

# NIPEC CLINICAL CAREER PATHWAY



## SPECIALIST NURSE ROLE FRAMEWORK



Career & Development Model  
for Nursing & Midwifery



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# 1

## Introduction

As the largest professional group, nurses play a pivotal role in healthcare provision. They contribute to the delivery of safe, effective, compassionate and quality person-centred care. Their unique combination of knowledge, skills, compassion and dedication makes them indispensable in preventing ill-health and promoting and maintaining the health and well-being of individuals and communities across the lifespan.

In July 2022, the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) published new [standards of proficiency for specialist community public health nursing](#) (SCPHN) and [community nursing specialist practice qualifications](#) (SPQ) and associated [standards for post-registration programmes](#).

The new NMC post-registration standards and this *Specialist Nurse Framework* will assist all those Specialist Nurses working in community and non-community settings to professionally develop and shape nursing services<sup>1</sup> with a focus on:

- Improving population health;
- Enhancing safety and experience of care;
- Workforce wellbeing;
- Enhancing equity; and
- Ensuring value for all.

# 2

## Background

Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council for Nurses and Midwives (NIPEC) have compiled a suite of Role Frameworks which are building blocks to support career progression and professional development. Examples of Role Frameworks have been regionally agreed for a Nursing Assistant, Senior Nursing Assistant, Ward Sister/Charge Nurse and Team Leader, Registered Nurse, Advanced Nurse Practitioner and Consultant Nurse/Midwife.

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Health (2023) *Shaping our future: a vision for nursing and midwifery in Northern Ireland 2023-2028*. Belfast: DoH

This Role Framework has been developed for Specialist Nursing roles and outlines the key knowledge, skills, behaviours and educational requirements which enable high standards of care. It aims to provide consistency, structure, guidance and direction in relation to career progression. The Framework also provides clear expectations for Specialist Nursing practice across a range of roles and settings. These roles can span wide areas of health and social care aligned to local and national legal, regulatory, professional and educational requirements. This includes but is not limited to the delivery of safe and effective care for a range of people across the continuum of care with an understanding of the wider determinants of health to promote wellbeing, protect health and prevent ill health. All nurses and midwives on the NMC register must practise in line with the NMC Code.<sup>2</sup>

Although the NMC did not publish standards for non-community nursing specialist practice programmes, in discussion with key stakeholders including the NMC, the Chief Nursing Officer (CNO), Professor Maria McIlgorm, approved the adoption and implementation of the Community Nursing SPQ Standards<sup>3</sup> for all SPQ programmes provided by Approved Education Institutions (AEIs) in NI. This was to facilitate non-community nurses to have the same opportunity as community nurses to transition, using recognition of prior learning from their SPQ/SCPHN programme, to the level of Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP)\* if they wished to pursue this Clinical Practice career pathway.

This Specialist Nurse Framework in conjunction with the relevant standards, policies and guidance will support our specialist nurses to confidently and safely provide high quality evidence-based care within the Clinical Practice Career Pathway. For more information on Career Pathways visit our Careers Website at <https://nursingandmidwiferycareersni.hscni.net>.

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<sup>2</sup> Nursing and Midwifery Council (2018) The Code: Professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses, midwives and nursing associates. London: NMC.

<sup>3</sup> Nursing and Midwifery Council (2022) Standards of proficiency for specialist community nursing specialist practice qualifications (SPQ). London: NMC.

\* Registered Nurses do not require to have a SPQ or SCPHN qualification prior to obtaining an ANP qualification.

## 3 Who the Framework is For

This Framework supersedes the *2018 Career Framework for Specialist Nurses in Northern Ireland*. It provides a guide for nurses working in Specialist Nursing roles, regardless of the area of practice, on how to use the NMC post-registration standards<sup>4,5</sup> to support them with preceptorship<sup>6</sup>, revalidation, appraisal, supervision and career planning. Specialist Nurses should use this *Framework* in conjunction with:

- relevant [NMC post-registration standards](#)<sup>5</sup>;
- specific competencies for the relevant specialist area of nursing practice;
- other relevant competency frameworks, for example<sup>4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11</sup>;
- competency framework for all prescribers<sup>12</sup>; and
- relevant clinical practice career pathways.

A core job description has also been regionally agreed for all Specialist Nursing roles which is available on the Core Career Pathways section of our Careers Website at <https://nursingandmidwiferycareersni.hscni.net>

More information on the implementation and embedding of the post-registration standards can be accessed via the following links:

- [implementation and embedding of the NMC post-registration standards in NI](#);
- [relevant documents](#).

