



Royal College  
of Nursing

# Occupational health nursing: career and competence development

RCN guidance



## Foreword

The introduction of *Agenda for Change* (AfC) (DH, 2003a) and the *NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework* (KSF) (DH, 2004) has affected the career and pay progression of occupational health nurses working in both the NHS and the independent sector. The original Royal College of Nursing (RCN) publication for occupational health nurses (RCN, 2004) used the competences identified through consultation with occupational health nurses themselves and the professions allied to occupational health, and mapped them against the six core NHS KSF competences and seven of the specific KSF competences. It also mapped them against the ten public health proficiencies required by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) for entry into Part 3 of the Professional Register (see Appendix 1).

This document has now been reviewed and updated to complement the RCN's *Integrated Core Career and Competence Framework for Registered Nurses* (2010). It also takes account of recent policy and practice developments including the introduction of the Department for Work and Pensions' (DWP) *Statement of Fitness for Work* (2010) and the public health strategy outlined in the *Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Our Strategy for Public Health in England White Paper* (DH, 2010). Our framework also acknowledges the current policy and practice emphasis on case management and rehabilitation, with the recognition that occupational health practice provides the key specialist link for knowledge and expertise of health in the workplace. Occupational health nurses have the clinical expertise to link primary care with the workplace and are well placed to support and motivate employees to achieve maximum participation in work. The rewritten document has, therefore, incorporated the relevant recommendations from Dame Carol Black's *Review of the Health of the Working Age Population Working for a Healthier Tomorrow* (HMSO, 2008).

Providing signposts to a scope of practice at key points in career development and progression, the framework is a guide to occupational health nurses and their employers for decisions on practice competency; personal and professional development; and career and pay progression. This publication now maps occupational health nursing against the six core NHS KSF competences and sixteen of the specific NHS KSF competences. This will provide occupational health nursing practitioners and curriculum leaders with a benchmark which will assist them to plan developments for practice, and to determine which of the competency statements best reflect their practice.

*Sandra Grieve* Chair, RCN Public Health Forum  
*Jan Maw* RCN Adviser in Public Health

## Acknowledgements

This integrated career and competency framework for occupational health nursing was developed in partnership with the RCN Public Health Forum and RCN members working in occupational health. The document builds on the 2004 RCN publication *Competences: an integrated career and competency framework for occupational health nursing*. Nurses working in occupational health settings helped to inform the development of the initial framework and we thank those who contributed towards its development and subsequent revision, and in particular those who gave invaluable input by responding to our call for comments on earlier drafts. A full list of acknowledgements can be found in Appendix 2.

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# Part 1: Introduction

Competence can be defined as: *“The state of having the knowledge, judgment, skills, energy, experience and motivation required to respond adequately to the demands of one’s professional responsibilities”* (Roach, 1992).

This RCN guidance for an integrated career and competency framework for occupational health is an important step forward for occupational health nursing. It addresses a number of political and professional issues and initiatives including:

- *Agenda for Change* (DH, 2003b)
- the need for leadership in specialist nursing
- the need for the development of standards
- new public health strategies and government reviews on occupational rehabilitation and fitness to work
- increased focus on work-based and lifelong learning and clinical supervision
- a changing focus towards professional rather than academic accreditation.

This version of the *RCN Career and Competency Framework* has been updated to take account of the final version of the *NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework* published by the Department of Health in October 2004 and the *Integrated Core Career and Competency Framework* published by the RCN in 2010.

## Background to the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework

The RCN *Integrated Career and Competency Framework for Occupational Health Nursing* (RCN CCF-OHN) (RCN 2010) mirrors the career frameworks designed around the core functions of the nurse consultant, the career benchmarks of *Agenda for Change* and the *Knowledge and Skills Framework* (NHS KSF, 2004), and the *Development and Review Process* (DH, October 2004)

*Agenda for Change* provides a nationally agreed framework for reforming pay, career structure and conditions for nurses, health care assistants and other health care workers. Generic competences are captured by the NHS KSF and health care workers are expected to achieve all six core

competences and up to a maximum of seven of the 24 specific dimension competences. You will find a description all of the NHS KSF competences at: [www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk)

The KSF six core dimensions are:

1. Communications
2. Personal and people development
3. Health, safety and security
4. Service improvement
5. Quality
6. Equality and diversity.

