Develops and evaluates strategies of hazard management.
 - (d) Designs methods to evaluate programme and service effectiveness and implement quality improvement efforts.

Expert

1. Serves as the occupational and environmental health and safety expert to corporations, government agencies, the community and other outside groups.
 - (a) Provides expert consultation on occupational and environmental health and safety issues.
 - (b) Offers expert testimony to governmental agencies and others on occupational and environmental health and safety issues.
 - (c) Advances the knowledge base in risk management and health surveillance by using root cause analysis, or other analytical approaches, and hierarchy of control measures.



Competencies and Performance Criteria in Occupational and Environmental Health Nursing

Category 4: Regulatory/Legislative

Competent

1. Demonstrates compliance with laws and regulations governing nursing practice.
2. Monitors legislative activities that may impact on nursing practice, workers, worksite and environment.
 - (a) Identifies and communicates impact of legislation/regulations on occupational and environmental health and safety programmes and services, as well as organisations.

Proficient

1. Engages actively in efforts to affect policymaking and practices governing nursing practice, workers, worksite and environment.
 - (a) Serves as a spokesperson to local community and governmental agencies.
 - (b) Acts to influence regulatory and legal processes through individual and collective action.
 - (c) Serves as mentor and resource to others concerning regulatory and legislative issues.

Expert

1. Influences legislative and regulatory public policy related to nursing practice, workers, worksite and environment.
 - (a) Serves on national committees, boards or agencies addressing policy.
 - (b) Serves as an expert in providing written comments or testimony.



Competencies and Performance Criteria in Occupational and Environmental Health Nursing

Category 5: Management

Competent

1. Coordinates the provision of occupational health services and programmes.
 - (a) Identifies the organisation's structure, culture and climate.
 - (b) Organizes and implements occupational health programmes and services.
 - (c) Uses professional and regulatory standards to promote efficient, effective and safe care delivery as well as safe working conditions.
 - (d) Participates in the formulation of goals, plans and decisions related to programmes and services.
 - (e) Contributes to the development of the budget for the programme or service.
 - (f) Participates in the design and implementation of methods for quality improvement and quality assurance based on data collected.
 - (g) Identifies and uses community resources.
 - (h) Determines and acquires support services, equipment and supplies to facilitate occupational and environmental health nursing programmes and services.
 - (i) Participates in decision-making related to acquisition, allocation and utilization of occupational and environmental health resources.
 - (j) Maintains knowledge of current technology, laws, trends, risk assessment and cost benefit analysis.
 - (k) Maintains knowledge of occupational and environmental health structure and systems.
 - (l) Participates in strategic and long-range planning.
2. Monitors the quality and effectiveness of contracted services.
 - (a) Uses objective and valid methods to evaluate contracted services.
 - (b) Recommends changes to improve quality of programmes and services.
3. Collaborates with the multidisciplinary team to promote the provision of effective health, safety and environmental programmes and services.
 - (a) Engages all appropriate staff, including management and other health-care professionals in developing occupational health and environmental programmes and services.
 - (b) Engages team members in problem solving activities and in evaluating programmes and services.



Category 5: Management

- (c) Participates in health and safety committees, team meetings and other appropriate team activities.
 - (d) Recommends changes in programmes and services to the multidisciplinary team.
4. Uses an ethical decision-making framework in all activities.
- (a) Advocates accessible, equitable and quality health-care programmes and services, including a safe and healthy work environment.
 - (b) Establishes mechanisms for identifying and resolving ethical dilemmas and participates in decision-making process.

Proficient

1. Designs and manages health, safety and environmental programmes and services consistent with corporate culture, business objectives and the needs of worker and community populations.
- (a) Develops position descriptions for occupational health services personnel.
 - (b) Determines staffing requirements of occupational health programmes and services.
 - (c) Participates in hiring and induction.
 - (d) Develops assessment tools for programmes and services to identify areas of need, value and importance.
 - (e) Collects and analyses data and identifies trends to establish priorities and manage programmes and services.
 - (f) Collaborates with management to provide resources that support occupational and environmental health and safety programmes and services that meet the needs of the worker population and work environment.
 - (g) Identifies resources for programmes and services.
 - (h) Develops goals and objectives consistent with the organisational mission, vision and culture.
 - (i) Uses knowledge of organisational theory, business principles and dimensions of professional practice in management role.
 - (j) Manages human, operational and financial resources to effectively implement health, safety and environmental programmes and services.
 - (k) Establishes standards of performance and conducts performance appraisals annually.
 - (l) Develops policies and procedures related to health and safety.