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<sup>4</sup> Nursing and Midwifery Council (2022) Standards of proficiency for specialist community public health nurses (SCPHN). London: NMC.

<sup>5</sup> Nursing and Midwifery Council (2022) Standards of proficiency for specialist community nursing specialist practice qualifications (SPQ). London: NMC.

<sup>6</sup> In addition to the DoH (2022) Preceptorship Framework, Health Visitors can also refer to the Institute of Health UK Preceptorship Framework for Health Visiting (Holland and Judd 2024).

<sup>7</sup> HSC and DHCNI (2022) *All-Ireland Digital Health Capability Framework for Health and Social Care*. Belfast: DHCNI.

<sup>8</sup> NIPEC (2023) *A Collective Leadership Framework for Nursing and Midwifery*. Belfast: NIPEC.

<sup>9</sup> DoH (2023) *Regional policy on the use of restrictive practices in health and social care settings and regional operational procedure for the use of seclusion Northern Ireland*. Belfast: DoH.

<sup>10</sup> DoH (2024) *Draft Regional Being Open Framework for the HSC Consultation Document*. Belfast: DoH.

<sup>11</sup> Health and Social Care (2025) *The little book of cultural competence: a glossary of key terminology*. Belfast: HSC.

<sup>12</sup> Royal Pharmaceutical Society (2021) *Competency Framework for all Prescribers*. London: RPS.

The Framework is also designed to be used by:

- nurses interested in pursuing a Specialist Nursing career;
- strategic nursing leaders, to develop the Specialist Nursing workforce;
- managers to inform workforce planning by assessing the competence of the workforce required to meet population health and service needs and identify gaps based on the assessment to support implementation of an improvement plan;
- commissioners of services to inform service development and service delivery;
- AEs to inform the development of learning opportunities necessary for Specialist Nursing roles;
- Regional Nursing and Midwifery Education Commissioning Group (ECG) to inform them in making decisions about learning opportunities to be commissioned; and
- people who use services and other HSC professionals as a guide to the core competencies required by Specialist Nurses and to assure the quality of governance processes and service delivery for all nurses practising at this specialist level.

## 4 Partnership Working

This Framework was developed in collaboration with key stakeholders (Appendix 1). The contribution of those who participated in the Writing Groups to update the Framework and the Job Descriptions were particularly valued. This was in addition to all those who contributed to the Focus Groups, that is, students and people who use services as well as Registered Nurses in specialist nursing roles in community and non-community settings.

# 5 Levels & Pillars of Practice

Levels of Practice<sup>13</sup> outline the expectations of roles at practice levels 2–9 for nurses, midwives and related support roles. They span from Level 2 Support Worker/Assistant to Level 9 Consultant Nurse/Consultant Midwife/Director/Professor (Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Levels of Practice**

Level	Role Overview
2	People at level 2 require basic factual knowledge of a field of work. They may carry out clinical, technical, scientific or administrative duties and provide safe, effective, person-centred care under the direction of a registrant.
3	People at level 3 require knowledge of facts, processes and general concepts in a field of work. They may carry out a wider range of duties than a person working at level 2 and will have more responsibility, with supervision by a registrant.
4	People at level 4 require factual and theoretical knowledge in broad contexts within a field of work. Work is guided by standard operating procedures, protocols or systems of work and they may have responsibility for supervision. BSc (Hons) or MSc (Hons) to Registered Nurse and Registered Midwife.
<b>BSc (Hons) or MSc to Registered Nurse and Registered Midwife</b>	
5	People at level 5 will have a comprehensive, factual and theoretical knowledge on registration. They use knowledge to solve problems creatively, make judgements which require analysis and interpretation, and actively contribute to service development, supervision or training.
6	People at level 6 require a critical understanding of detailed theoretical and practical knowledge, are specialist and/or have management, education and leadership responsibilities. They demonstrate initiative and creativity in finding solutions with responsibility for team performance and development.
7	People at level 7 have a critical awareness of knowledge and issues in the field and at the interface between different fields. They are innovative and have a responsibility for developing and changing practice and/or services in a complex and unpredictable environment.
8	People at level 8 require highly specialised knowledge, some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work. They are leaders with considerable responsibility, and the ability to research and analyse complex processes. They may lead policy, research, education or service delivery and improvement and have a clinical, management or education responsibilities.
9	People working at level 9 require knowledge at the most advanced frontier of the field of work and at the interface between fields. They will have responsibility for the development and delivery of a service to a population or leading research at the highest level of the organisation.