The KSF twenty four specific dimensions are grouped into the following themes:

- Health and wellbeing (HW)
- Estates and facilities (EF)
- Information and knowledge (IK)
- General (G).

Every dimension is subdivided into four levels and each given a level descriptor. Level 1 represents basic knowledge and skills, through to level 4 which represents the highest level of knowledge and skills.

*“Every NHS KSF post outline must include an appropriate level from each of the six core dimensions, to which will be added a number of specific dimensions. There is no limit to the number of specific dimensions which can be included, but it would be unusual for a post to need more than seven. The specific dimensions should reflect critical aspects of the post.”*

KSF (DH, 2004) pp11-12

In this RCN document:

- Table 1 maps RCN OHN competences to the six core dimensions
- Table 2 maps RCN OHN competences to 16 specific competences.

*Please refer to the KSF (October 2004) pp 45-48 for an overview of all core and specific dimensions.*

Remember, the scope of the KSF is extremely broad, and is essentially a development tool which provides the basis for pay progression within bands. Its purpose is to be used during the ongoing cycle of review, planning, development and evaluation of staff in the NHS, linking it to both organisational and individual development needs. Post outlines based on the NHS KSF should be developed in partnership, and should “*reflect the requirements of the post, not the abilities or preferences of the person who is employed in that post*” (KSF, 2004, p11). Most jobs will be made up of the six core dimensions and up to seven of the specific dimensions out of the 24 published in the KSF. The RCN occupational health nursing (OHN) competency framework is mapped to all of the core competences and to sixteen of the specific dimension competences. Occupational health nurses are not expected to meet the requirements for all sixteen specialist dimension competences. You should just select and use those competences listed in this framework which best reflect your practice. Tables 1 and 2 show how the KSF competences relate to the occupational health nurse competences outlined in this document.

## Mapping against the NHS KSF

The competences identified through various OHN consultation exercises conducted by the RCN have been mapped against the six core NHS KSF competences and sixteen of the specific NHS KSF competences.

The mapping also demonstrates how practice at level 4 (that of expert) mirrors the definition of nurse consultant outlined by Manley (2001), who described the following elements:

- the practice of nursing for a specific client group
- developing a learning culture
- practice-based research approaches and evaluation
- providing consultancy from clinical to organisational levels
- transformational leadership
- facilitation of individual, team and organisational learning
- cultural change, practice and service development.

## Mapping against the standards of proficiency for specialist community public health nurses

In addition, the competences are mapped against the ten public health competences required to be met by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) standards of preparation for OHN, which lead to entry to Part 3 (Specialist Community Public Health Nurses) of the NMC Register (Appendix 1). However, the RCN competency framework for occupational health nurses is NOT intended to be used as an educational curriculum. Rather, the framework has combined core competences and specialist competences for occupational health nursing practice.

## How to use this framework

Nurses working in the field of occupational health practice in a wide variety of settings: either as lone practitioners or as part of an extended team. Their scope of practice is dependent upon the historical expectations of employers and employees, on the outcome of hazard/risk assessment and on legislative requirements. Therefore, while we have included the broadest spectrum of practice in the descriptors and levels of practice, it may be that some elements will not be included in the actual role of some practitioners. However, the descriptors and levels do provide an indication of the expected ability to be able to function at that level, should the situation arise.

As occupational health nurses move from the level of competence to the level of experienced and on to expert practice, they build on the previous set of skills and knowledge. Hence, the expert nurse would be able (where applicable and called for in their occupational health role and setting) to function across the entire range of descriptors for practice.

In the framework:

- ‘competent nurse’ relates to a practitioner at level 5
- ‘experienced nurse’ relates to a proficient nurse at level 6 or 7
- ‘expert nurse’ relates to an advanced practitioner at level 8 or in a senior nurse management role.

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the RCN publication *Integrated Career and Competence Framework for Registered Nurses* (RCN, 2010). For nurse consultant competences, refer also to the RCN *General Career and Competence Framework for Registered Nurses* (add ref).

## How you produce evidence to show competence

You, as an occupational health nurse, are responsible for producing evidence for each competency in order to demonstrate that you have achieved it at the identified/desirable level. Forms of evidence that you can use include case histories, self appraisal, via a reflective diary, 360-degree feedback, verification of practice and structured observation of practice, as well as attendance at courses.

