



Notes for Completion of Competence Assessment

These notes are intended to assist senior nurses in completing a competence assessment.

Preparing for Competence Assessment

The NCNZ (2011) suggests you prepare for competence assessment by:

- Plan the assessment (including time for observation of practice, discussion and feedback)
- Make sure you understand the competencies and indicators
- Have a pre-assessment discussion with the nurse to clarify expectations
- Gather evidence – you need enough evidence to be sure the competency is met
- Discuss the assessment with the nurses' line manager

If you are uncertain as to requirements it may be helpful to discuss this with colleagues in your area with knowledge and experience (NCNZ 2011).

Types of evidence you might need may include the following (NCNZ, 2011):

- Direct observation of practice
- An interview with him/her to ascertain nursing care in different scenarios
- Evidence provided by him/her including self assessments, exemplars or examples of practice
- Reports from other nurses and other health professionals

Assessments should be comprehensive and not solely based on observation, you should include information gathered from at least 3 different sources to enhance the reliability of the conclusions reached (NCNZ, 2011).

Writing the competence assessment

Competence assessors should reflect on what a 'competent', 'proficient', 'expert' or 'senior' nurses is and how they practice in your area (see page 34 of HVDHB PDRP handbook for advice). You may comment on knowledge, skill, behaviour, attitudes and values and **must** assess each competency and each comment you make needs to provide a specific example from practice. Rephrasing the competency or indicator is not acceptable and may mean the nurse is not successful (NCNZ, 2011).

2.2 Undertakes a comprehensive and accurate nursing assessment of clients in a variety of settings.

I have worked with Alice while she assesses clients and am always impressed by the depth of her assessment. Alice performs a thorough assessment and always personalises the assessment to the clients needs. She recently sought my advice regarding an elderly man with COPD and dementia. She had noted a high ETOT intake and was concerned he was showing signs of withdrawal. Following the CIWA scale she suggested he needed a minder which I arranged. This is one example of her consistently good assessment skills which have been noted to me by medical and allied health staff also.

At the end of the assessment ensure you give feedback and discuss areas for improvement and development (commend, recommend, commend) (NCNZ, 2011). Always ensure you sign the assessment and write met/not met by each.

For more help contact Karen Shaw on 5709978 or Karen.Shaw@HuttvalleyDHB.org.nz

References: Nursing Council of New Zealand.(2011). Guidelines for Competence Assessment. Retrieved from <http://www.nursingcouncil.org.nz/download/97/comp-assess-feb11.pdf>