Source of Figure 1: Adapted from [www.skillsforhealth.org.uk](http://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk)

<sup>13</sup> Skills for Health (2010) Key Elements of the Career Framework. Bristol: Skills for Health.

The **Levels of Practice** reflect role development and progression similar to the Knowledge and Skills Framework<sup>14</sup>. The **Level of Practice** does not equate to the banding of Agenda for Change, which is related to remuneration.

The levels are aligned to four **Pillars of Practice**<sup>15</sup>: Clinical Practice, Education and Learning, Leadership and Research and Development (Figure 2). It is the underpinning knowledge, skills and behaviours outlined in the four **Pillars of Practice** which determine the **Level of Practice** of each role. This will enable a standardised approach to design and delivery of models of nursing and midwifery roles across service provision to support delivery of safe and effective person-centred care.

**Figure 2: Pillars of Practice**



Source of Figure 2: Adapted from Post Registration Career Development Framework (NES 2010)

The **Pillars of Practice** outline the breadth and range of knowledge and skills and behaviours required to practice safely and effectively across the wide variety of roles and settings. The competence statements are described under:

<sup>14</sup> Department of Health (DoH) (2004) *The NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (NHS KSF) and the Development Review Process*. London: DoH.

<sup>15</sup> NHS Education for Scotland (2010) *Post Registration Career Development Framework*. Edinburgh: Scotland: NES.

**Clinical Practice:** It is important that individuals acquire key clinical knowledge, skills and behaviours appropriate to their specific job to ensure the delivery of safe and effective person-centred care. This will support workforce planning and workforce modelling to enable the right people, with the right skills are in the right place at the right time.

**Education and Learning:** The pillars of practice will define educational requirements to support individuals to maintain and advance their knowledge, skills and behaviour throughout their career journey.

**Leadership:** The Leadership Pillar of Practice promotes the importance of the role of registrants in inspiring and managing practice, demonstrating professionalism and accountability at every level

**Research and Development:** This pillar focuses on advancing nursing and midwifery practice through evidence-based care, continuous learning and dissemination of practice to improve healthcare outcomes.

The four pillars of practice and descriptors for Specialist Nursing roles are presented in Figure 2. The relevant NMC post registration standards<sup>16</sup> are applicable to all Specialist Nurse roles, although the balance of each of the pillars may vary depending on the role and practice setting.

A **Staff Assessment & Development Tool** (Appendix 3) will help staff, with their line manager, reflect on their current job role and identify areas where further training and development could enhance or advance their skills in each Pillar of Practice.

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<sup>16</sup> Nursing and Midwifery Council (2022) *Standards of proficiency for specialist community nursing specialist practice qualifications (SPQ)*. London: NMC.

In addition to the educational requirements specific to the roles, individuals should also have access to a range of ongoing professional development activities to enable them to continue to enhance their knowledge and skills throughout their career. Induction specific to the role and area of practice will be completed which will complement the core education requirements for the role.

These include:

- Mandatory training;
- Learning through practice;
- Appraisal, preceptorship (where relevant) and personal development planning, and;
- Access to post graduate commissioned and non-commissioned training and development programmes available through a range of education providers.