When you gather evidence it is important to:

- ensure you understand what the competency statement is asking of you
- review any existing work that could be used
- identify whether the existing evidence is appropriate. For example, if you attend a study day in preparation for carrying out a particular intervention you must apply this to practice and evaluate the outcomes of the intervention for this to be used towards your NMC Post-registration Education & Practice (PREP) portfolio
- ensure you have sufficient evidence to meet the NMC requirements for PREP.

## Using the framework flexibly

While the framework provides comprehensive guidance on competences for occupational health nursing practice, it is a tool to be used flexibly and in conjunction with RCN publications on pay and terms and conditions of work (see [www.rcn.org.uk/publications](http://www.rcn.org.uk/publications)). Used together, these can help determine the scope of actual posts, individual development needs and pay banding, and should take account of developing roles as they expand in line with changing occupational health care needs and knowledge.

**Table 1: OHN competences mapped against the KSF six core dimensions**

RCN LEVEL DESCRIPTORS		Competent nurse		Experienced OH nurse		Expert OH nurse	
OHN COMPETENCE	KSF CORE DIMENSIONS	KSF LEVEL 1	KSF LEVEL 2	KSF LEVEL 3	KSF LEVEL 4		
Core transferable skills Ethical and legal issues Leadership and management Health promotion Attendance management Psycho-social interventions	1) Communication	Communicate with a limited range of people on day-to-day matters	Communicate with a range of people on a range of matters	Develop and maintain communication with people about difficult matters and/or in difficult situations	Develop and maintain communication with people on complex matters, issues and ideas and/or in complex situations		
Core transferable skills Leadership and management skills All other OH competences	2) Personal and people development	Contribute to own personal development	Develop own skills and knowledge and provide information to others to help their development	Develop self and contribute to the development of others	Develop self and others in areas of practice		
Risk assessment Core quality assurance Occupational hygiene Ethical and legal issues	3) Health, safety and security	Assist in maintaining own and others health, safety and security	Monitor and maintain health, safety and security of self and others	Promote, monitor and maintain best practice in health, safety and security	Maintain and develop an environment and culture that improves health, safety and security		
Core transferable skills Core quality assurance Core leadership and management skills	4) Service improvement	Make changes in own practice and offer suggestions for improving services	Contribute to the improvement of services	Appraise, interpret and apply suggestions, recommendations and directives to improve services	Work in partnership with others to develop, take forward and evaluate direction, policies and strategies		
Core leadership and management skills Quality assurance Ethical and legal issues All other OH competences	5) Quality	Maintain quality in own work	Maintain quality in own work and encourage others to do so	Contribute to improving quality	Develop a culture that improves quality		
Core transferable skills Ethical and legal issues Health promotion Risk assessment Case management	6) Equality and diversity	Act in ways that support equality and diversity	Support equality and value diversity	Promote equality and value diversity	Develop a culture that promotes equality and values diversity		