Category 5: Management

- (m) Collaborates with the internal and external multidisciplinary teams to facilitate change.
 - (n) Integrates research findings into planning for programmes and services.
 - (o) Develops methods to control the cost of occupational and non-occupational injuries and illnesses while monitoring quality and effectiveness.
 - (p) Conducts and documents evaluation of programmes and services, including measurement of outcomes, quality of interventions and cost benefit analysis.
 - (q) Determines appropriate information management systems and coordinates resources to facilitate use.
 - (r) Coordinates elements of strategic, long-range planning within the organisation.
2. Develops and manages the budget for programmes and services.
- (a) Develops, monitors and recommends the budget that provides for efficient and cost-effective programmes and services, including human, operating and financial resources.
 - (b) Provides adequate resources for ongoing staff education and professional development.
 - (c) Demonstrates effective use of resources, including cost benefits.
3. Negotiates contractor and provider contracts and evaluates effectiveness of programmes and services.
- (a) Participates in decisions regarding acquisition, allocation and utilization of programmes and services.
 - (b) Develops cost-effective contractual relationships with contractors and providers.
 - (c) Monitors and evaluates programmes and services provided and outcomes achieved.
4. Designs quality improvement methods to measure health outcomes.
- (a) Identifies appropriate standards, guidelines or protocols indicative of quality processes and outcomes.
 - (b) Conducts audit or reviews.
 - (c) Conducts or participates in benchmarking.



Category 5: Management

5. Communicates with management on health programmes and services outcomes and cost effectiveness.

- (a) Documents and submits plans to meet develops goals and objectives, targeted outcomes and other measures.
- (b) Develops and submits periodic reports that document budget projections versus actual expenditures, quality activities and measures, staff development activities, outcomes such as participation in programmes and services, staff participation in interdepartmental and interdisciplinary activities and trends related to injuries and illnesses.

6. Implements activities that improve the level of occupational and environmental health personnel.

- (a) Provides an environment for occupational and environmental health staff to participate in decision-making related to practice resources.
- (b) Determines and coordinates opportunities for in-service education, staff development and continuing professional education.
- (c) Creates learning opportunities for students in the occupational and environmental health setting.

Expert

1. Functions as an expert and leader in a consultative or executive role, both internally and externally, to business, academia, government and the community.

- (a) Advises clients on the recommended scope and focus of occupational and environmental health and safety programmes and services.
- (b) Presents options for the structure and delivery of occupational and environmental health and safety programmes and systems.
- (c) Directs strategic planning to develop comprehensive occupational and environmental health and safety programmes and services.
- (d) Conducts research studies, synthesizes results and presents findings to enhance occupational and environmental health and safety programmes and services.
- (e) Plans and directs marketing and promotion of occupational and environmental health and safety programmes and services and their value.

2. Establishes and communicates mission, vision, values and goals for occupational and environmental health programmes and services.

- (a) Determines the values.



Category 5: Management

- (b) Establishes the vision, mission and goals.
- (c) Integrates values, vision, mission and goals with corporate mission, vision and goals.



Competencies and Performance Criteria in Occupational and Environmental Health Nursing

Category 6: Health Promotion and Disease Prevention

Competent

1. Assesses the health needs of workers and worker populations.
 - (a) Performs needs assessment.
 - (b) Reviews the needs assessment results for programme planning.

2. Plans, implements and evaluates health promotion and disease prevention strategies and programmes.
 - (a) Defines goals and objectives using needs assessment data and the principles of levels of prevention.
 - (b) Collaborates with other disciplines and community organisations to target and plan programmes and services.
 - (c) Provides programmes and services that increase awareness of health issues and choices.
 - (d) Implements prevention, follow-up and referral programmes and services as needed and evaluates their effectiveness.
 - (e) Assists workers, their families, and communities to modify health risk behaviors.
 - (f) Collaborates with management to provide a healthy work environment.

3. Uses adult learning concepts in health education programmes.
 - (a) Selects teaching methods and strategies with consideration of levels of prevention, readiness to change, cultural orientation and learning abilities.
 - (b) Provides health education using multiple teaching methods and strategies designed to enhance motivation and change behaviors.
 - (c) Includes techniques that promote personal and community wide responsibility for health.

Proficient

1. Develops health promotion and disease prevention programmes and services.
 - (a) Assesses the psychosocial and physical environment, the organisation of work and the community to determine impact on health risks.