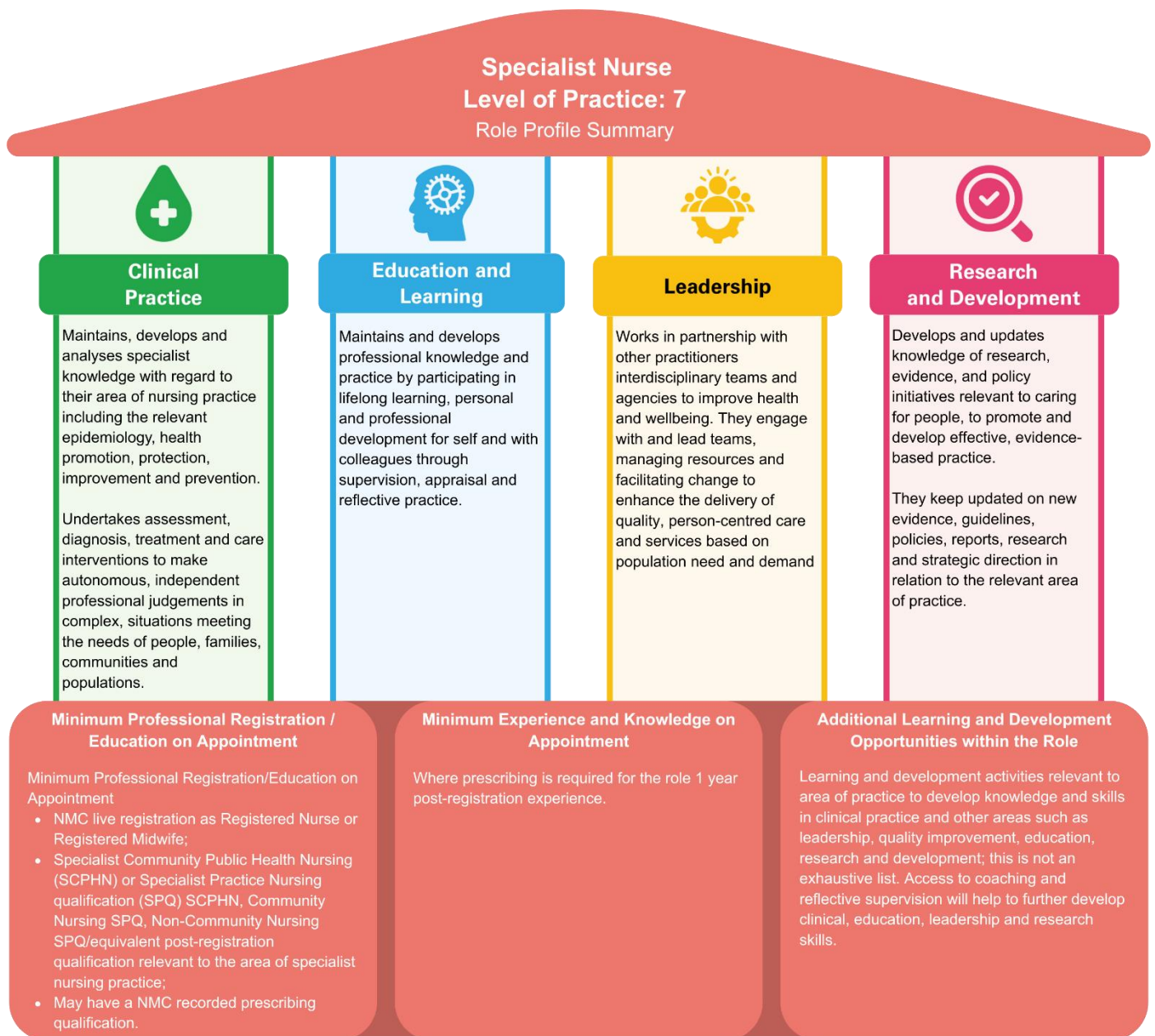
Further information and support can be found on the Learning and Development Section of the Careers Website:

[\(Learning & Development Framework | Nursing and Midwifery Careers NI\)](#).

**7** Knowledge, Skills & Behaviours for Specialist Nurse (Level of Practice 7)

A profile summary for the role of Specialist Nurse, Level of Practice 7, is outlined in Figure 3:

**Figure 3: Specialist Nurse Role Profile Summary**





# Role Descriptor

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Nurses employed in specialist nursing roles are guided by the NMC Code<sup>17</sup> and practice with higher levels of autonomy, knowledge and skill. This enables them to achieve their full potential and to optimise their contribution to meeting population health needs, delivering person centred care and improving quality, safety and efficiency. They also contribute to the support and leadership of the wider health and social care team and ensure the service is delivered effectively for the benefit of the people, families and communities they serve. Specialist nurses have undertaken additional education and learning after their initial professional registration to develop further knowledge and skills. The post-registration standards published by the NMC ensure the consistency of practice so that a higher level of quality and safety of care is provided.

Specialist Nursing roles involve more autonomous decision-making, in situations that require them to manage a greater level of clinical complexity, unpredictability and risk, in terms of the people they care for, the nursing care they manage and co-ordinate and the services they work within, which in turn may be integrated with other agencies, professionals and disciplines.



## Core Proficiencies for Specialist Nursing Roles

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The NMC post-registration standards of proficiency support nurses working in specialist roles to advance their clinical, leadership, research and educative practice. This will enable greater clinical autonomy, independent decision-making and leadership in complex and high-risk situations for the benefit of people, families, communities, populations and services. NIPEC has mapped the core post-registration standards against each of the four pillars that apply to all fields of community and non-community Specialist Nursing practice<sup>18</sup> and SCPHN

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<sup>17</sup> Nursing and Midwifery Council (2018) *The Code: Professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses, midwives and nursing associates*. London: NMC.