**Table 2: OHN competences mapped against sixteen KSF specific dimensions**

RCN LEVEL DESCRIPTORS		Competent nurse		Experienced OH nurse		Expert OH nurse	
OHN COMPETENCE	KSF CORE DIMENSIONS	KSF LEVEL 1	KSF LEVEL 2	KSF LEVEL 3	KSF LEVEL 4		
Health promotion Health protection and surveillance Attendance management Case management Retention and rehabilitation Psycho-social interventions	HWB 1 Promotion of health and wellbeing and prevention of adverse affects on health and wellbeing	Contribute to promoting health and wellbeing and preventing adverse effects on health and wellbeing	Plan, develop and implement approaches to promote health and wellbeing and prevent adverse effects on health and wellbeing	Plan, develop, implement and evaluate programmes to promote health and wellbeing and prevent adverse effects on health and wellbeing	Promote health and wellbeing and prevent adverse effects on health and wellbeing through contributing to the development, implementation and evaluation of related policies		
Health Promotion Health protection and surveillance Attendance management Case management Retention and rehabilitation Psycho-social interventions	HWB 2 Assessment and care planning to meet health and wellbeing needs	Assist in the assessment of people's health and wellbeing needs	Contribute to assessing health and wellbeing needs and planning how to meet those needs	Assess health and wellbeing needs and develop, monitor and review care plans to meet specific needs	Assess complex health and wellbeing needs and develop, monitor and review care plans to meet those needs		
Risk assessment Ergonomics Occupational hygiene Psycho-social interventions Maintaining safety Health protection and surveillance Attendance management Case management Retention and rehabilitation	HWB 3 Protection of health and wellbeing	Recognise and report situations where there might be a need for protection	Contribute to protecting people at risk	Implement aspects of a protection plan and review its effectiveness	Develop and lead on the implementation of an overall protection plan		
Equality Attendance management Case management Retention and rehabilitation Health promotion Health protection and surveillance Psycho-social interventions	HWB 4 Enablement to address health and wellbeing	Enable people to meet daily health and wellbeing needs	Enable people to meet ongoing health and wellbeing needs	Enable people to address specific needs in relation to health and wellbeing	Empower people to realise and maintain their potential in relation to health and wellbeing		
Equality Attendance management Case management Retention and rehabilitation Health promotion Health protection & surveillance	HWB 5 Provision of care to meet health and wellbeing needs	Enable people to meet daily health and wellbeing needs	Enable people to meet their health and wellbeing needs	Plan, deliver and evaluate care to meet people's health and wellbeing	Plan, deliver and evaluate care to meet people's complex health and wellbeing needs		
Attendance management Case management Retention and rehabilitation Health promotion Health protection and surveillance Ergonomics Occupational hygiene Psycho-social interventions Maintaining safety	HWB6 Assessment and treatment planning	Undertake tasks related to the assessment of physiological and/or psychological functioning	Contribute to the assessment of physiological and/or psychological functioning	Assess physiological and/or psychological functioning and develop, monitor and review related treatment plans	Assess physiological and/or psychological functioning when there are complex and/or undifferentiated abnormalities, disease and disorders and develop, monitor and review related treatment plans		



**Table 2: OHN competences mapped against sixteen KSF specific dimensions (continued)**

RCN LEVEL DESCRIPTORS		Competent nurse		Experienced OH nurse		Expert OH nurse	
OHN COMPETENCE	KSF CORE DIMENSIONS	KSF LEVEL 1	KSF LEVEL 2	KSF LEVEL 3	KSF LEVEL 4	Expert OH nurse	KSF LEVEL 4
Attendance management Case management Retention and rehabilitation Health promotion Health protection and surveillance Psycho-social interventions	HWB7 Interventions and treatments	Assist in providing interventions and/or treatments	Contribute to planning, delivering and monitoring interventions and/or treatments	Plan, deliver and evaluate interventions and/or treatments where there are complex issues and/or serious illness	Plan, deliver and evaluate interventions and/or treatments where there are complex issues and/or serious illness	Plan, deliver and evaluate interventions and/or treatments where there are complex issues and/or serious illness	KSF LEVEL 4
Case management Retention and rehabilitation Health promotion Health protection and surveillance Psycho-social interventions Maintaining safety Risk assessment Ergonomics	IK1 Information processing	Input, store and provide data and information	Modify, structure, maintain and present information	Monitor the processing of information and data	Develop and modify data and information models and processes	Develop and modify data and information models and processes	
Risk assessment Ergonomics Health promotion Health protection and surveillance Attendance management Case management Retention and rehabilitation Psycho-social interventions Maintaining safety Occupational hygiene	IK 2 Information collection and analysis	Collect, collate and report routine and simple data and information	Gather, analyse and report a limited range of data and information	Gather, analyse, interpret and present extensive and/or complex data and information	Plan, develop and evaluate methods and processes for gathering, analysing, interpreting and presenting data and information	Plan, develop and evaluate methods and processes for gathering, analysing, interpreting and presenting data and information	
Health promotion Health protection and surveillance Maintaining safety Case management Retention and rehabilitation Psycho-social interventions Maintaining safety Risk assessment Ergonomics Occupational hygiene	IK3 Knowledge and information resources	Access, appraise and apply knowledge and information	Maintain knowledge and information resources and help others to access them and use them	Organise knowledge and information resources and provide information to meet needs	Organise knowledge and information resources and provide information to meet needs	Organise knowledge and information resources and provide information to meet needs	
Self assessment transferable skills Quality assurance and research Leadership and management All other OH competences	G1 Learning and development	Assist with learning and development activities	Enable people to learn and develop	Plan, deliver and review interventions to enable people to learn and develop	Design, plan, implement and evaluate learning and development programmes	Design, plan, implement and evaluate learning and development programmes	