Category 6: Health Promotion and Disease Prevention

- (b) Analyses worker health data to assess and target health promotion programme needs for the worker population and the community.
- (c) Designs programmes and services using health behavior change models.
- (d) Conducts trend analysis targeting health promotion and disease prevention programmes and services.
- (e) Develops primary prevention interventions to reduce the risk of disease.
- (f) Develops secondary prevention strategies to encourage early identification and diagnosis of disease conditions.
- (g) Develops tertiary prevention programmes and services designed to restore health and productivity.
- (h) Provides operational direction for health promotion programmes and services for planning, staffing, organizing and directing consistent with organisational philosophy and culture.
- (i) Develops budget for programmes and services.
- (j) Selects, manages and evaluates contractors/health providers to ensure quality of health promotion programmes and services.
- (k) Plans and directs marketing of the health promotion programme to increase employee participation.
- (l) Critically evaluates and applies research findings in programme design.

Expert

1. Serves as an expert in health promotion and disease prevention to corporations, government agencies, the community and other outside groups.
 - (a) Develops organisational policies to facilitate and support healthy worker and community behaviors and environments.
 - (b) Provides consultation on health promotion.
 - (c) Advises clients on the recommended scope, content and resources of health promotion programmes and services.
 - (d) Recommends options for the structure and delivery of health promotion programmes and services, including benefit design.
 - (e) Develops comprehensive, cost-effective long-range plans for health promotion programmes and services.
 - (f) Conducts research studies and disseminates results to enhance health promotion programmes and services.
 - (g) Designs systems for integration of health promotion strategies.

Competencies and Performance Criteria in Occupational and Environmental Health Nursing

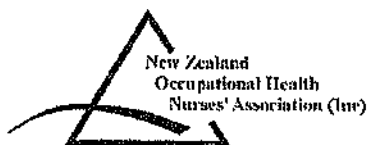
Category 7: Occupational and Environmental Health and Safety Education and Training

Competent

1. Implements occupational and environmental health and safety education and training.
 - (a) Identifies education and training goals and objectives based on worker needs assessment, company practices and regulatory requirements.
 - (b) Provides education and training programmes and services incorporating knowledge of current laws and regulations governing worker, worksite and community health and safety.
 - (c) Uses adult learning concepts in education and training programmes.
 - (d) Collaborates with other disciplines in regard to education and training programmes.
 - (e) Evaluates effectiveness of education and training programmes.
 - (f) Maintains education and training records according to regulatory and other requirements.

Proficient

1. Develops and evaluates occupational and environmental health and safety education and training programmes and services.
2. Communicates with management on occupational and environmental health and safety education and training initiatives, outcomes and effectiveness.
 - (a) Provides periodic reports that document health outcomes and return on investment of health and safety education and training programmes and services.
 - (b) Provides annual reports which include programme performance, goal achievements in future recommendations.



Category 7: Occupational and Environmental Health and Safety Education and Training

Expert

1. Serves as an expert in occupational and environmental health and safety education and training to corporations, government agencies, the community and other outside groups.
 - (a) Develops organisational policies.
 - (b) Provides consultation.
 - (c) Recommends options for the structure and delivery of education and training programmes and services.
 - (d) Develops comprehensive, cost-effective long-range plans for education and training.
 - (e) Conducts research studies and disseminates results to enhance education and training.

2. Educates occupational and environmental health and other professionals.
 - (a) Develops, implements and evaluates curricula appropriate to various levels of educational preparation.
 - (b) Synthesizes research findings in curriculum development.
 - (c) Contributes to the peer reviewed literature.
 - (d) Mentors and encourages others to contribute to the peer reviewed literature.



Competencies and Performance Criteria in Occupational and Environmental Health Nursing

Category 8: Research

Competent

1. Identifies resources that describe relevant research findings and applies them to practice.
 - (a) Reviews periodicals and other publications featuring research related to the field of occupational and environmental health and safety.
 - (b) Conducts research of the literature and other resources to address specific occupational and environmental health and safety issues.
 - (c) Applies research supported interventions to practice in cooperation with the occupational and environmental health and safety team.

2. Assists in identifying researchable problems.
 - (a) Contributes to identification of problems observed in practice settings.
 - (b) Works with the community to identify environmental health research issues or questions based on community concerns and interests.

Proficient

1. Enhances research skills using mentoring and preceptorship opportunities.
 - (a) Identifies experienced researchers in the practice or academic setting.
 - (b) Seeks assistance as necessary to identify researchable problems, conducts research investigation and interpret and evaluate research findings.