<sup>18</sup> Nursing and Midwifery Council (2022) *Standards of proficiency for specialist community nursing specialist practice qualifications (SPQ)*. London: NMC.

practice<sup>19</sup> (Table 1 and Table 2). This will help Specialist Nurses\* when preparing for revalidation, appraisal and supervision.

**Table 1: Mapping of NMC Standards of Proficiency for SPQ (2022) to the Four Pillars of Practice**

NMC Standards of Proficiency for SPQ (2022)	DoH Clinical Career Pathway Pillars
<b>Platform 1: Being an accountable autonomous professional &amp; partner in care</b>	Clinical Practice
<b>Platform 2: Promoting health &amp; wellbeing &amp; preventing ill health</b>	Clinical Practice
	Education & Learning
<b>Platform 3: Assessing people’s abilities &amp; needs &amp; planning care</b>	Clinical Practice
	Education & Learning
<b>Platform 4: Providing and evaluating evidence-based care</b>	Education & Learning
	Research & Development
<b>Platform 5: Leading, supporting &amp; managing teams</b>	Education & Learning
	Leadership
<b>Platform 6: Leading improvements in safety &amp; quality of care</b>	Education & Learning
	Leadership
	Research & Development
<b>Platform 7: Care co-ordination &amp; system leadership</b>	Leadership

<sup>19</sup> Nursing and Midwifery Council (2022) *Standards of proficiency for specialist community public health nurses (SCPHN)*. London: NMC.

\* All Specialist Nurse roles should have an associated job plan.

**Table 2: Mapping of NMC Standards of Proficiency for SCPHN (2022) to the Four Pillars of Practice**

NMC Standards of Proficiency for SPQ (2022)	DoH Clinical Career Pathway Pillars
Sphere A: Autonomous SCPHN Practice	Clinical Practice
Sphere B: Transforming SCPHN practice: evidence research evaluation & translation	Education & Learning
	Research & Development
Sphere C: Promoting Human Rights & addressing inequalities: assessment, surveillance & intervention	Clinical Practice
	Education & Learning
Sphere D: Population Health: enabling, supporting & improving health outcomes of people across the life course	Clinical Practice
	Education & Learning
Sphere E: Advancing Public Health services & promoting healthy places environments & Cultures & Evidence- Based Practice	Education & Learning
	Leadership
	Research & Development
Sphere F: Leading & collaborating: from investment to action & dissemination	Leadership



## Key Knowledge, Skills & Behaviours

### Ability to:

- Work autonomously and independently within a defined area of nursing practice;
- Work with and delegate to diverse interdisciplinary and interagency teams;
- Exercise a higher level of clinical autonomy, independent decision-making and leadership in complex, dynamic, unpredictable, and high-risk situations;
- Use advanced communication skills;
- Undertake comprehensive assessments, make differential diagnoses, if within scope of practice;
- Work independently and prescribe nursing care, treatment and interventions;
- Identify and mitigate risk, intervene early to promote the health and wellbeing of populations;
- Lead on identifying vulnerable people, families and communities at risk of direct and indirect abuse or harm and take action to support, safeguard and protect them by coordinating timely evidence-based care from relevant services when needed;
- Recognise, identify, respond, contribute to assist children and adults when they may be at risk of harm or in need of protection;
- Appropriately refer and discharge from specialist nursing episode of-care/services or refer to other services or agencies;
- Contribute to education, innovation and research and demonstrate the application of evidence-based practice;
- Undertake and apply the principles of health promotion, protection, improvement and prevention and recognise factors which contribute to health inequalities and wider determinants of health;
- contribute to policy and service development; and
- contribute to service improvement/quality improvement initiatives.



## Minimum Professional Registration/ Education on Appointment

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1. NMC live registration as a Registered Nurse or Registered Midwife;
2. SCPHN or Specialist Practice Nursing qualification (SPQ) (Community SPQ, non-community SPQ)/equivalent post-registration qualification relevant to the area of specialist nursing practice;

*Where prescribing is required for the role, include:*

3. NMC recorded Independent/Supplementary prescribing qualification\* .



## Minimum Experience & Knowledge on Appointment

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To be determined by HSC Trusts.



## Additional Learning and Development Opportunities within the Role

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Learning and development activities relevant to area of practice to develop knowledge and skills in clinical practice and other areas such as leadership, quality improvement, education, research and development; this is not an exhaustive list. Access to coaching and reflective supervision will help to further develop clinical, education, leadership and research skills.

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\* For those who already have NMC recordable prescribing qualification V150 or V100 they will be expected to undertake and successfully complete the V300 Nurse Independent/Supplementary Prescribing qualification, if prescribing is required for the role.