**Table 2: OHN competences mapped against sixteen KSF specific dimensions (continued)**

RCN LEVEL DESCRIPTORS		Competent nurse		Experienced OH nurse		Expert OH nurse	
OHN COMPETENCE	KSF CORE DIMENSIONS	KSF LEVEL 1	KSF LEVEL 2	KSF LEVEL 3	KSF LEVEL 4		
Self assessment Maintaining safety Occupational hygiene Case management Retention and rehabilitation Health promotion Health protection and surveillance Psycho-social interventions Maintaining safety Risk assessment Ergonomics	G2 Development and innovation	Appraise concepts, models, methods, practices, products and equipment developed by others	Test and review new concepts models, methods, practices, products and equipment	Test and review new concepts models, methods, practices, products and equipment	Develop new and innovative concepts models, methods, practices, products and equipment		
Leadership and management	G4 Financial management	Monitor expenditure	Co-ordinate and monitor the use of financial resources	Co-ordinate, monitor and review the use of financial resources	Co-ordinate, monitor and review the use of financial resources		
Leadership and management	G5 Services and project management	Assist with the organisation of services and/or projects	Organise specific aspects of services and/or projects	Prioritise and manage the ongoing work of services and/or projects	Plan, co-ordinate and monitor the delivery of services and/or projects		
Self assessment Transferable skills Leadership and management	G6 People management	Supervise people's work	Plan, allocate and supervise the work of a team	Co-ordinate and delegate work and review people's performance	Plan, develop, monitor and review the recruitment, deployment and management of people		
Leadership and management	G 8 Public relations and marketing	Assist with public relations and marketing activities	Undertake public relations and marketing activities	Market and promote a service / project	Plan, develop, monitor and review public relations and marketing for a service / organisation		

Overview of the KSF (DH, 2004), pp 45-48

**Key**

- HWB** = Health and wellbeing dimension
- IK** = Information and knowledge dimension
- G** = General dimension
- KSF** = the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework

**Table 3: OHN competences mapped against examples of KSF level descriptors**

COMPETENT OHN	EXPERIENCED OHN	EXPERT OHN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First level registered nurse</li> <li>• 2 years post basic experience</li> <li>• Post basic education and training equivalent to university diploma</li> <li>• Works under guidance of established protocols and procedures at operational level</li> <li>• Maintains safe and competent practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two years experience in OH setting</li> <li>• Post basic education and training equivalent to university degree</li> <li>• Holds or working toward a recordable OHN qualification with the NMC</li> <li>• Develops and establishes protocols and procedures at operational level</li> <li>• Develops and leads on safe and competent practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five years experience in OH setting</li> <li>• Post basic education and training equivalent to university higher degree</li> <li>• Holds a recordable OHN qualification with the NMC</li> <li>• Develops, leads and establishes protocols and procedures at operational and strategic levels</li> <li>• Innovates, develops and leads on safe and competent practice</li> <li>• Leads and develops consultant occupational nursing and consultancy</li> </ul>
<p><b>KSF DIMENSION 1 &amp; 2 descriptors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintains</li> <li>• Contributes</li> <li>• Assists</li> <li>• Ensures</li> <li>• Routine</li> <li>• Monitors</li> <li>• Prepares</li> <li>• Produces</li> <li>• Influences</li> <li>• Participates at individual and group level</li> </ul>	<p><b>KSF DIMENSION 3 &amp; 4 descriptors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishes</li> <li>• Maintains</li> <li>• Develops</li> <li>• Contributes</li> <li>• Promotes</li> <li>• Assesses</li> <li>• Modifies</li> <li>• Monitors</li> <li>• Evaluates</li> <li>• Plans, delivers and evaluates</li> <li>• Improves</li> <li>• Protects</li> <li>• Co-ordinates</li> <li>• Processes and manages data</li> <li>• Designs, produces and modifies</li> <li>• Plans, analyses, interprets and assesses reports</li> <li>• Develops and sustains partnerships</li> <li>• Leads teams</li> <li>• Allocates</li> <li>• Obtains</li> </ul>	<p><b>KSF DIMENSION 5 descriptors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops own and others skills and knowledge</li> <li>• Develops strategies and policies</li> <li>• Enables</li> <li>• Leads</li> <li>• Implements</li> <li>• Evaluates</li> <li>• Innovates</li> <li>• Strategic</li> <li>• Researches</li> <li>• Disseminates</li> <li>• Influences</li> </ul>

