

**National Institutes of Health  
Warren Grant Magnuson Clinical Center  
Nursing & Patient Care Services**

**POLICY:** Competency Evaluation

Purpose:

To outline specific competencies required of each role and the frequency of competency evaluation.

Definition of Terms

Clinical Center Competencies – These competencies are required of all employees regardless of role.

Role Competencies -- These competencies are required of all members of a specific role group (e.g., clinical research nurse, research support assistant, manager).

Program of Care Competencies -- These competencies are required to address the needs of specific patient populations (e.g., critical care, pediatrics).

Patient Care Staff – Employees who provide direct patient care (see Appendix 1 for Role Designations).

Patient Contact Staff– Employees who interact with patients and family but do not provide direct patient care.

Non Patient Contact Staff – Employees who provide administrative support to the work of Nursing and Patient Care Services and do not have contact with patients.

Competency Development

The development of competencies is a dynamic process involving the managers, the clinical specialists, the nurse educators, the clinical educators and the nursing staff. The development of new technologies, the introduction of new research protocols, new standards of practice and the introduction of evidence-based treatment strategies will guide the determination of new competencies and mandatory education requirements.

Competencies also may be added in response to the evaluation of data from various quality monitors, or from performance issues identified by managers, clinical nurse specialists, nurse educators, or other sources. Nursing leadership will review data from the following sources at least annually to determine if there is a need to target education and/or performance evaluation to address an identified problem:

- quality management data (including occurrence reports)
- patient/family/staff satisfaction surveys
- documentation reviews
- feedback from nurse educators

To ensure consistency in the structure and language of competencies, all newly developed competencies will be reviewed by the respective Service Chief. Input will be sought from the appropriate Clinical Center experts. Competencies will be approved by the respective Service Chief prior to implementation.

### Competency Evaluation

Staff competency will be evaluated by either competency assessment or competency validation:

- **Competency assessment** is an ongoing supervisory process that occurs as managers and senior clinical staff assess care given by each nurse through performance observation, documentation reviews, review of PI data, patient and peer feedback received and other data sources.
- **Competency validation** requires that each behavioral indicator of the competency be observed through demonstration, documentation review, test/quiz, verbalization or other method by the nurse manager or designee. See Appendix 2 for an example of a Competency Validation Form.

Competency assessment and validation are documented annually as part of the employee performance evaluation process, and more frequently if concerns arise with an employee's performance. Each competency is identified as being either assessed or validated on the Annual Competency Evaluation Record (see Appendix 3). If the competency was validated, there will be the accompanying Competency Validation Form. The manager is responsible for forwarding Orientation Competency Validation Records, Annual Competency Evaluation Records, Competency Validation Forms and required training and certification documentation to the appropriate Service Chief's office for filing in each employee's personnel file.

### Initial Competency Validation

Clinical Center Competencies, Role Competencies and Program of Care Competencies will be validated during the employee's orientation and documented on the Orientation Competency Validation Record (See Appendix 4). Program of Care Competencies will be met prior to independent practice. When clinical opportunities prohibit a Program of Care Competency from being validated prior to the end of orientation, the employee will be precepted in order to validate that competency when the opportunity arises. A new Clinical Center employee must complete all Program of Care Competencies prior to the end of the probationary period. If the new employee is unable to meet all competencies during the 1 year probationary period, administrative action may be taken. An employee, who is initially unable to meet the competency requirements of his or her position, may be offered the opportunity to develop an action plan at the discretion of the manager.

### Ongoing Training, Competency Validation and Assessment

- All employees are required to comply with Clinical Center and regulatory agencies' annual training and certification requirements (i.e., OSHA, equipment quality controls, etc.). Clinical Center competencies are re-validated annually according the Clinical Center Policy.
- On an annual basis, each SCRN, CRN and LPN will be re-validated on Clinical Emergency Response competency.

- Each Patient Care Unit will determine a minimum of two additional competencies (from either role or program of care competencies) for yearly re-validation for SCRNs, CRNs and LPNs. The competencies to be re-validated each year will be chosen based on review of quality indicators and/or those that fit the criteria of being high-risk, low-volume, problem prone, or of a new/revised process or procedure. The competencies may change from year to year. The manager is responsible for providing their respective competency list for annual re-validation to the appropriate Service Chief. The manager then reviews this list with each clinical staff member when the next year's performance plan is signed.
- In addition to unit defined competencies for re-validation, the Nurse Manager may define additional competencies for validation based on assessment of individual or group performance.
- All remaining Role Competencies and Program of Care Competencies will be assessed annually and documented on the Annual Competency Evaluation Record.

An employee who does not maintain competence after an action plan is carried out will be placed on a Performance Improvement Plan by the manager. If the employee is not able to meet competency requirements, he or she may be reassigned to an area commensurate with level of competence or administrative action may be taken.

At the completion of each evaluation cycle, each manager will summarize the learning needs identified during the performance evaluation process and competency review. A summarized list will be forwarded to the respective Service Chief. Service level Nurse Educators will collate learning needs identified by each service into one list for Nursing & Patient Care Services. The Nurse Educators will then design educational opportunities/experiences to address any identified trends.

Each year the service level Nurse Educators, in conjunction with the Nursing Executive Leadership group, will evaluate the effectiveness of the competency assessment and validation process.

Addendum:

- Appendix (1) Role Designations
- Appendix (2) Competency Validation Form
- Appendix (3) Annual Competency Evaluation Record
- Appendix (4) Orientation Competency Validation Record

Reference:               Nursing & Patient Care Services Competency Program 2004  
                               Nursing Department Competence Assessment and Performance  
                               Evaluation (CAPE)  
                               NIH Clinical Center Policy: Staff Competency Feb. 2000

Approved:

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 Clare E. Hastings, RN, Ph.D, FAAN  
 Chief, Nursing and Patient Care Services

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 NURSshare: Policies\ Competency Evaluation

## **Nursing and Patient Care Services Role Designations**

<b>Patient Care</b>	<b>Patient Contact</b>	<b>Non Patient Contact</b>
Clinical Research Nurse	Clinical Support Administrator	Administrative Technician
Licensed Practical Nurse	Clinic Support Assistant	Clerk/Office Automation
Nurse Administrative Coordinator	Nurse Consultant (role based)	Information Technology Specialist
Patient Care Technician	Nurse Specialist (role based)	Management & Program Analyst
Health Technician	Nurse Manager	Nurse Consultant (role based)
Research Support Assist/Pt Care	Research Support Assistant	Program Assistant
Behavioral Health Tech	Admissions Assistant	Program Support Assistant
Senior Clinical Research Nurse (role based)	Clinic Clerk	Program Support Specialist
Transplant Coordinator	Chief Nurse Officer	Secretary
Clinical Nurse Specialist	Chief, Nursing Service	
Nurse Specialist (Research) (role based)	Patient Appointment Assistant	
Nurse Practitioner	Patient Program Assistant	
Nursing Assistant	Program Director	
	Nurse Specialist (Research) (role based)	
	Senior Clinical Research Nurse (role based)	
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