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# Appendix 1

In developing this Framework, the following have been considered:

- Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety (2014) Supporting Leadership for Quality Improvement and Safety: An Attributes Framework for Health and Social Care. Belfast: NIPEC.
- Department of Health (2022) Northern Ireland Preceptorship Framework for Nursing and Midwifery. Belfast: NIPEC.
- Department of Health (2022) Reflective Supervision A Framework to Support Nursing and Midwifery in Northern Ireland. Belfast: NIPEC.
- Public Health Agency (2022) Reflective Supervision Regional Safeguarding Supervision Policy and Standards for Nurses and Midwives. Belfast: PHA.
- Department of Health (2023) Shaping our future: a vision for nursing and midwifery in Northern Ireland 2023-2028. Belfast: DoH.
- Department of Health (2023) A Collective Leadership Framework for Nursing and Midwifery. Belfast: NIPEC.
- Department of Health (2023) Regional policy on the use of restrictive practices in health and social care settings and regional operational procedure for the use of seclusion Northern Ireland. Belfast: DoH.
- Department of Health (2024) Draft Regional Being Open Framework for the HSC (pending publication).

- Health and Social Care (2025) The little book of cultural competence: a glossary of key terminology. Belfast. HSC.
- Health Services Executive and Digital Health and Care Northern Ireland (2022) All-Ireland Digital Health Capability Framework for Health and Social Care. Accessed at Publications – DHCNI ty
- Holland A. and Judd M. (2024) Institute of Health Visiting UK Preceptorship Framework for Health Visiting. London: Institute of Health Visiting.
- National Health Service Employers (2010) Appraisals and KSF made simple – a practical guide. London: NHS Employers.
- Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council (2006) Competency Profile: Foundation Paper. Belfast: NIPEC.
- Nursing and Midwifery Council (2018) The Code: Professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses, midwives and nursing associates. London: NMC.
- Nursing and Midwifery Council (2022) Standards of proficiency for specialist community public health nurses (SCPHN). London: NMC.
- Nursing and Midwifery Council (2022) Standards of proficiency for specialist community nursing specialist practice qualifications (SPQ). London: NMC.
- Nursing and Midwifery Council (2025) Evaluation of Post registration implementation report. London: NMC (pending publication).
- Public Health Agency and Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council (2014)
- Job Planning Guidance Toolkit for Clinical Nurse Specialist Roles. Belfast: PHA.

- Public Health Agency (2022) Safeguarding Supervision Policy and Standards for Nurses and Midwives. Belfast: PHA.
- Royal Pharmaceutical Society (2021) A competency framework for all prescribers. London: RPS.
- Skills for Health (2010) Key Elements of the Career Framework for Health at [www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Career\\_framework\\_key\\_elements.pdf](http://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Career_framework_key_elements.pdf) [Accessed on 12 November 2025]

## Appendix 2

Name	Job Role	Organisation/Group Represented
Prof. Owen Barr	Academic Co-Chair	Ulster University
Paula Forrest	Trust Co-Chair	Belfast HSC Trust
Daphne Martin	Non-Community SPQ	Queen's University Belfast
Dr Gary Mitchell	Director Post-Graduate Education	Queen's University Belfast
Patricia Cosgrove	Workforce Nursing Officer	Department of Health
Sonia Glendinning	Public Health Nursing Officer	Department of Health
Janice Reid	Programme Director Specialist Practice	Ulster University
Wendy Mallon	Programme Director Specialist Community Public Health Nursing	Ulster University
Brian McEnteggart	Programme Director Non-Community Specialist Practice	Ulster University
Carly Thompson	Trust PEC	Northern HSC Trust
Pamela McBride	Trust Lead Public Health - Health Visiting	Northern HSC Trust
Margaret Bunting	Trust Lead Public Health - School Nursing	Southern HSC Trust
Elaine Smyth	Trust Lead Public Health - Occupational Health	South Eastern HSC Trust

Anne McCaffrey	Trust Lead Community Nursing - Children's	Belfast HSC Trust
Lynne Vercoe-Rogers	Trust Lead Community Nursing - Children's	Northern HSC Trust
Marion Orr	Trust Lead Community Nursing - District Nursing	Northern HSC Trust
Siobhan Donald	Trust Lead Community Nursing - General Practice	PHA
Ciara Hughes	Trust Lead Community Nursing - Learning Disabilities	Southern HSC Trust
Rachel Cunningham	Trust Lead Community Nursing - Mental Health	Western HSC Trust
Lisa Riddell	Trust Lead Community Nursing - Mental Health	Western HSC Trust
Marie Hannaway	Trust Lead Community Nursing - Cancer	Belfast HSC Trust
Debbie McKelvey	Trust Lead Non-Community Nursing - Haematology	Western HSC Trust
Mairead McClintock	Trust Lead Non-Community Nursing - Diabetes	Belfast HSC Trust
Karalyn Browne	Trust Lead Non-Community Nursing - Respiratory	Western HSC Trust
Jenny Nicholson	Trust Lead Non-Community Nursing - Emergency Care	South Eastern HSC Trust
Rebecca Thompson	Community Nursing Programme Student	Queen's University Belfast