## Part 2: OHN competence dimensions as level descriptors for practice

1) OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH NURSING – SELF ASSESSMENT		
COMPETENT	EXPERIENCED	EXPERT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Under supervision I am able to:</i></li> <li>• plan and carry out initial assessments for a range of clients using an evidence-based and client-centred approach to practice</li> <li>• monitor clients within working environments</li> <li>• prescribe care for a range of clients within working environment</li> <li>• in collaboration with others, implement a plan of care for a range of clients using an evidence-based approach and client-centred approach</li> <li>• set and monitor clients' goals using an evidence-based and client-centred approach to practice, in collaboration with clients and other members of the team</li> <li>• evaluate a plan of care for a range of clients using an evidence-based and client-centred approach to practice</li> <li>• make decisions about priorities of care for a range of clients within the working environment, in collaboration with clients and other team members</li> <li>• initiate interventions for clients within the working environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>With minimum guidance and supervision I am able to:</i></li> <li>• decide on priorities within the care setting for a range of clients</li> <li>• organise a team of others to deliver the care of a range of clients within a working environment</li> <li>• initiate the care of a range of client groups in different occupational settings</li> <li>• monitor the care of a range of clients within the working environment</li> <li>• facilitate others to set client goals using an evidence-based and client-centred approach to practice, in collaboration with clients and other members of the team</li> <li>• challenge care practices and processes and decide on care priorities</li> <li>• interpret care practices and processes within the care setting</li> <li>• evaluate care practices and processes within a range of workplace environments</li> <li>• take responsibility for leading a team over time and facilitating others to lead on a day to day basis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Working autonomously I am able to:</i></li> <li>• take responsibility, without supervision and in any care setting, for monitoring interventions for the care of clients within the working environment</li> <li>• take responsibility for deciding on the priorities for care of clients within the working environment</li> <li>• take responsibility in any care setting for deciding on what may be best for the care of clients within the working environment</li> <li>• take responsibility for initiating interventions for the care of clients within the working environment</li> <li>• independently organise nursing care within the working environment</li> <li>• actively lead on developments in nursing practice and their day to day implementation</li> <li>• manage and lead an occupational health nursing team (particularly in the case of a nurse-led service); manage and lead the occupational health service</li> <li>• manage occupational health nursing resources (particularly in the case of a nurse-led service); manage resources for the occupational health service</li> </ul>

## Part 2: OHN competence dimensions as level descriptors for practice (continued)

2) OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH NURSING – CORE TRANSFERABLE SKILLS		
COMPETENT	EXPERIENCED	EXPERT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilise transferable nursing skills of research, audit, quality assurance, IT and data collection; work under guidance of established protocols and procedures at operational level; maintain safe and competent practice, and able to apply the principles of the NMC <i>Code of Professional Conduct</i> to occupational health settings</li> <li>• Develop an understanding of the OHN role within workplace settings in a range of settings both within and outside the NHS</li> <li>• Adhere to occupational health standards and polices and recognise limitations to own competence and scope of professional practice in respect of occupational health nursing practice</li> <li>• Seek the support of experienced practitioners for non-routine decisions and refer to experienced or expert nurse, and/or occupational health physician, and/or line manager and/or human resources department for support in more complex occupational health issues</li> <li>• Communicate effectively within occupational health team and with clients</li> <li>• Undertake a range of routine occupational health screening tasks, and collect, record and store data accurately</li> <li>• Participate in clinical supervision, keeping records of progress and development, linking this to the NMC PREP requirements; use feedback to continuously develop practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain and develop competent practice in occupational health nursing with regular personal and professional development activity</li> <li>• Collect, record and interpret occupational health data using an evidence base and with accuracy</li> <li>• Develop communication skills with specific groups and individuals in a justified, sensitive and mediating way, and able to communicate effectively within the occupational health team, with clients and across operational boundaries</li> <li>• Work autonomously and where appropriate, seek support and guidance from expert nurse, and/or occupational health physician, and/or line manager and/or human resources department for support in more complex occupational health issues</li> <li>• Facilitate the best employee health and safety outcomes, achieved by negotiating with safety staff, employers, NHS trusts and general practitioners</li> <li>• Provide clinical supervision and support staff development in practice</li> <li>• Participate in clinical supervision, keeping records of progress and development, and linking this to the NMC PREP requirements to maintain and develop evidence-based skills and knowledge in occupational health nursing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work interdependently in a multidisciplinary team and autonomously within a framework of clinical governance and clinical supervision</li> <li>• Analyse and evaluate data; ability to integrate data and give advice at strategic planning at organisational level</li> <li>• Demonstrate excellent presentation and analytical skills. Manage conflict with mediating skills</li> <li>• Where appropriate and dependent upon an individual's scope of professional practice, undertake a continued professional development which leads to admission to the Register of recognised occupational health and safety professional bodies (e.g. ergonomics, hygiene, occupational psychology, etc.)</li> <li>• Develop and lead clinical supervision policy and practice for the workplace to maintain and develop evidence-based skills and knowledge</li> <li>• Lead on coaching, mentoring and clinical supervision of competent and experienced nurses</li> <li>• Participate in clinical supervision on a regular basis, keeping records of progress and development, linking this to the NMC PREP requirements</li> </ul>