2. Identifies need for and initiates, or participates in research on practice issues or problems.
 - (a) Evaluates research studies to determine quality of study, reliability and validity of methodology and relevance to occupational and environmental health.
 - (b) Identifies researchable problems with consideration of current research priorities and other needs.
 - (c) Evaluates feasibility of conducting research.
 - (d) Protect the rights of research study participants.



Category 8: Research

- (e) Identifies potential sources of funding, if applicable.
- (f) Prepares or assists in preparing proposal(s) for peer review and potential funding.
- (g) Conducts or assists in conducting research.
- (h) Analyses and interprets data to form sound conclusions, seeking assistance as needed.
- (i) Communicates research findings through reports, articles or presentations.
- (j) Promotes application of findings to occupational and environmental health and safety practice.

Expert

1. Builds and validates the scientific knowledge base and conceptual models of occupational and environmental health and safety.
 - (a) Develops a programme of research building on previous knowledge and findings.
 - (b) Uses, tests and expands specific theoretical models in research studies.
2. Performs independent research and disseminates results.
 - (a) Serves as principal investigator for the research conducted.
 - (b) Disseminates findings through presentations, published articles in professional journals and other media.
3. Serves as a member for nurses and other occupational and environmental health and safety professionals in the research process.
 - (a) Acts as a resource for identifying researchable problems, conducting research investigations and interpreting and evaluating research findings.
 - (b) Facilitate involvement of other occupational and environmental health and safety professionals in the research process.
 - (c) Seeks opportunities to share expertise and encourage the novice researcher.
4. Influences occupational and environmental health public policy and research related decisions.
 - (a) Serves as the peer reviewer for research grants.
 - (b) Serves on national committees, boards or agencies addressing occupational and environmental health research policy.



Competencies and Performance Criteria in Occupational and Environmental Health Nursing

Category 9: Professionalism

Competent

1. Implements an ethical framework for practice.
 - (a) Recognizes ethical dilemmas in practice.
 - (b) Maintains confidentiality of health information and records in accordance with professional codes, laws, regulations and guidelines.
 - (c) Incorporates NZOHNA Code of Ethics and other professional resources into practice.
 - (d) Seeks consultation as needed for ethical decision-making and develops resolution.Evaluates resolutions to ethical conflicts.
2. Demonstrates cultural competency.
 - (a) Practices occupational health nursing in a manner which the client determines as being culturally safe.
3. Maintains scientific, regulatory and business knowledge appropriate to the nursing profession and to the specialty.
 - (a) Uses standards in practice guidelines and other relevant professional and regulatory documents as a framework for practice.
 - (b) Uses resources to obtain updated information.
 - (c) Implements scientific and business findings in practice and decision-making.
 - (d) Monitors laws and regulations affecting practice.
 - (e) Maintains professional behavior guided by laws, regulations, practice standards and ethical codes
4. Develops and implements a lifelong learning plan including strategies for academic education, continuing professional education and certifications as appropriate.
 - (a) Develops a plan for maintaining and expanding knowledge in nursing and occupational and environmental health and safety.



Category 9: Professionalism

- (b) Participates in regular continuing education activities to meet knowledge and skill needs.
 - (c) Plans for and/or obtains academic qualifications and certifications commensurate with learning plan.
 - (d) Reviews plan and adjusts as needed.
5. Evaluates own performance.
- (a) Establishes annual goals and objectives for work performance.
 - (b) Uses performance appraisal and self-assessment techniques to measure goal accomplishment, areas of strength and need for improvement.
6. Supports a research-based discipline.
7. Supports professional society(ies).
- (a) Maintains current membership(s) in relevant professional organisation(s).
 - (b) Participates in association governance and other related volunteer activities.

Proficient

1. Acts as a role model and mentor.
- (a) Fosters excellence in practice.
 - (b) Acts as a preceptor.
 - (c) Provides support and direction to colleagues.
2. Assumes leadership roles in advancing the profession.
- (a) Assumes a leadership role within the work environment.
 - (b) Participates in leadership activities in professional organisations at all levels.

Expert

1. Advances the profession.
- (a) Collaborates with leaders from other nursing specialties to address national and international issues related to nursing and occupational and environmental health nursing.



Category 9: Professionalism

- (b) Collaborates with other disciplines to address global health and safety issues.
2. Guides the development of policy initiatives that impact occupational health and safety.
- (a) Develops policy for occupational and environmental health and safety.
 - (b) Influences legislative/regulatory policy.

(Adapted with permission from the American Association of Occupational and Environmental Health Nurses, AAOHN Journal, July 2003, Vol. 51, No. 7, pp. 290-302.)