Katie Johnston	Community Nursing Programme Student	Queen's University Belfast
Emma Gill	Community Nursing Programme Student	Ulster University
Suzy McNaul	Community Nursing Programme Student	Ulster University
Siobhan Donald	Career Pathway Lead	PHA
Elaine Robinson	Post-Registration Standards	NMC
Karen Bowes	Trade Union Representative	RCN
Ethel Rodrigues	Trade Union Representative	Unite
Janet Taylor	Trade Union Representative	Unite
Lorraine McCurdy	HR Business Partner	South Eastern HSC Trust
Karen Gordon	Consultant Nurses- Community Nursing	South Eastern HSC Trust
Sadie Campbell	Consultant Nurse - Community Nursing	Northern HSC Trust
Andrea Beeks	Consultant Nurse - Community Nursing	South Eastern HSC Trust
Anne Marie Marley	Consultant Nurse - Non-Community Nursing	Belfast HSC Trust
Tanya Zuliani	Consultant Nurse - Public Health	Belfast HSC Trust
Maureen Roberts	Consultant Nurse - Learning Disabilities	Southern HSC Trust
Ursula Murray	Service Manager	PCC
Fiona Bradley	Project Lead Implementation of Post-Registration Standards	NIPEC

Dr Carole McKenna	Senior Professional Officer Project Lead Advanced Practice Framework & Consultant Nurse & Consultant Midwife Professional Guidance	NIPEC
Dr Patricia McNeilly	Professional Officer Project Manager Career Framework Specialist Nursing	NIPEC
Cathy McCusker	Project Lead Career Framework Specialist Nursing	NIPEC
Francesc McNicholl	Project Administration Officer	NIPEC



**NI Career & Development Model  
for Nursing & Midwifery**

### **Staff Assessment and Development Tool Level of Practice 7 – Specialist Nurse**

#### **Getting Started**

The Staff Assessment and Development Tool is designed to help you reflect on your current job role and identify areas where further training, education, and development could enhance or advance your skills against the [NMC Standards of Proficiency for SPQ \(2022\)](#) or [NMC Standards of Proficiency for SCPHN \(2022\)](#)

Upon completion, you will have a list of specific knowledge, skills, and behaviours (KSBs) you wish to develop, along with evidence statements to support your competence. If you have additional KSBs, university modules, or competency statements to include, there is a blank section for this purpose.

To access the assessment tool, please visit the Career Pathways/Role Frameworks section on the Careers Website and select the tool relevant to your level of practice. [Learning & Development Framework | Nursing and Midwifery Careers NI](#)

## Sign Off

This tool is designed to support you in your appraisal and Personal Development Review (PDR) process, while also providing evidence of your ongoing continued professional development (CPD). There is a Sign Off template at the end of the tool to enable this, if relevant.

## Self-assessment of Knowledge, Skills and Behaviour (KSB) Statements

### Select a Platform (SPQ) or Sphere (SCPHN) of Practice to review

You can complete your assessment of the platforms all at once or separately, there is no set order for this.

### Self-assessment of Proficiencies within each of the seven platforms

In relation to your role, select the Pillars of Practice to review. You can complete this exercise for all 4 pillars at once or individually, there is no set order for this.

### *Best Practice Tips:*

Assess yourself against the knowledge, skills and behaviours required in relation to each Pillar of Practice.

For each, rate yourself using the following scale:

1. You need a lot of development
2. You need some development
3. You feel you are well developed

You should assess yourself against ALL the knowledge, skills and behaviour (KSB) statements relevant to your role/level of practice for each of the four pillars. As you assess yourself, consider how you might demonstrate proficiency and provide evidence. Your thoughtful evaluation will help guide your development plan. There is an Action Planning and Priority Rating Tool that you may find helpful to support you.

## Evidence

If you have rated yourself as having a development need in this area, make a brief action note on “how” you would anticipate meeting this development need and any evidence you may already have. This might be detailing what you are going to do, what actions you might need to take, how you are going to do this and when. You may find [the action planning and priority rating included in the assessment tool](#) helpful with this.