## Part 2: OHN competence dimensions as level descriptors for practice (continued)

3) OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH NURSING – CORE LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT SKILLS		
COMPETENT	EXPERIENCED	EXPERT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage themselves and their workload and prioritise their own actions in the working environment</li> <li>• Participate in new initiatives and developments in practice and contribute to their evaluation</li> <li>• Relate to other members of the multidisciplinary team and participate as a team member through the whole chain of care</li> <li>• Gain insight into the occupational health agenda through an awareness of the local and national political agendas that impact their area of practice</li> <li>• Participate in the day to day delivery of internal and external services and contracts</li> <li>• Participate in occupational health and safety audit</li> <li>• Develop self through continued professional development activities</li> <li>• Adopt a patient-focused approach in service delivery</li> <li>• Utilise networking and political awareness to contribute to service development</li> <li>• Understand how the organisation works and how the nurse may influence change</li> <li>• Understand how economic and business arguments can lead to improvements in health and safety in the workplace</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to the development of occupational health standards and policies, and assist in the development and establishment of protocols and procedures at operational level; develop and lead on safe and competent practice</li> <li>• Manage conflict situations in a sensitive and mediating way</li> <li>• Initiate, change and develop practice and evaluate changes in practice</li> <li>• Identify how local and national political agendas impact on the provision of the service and develop services that meet current policy agenda</li> <li>• Delegate appropriately and to give feedback to colleagues</li> <li>• Lead service development by participating in multidisciplinary team work and committee work.</li> <li>• Manage a limited budget and a limited range of external contracts</li> <li>• Implement and lead on departmental occupational health audits</li> <li>• Develop self and others through continued professional development activities</li> <li>• Participate and lead on specific programmes in the development of the occupational health and safety team</li> <li>• Utilise and develops patient-focused approaches in service delivery</li> <li>• Utilise networking and political awareness to develop services</li> <li>• Demonstrate change management skills which have an impact upon organisational behaviour in relation to health and safety at work</li> <li>• Demonstrate the incorporation of business planning into occupational health practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play a major role in the development and implementation of occupational health and safety standards and policies at operational and strategic levels</li> <li>• Develop and lead occupational health audits and solve problems in an ethical, reflective and evidence-based manner</li> <li>• Facilitate the development of innovations in practice, and push forward practice by visionary approaches to occupational health nursing. Communicate innovations in practice at local, national and international level</li> <li>• Appraise the performance and facilitate the personal development of others involved in the delivery of the service</li> <li>• Lead and manage a multidisciplinary team which may include medical, nursing, technical and professions allied to medicine</li> <li>• Secure and manage resources for the occupational health department</li> <li>• Manage complex departmental budgets and an extensive range of external contracts</li> <li>• Provide clinical leadership through self-development and guide and develop others through continued professional development activities</li> <li>• Provide operational and strategic leadership in the development of the occupational health and safety team</li> <li>• Develop the role of the OHN as an expert, acknowledging the complexity and responsibility of the role of an autonomous occupational health practitioner</li> <li>• Utilise networking and political awareness to lead and develop occupational health services</li> <li>• Develop economic and public health strategies to encourage employer and employee investment in health and safety at work</li> </ul>