You need to provide evidence for ratings **1 & 2** only.

The evidence should be clear and concise and relevant to the proficiencies in your area of practice. It should contain detail of the relevant learning and how this is applied in your practice. Evidence can be sourced from many areas of your practice like a reflection, training undertaken, supervised practice, reflective discussion/clinical supervision activity, feedback from colleagues and/or service users, reports.

For more information visit the Continuous Professional Development section of the Careers Website: [Learning & Development Framework | Nursing and Midwifery Careers NI](#)



## STAFF ASSESSMENT AND DEVELOPMENT TOOL - LEVEL 7

Please review the relevant **NMC SPQ** proficiencies for your role and rate yourself using the rating scale. Give careful thought to your assessment and how you might demonstrate evidence of the proficiency. Identify which of the four pillars of practice the platform and proficiency are linked to, i.e. Pillar - Clinical Practice (CP); Pillar - Education and Learning (E&L); Pillar - Leadership (L); and Pillar - Research and Development (R&D).



1.	I need a lot of development
2.	I need some development
3.	I feel I am well developed

NMC Standards of Proficiency for SPQ (2022) Platform	Pillar of Practice	Rating			Evidence to support achievement	How you will achieve this outcome
		1	2	3		
Platform 1: Being an accountable autonomous professional & partner in care	CP					

NMC Standards of Proficiency for SPQ (2022) Platform	Pillar of Practice	Rating			Evidence to support achievement	How you will achieve this outcome
		1	2	3		
Platform 2: Promoting health & wellbeing & preventing ill health	CP					
	E&L					
Platform 3: Assessing people's abilities & needs & planning care	CP					
	E&L					
Platform 4: Providing and evaluating evidence-based care	E&L					
	R&D					
Platform 5: Leading, supporting & managing teams	E&L					
	L					

NMC Standards of Proficiency for SPQ (2022) Platform	Pillar of Practice	Rating			Evidence to support achievement	How you will achieve this outcome
		1	2	3		
Platform 6: Leading improvements in safety & quality of care	E&L					
	L					
	R&D					
Platform 7: Care co-ordination & system leadership	L					

## STAFF ASSESSMENT AND DEVELOPMENT TOOL - LEVEL 7

Please review the relevant **NMC SCPHN** proficiencies for your role and rate yourself using the rating scale. Give careful thought to your assessment and how you might demonstrate evidence of the proficiency. Identify which of the four pillars of practice the sphere and proficiency are linked to, i.e. Pillar - Clinical Practice (CP); Pillar - Education and Learning (E&L); Pillar - Leadership (L); and Pillar - Research and Development (R&D).



1.	I need a lot of development
2.	I need some development
3.	I feel I am well developed

NMC Standards of Proficiency for SPQ (2022) Platform	Pillar of Practice	Rating			Evidence to support achievement	How you will achieve this outcome
		1	2	3		
Sphere A: Autonomous SCPHN Practice	CP					

NMC Standards of Proficiency for SPQ (2022) Platform	Pillar of Practice	Rating			Evidence to support achievement	How you will achieve this outcome
		1	2	3		
Sphere B: Transforming SCPHN practice: evidence research evaluation & translation	E&L					
	R&D					
Sphere C: Promoting Human Rights & addressing inequalities: assessment, surveillance & intervention	CP					
	E&L					
Sphere D: Population Health: enabling, supporting & improving health outcomes of people across the life course	CP					
	E&L					

NMC Standards of Proficiency for SPQ (2022) Platform	Pillar of Practice	Rating			Evidence to support achievement	How you will achieve this outcome
		1	2	3		
Sphere E: Advancing Public Health services & promoting healthy places environments & Cultures & Evidence- Based Practice	E&L					
	L					
	R&D					
Sphere F: Leading & collaborating: from investment to action & dissemination	L					

## Action planning and priority rating

You should now take some time to reflect on your learning needs assessment and complete the action planning and priority rating tool to assist you in planning and prioritising your development.

It can also be helpful to discuss your learning and development needs with your line manager or practice assessor and update your personal development plan (PDP).

Platform or Sphere & Proficiency	Pillar of Practice	Action of "how" to achieve this KSB	Support required within Practice	Time Frames

**Sign off**

Name	Date of review	Comments
<b>Sign off</b>		
Name	Date	Job title
Name	Date	Job title
Name	Date	Job title



Career & Development Model  
for Nursing & Midwifery

Published November 2025

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