# Part 2: OHN competence dimensions as level descriptors for practice (continued)

4) OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH NURSING – CORE QUALITY ASSURANCE AND RESEARCH SKILLS		
COMPETENT	EXPERIENCED	EXPERT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate and contribute to the clinical audit process and continuously evaluate own interventions</li> <li>Participate in improving the patient experience through a patient-focused approach to benchmarking</li> <li>Participate in and contribute to evaluating patients' experience and use patient-focused benchmarks in improving the patients' experience.</li> <li>Participate in clinical governance mechanisms</li> <li>Use a 'customer care' approach to practice</li> <li>Contribute to the implementation of local shared governance, local priorities, policy formation and implementation</li> <li>Use national targets and initiatives in own sphere of practice</li> <li>Contribute to aspects of work-based research and evaluation projects; actively research own practice through systematic reflection and critique via clinical supervision/co-operative inquiry</li> <li>Use a research supervisor/mentor for support and challenge in relation to research contributions</li> <li>Question practice and critique research, identifying research questions with regard to own practice</li> <li>Understand the role of the nurse consultant and work in collaboration with them</li> <li>Develop knowledge of the 'Safe Effective Quality OH Service' (SEQOHS) OHS standards for accreditation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and use clinical audit tools and ensure regular team clinical audit and action planning</li> <li>Introduce evaluation approaches that provide feedback on the patients' experiences and team activity, and maintain local action plans for reviewing actions arising from audit and evaluation.</li> <li>Contribute to the development and implementation of clinical policy formation and facilitate the delivery of effective customer care by the team</li> <li>Contribute to achieving national targets and initiatives within own sphere of practice</li> <li>Contribute to the identification of future priorities</li> <li>Undertake small, local evaluation/research projects in the workplace and be able to co-supervise undergraduate projects and practitioner-based research with a mentor</li> <li>Question practice and critique research, identifying research questions with regard to team practice and specific care of client group</li> <li>Use a role-model systematic critique in relation to the development and use of evidence in and from practice, and enable team members to contribute to different stages of the research process</li> <li>Provide opportunities for others to contribute to practice-based research</li> <li>Work collaboratively with nurse consultants</li> <li>Demonstrate strengthening and dissemination of evidence-based practice for occupational health, safety practice and occupational rehabilitation strategies within occupational health practice</li> <li>Supervise OHS provision and advise on improvements to comply with the SEQOHS standards for accreditation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead on clinical audit and develop practice through audit and evaluation</li> <li>Promote opportunities for interdisciplinary audit and evaluation, and evaluate audit tools</li> <li>Promote and use clinical governance mechanisms</li> <li>Develop local action plans to improve service delivery using patient-focused benchmarks</li> <li>Facilitate benchmarking of service against other departments</li> <li>Provide a service that reflects national standards and patient benchmarks</li> <li>Facilitate the development and monitoring of local protocols and guidelines for the care of patients, through critical evaluation of the evidence for practice</li> <li>Lead and develop clinical service development</li> <li>Facilitate strategic planning to meet the delivery and achievement of national targets and initiatives</li> <li>Lead a project that contributes to a programme of research and contributes to the evidence base for clinical practice, by presenting and publishing papers from practice-based research</li> <li>Supervise undergraduate projects and co-supervise post-graduate projects and practitioner-based research in collaboration with a mentor</li> <li>Identify areas for research and contribute to the corporate research agenda in relation to client group and service</li> <li>Ensure the skills and competence of nurse consultants are used effectively within the organisation</li> <li>Ensure that nurse consultants are given the opportunities to develop research and practice competence</li> <li>Enable others to contribute to practice-based research with support and supervision</li> <li>Enable support, time and resources for others to access, critically appraise and disseminate evidence-based information</li> <li>Support the development of a service infrastructure for utilising and organising evidence-based care and research</li> <li>Develop systems and processes to ensure the strengthening and dissemination of evidence-based practice for occupational health, safety and rehabilitation practice and strategies within occupational health practice</li> <li>Undertake a review of OHN provision, make changes as required and lead the implementation of the SEQOHS standards for accreditation</li> </ul>

## Part 2: OHN competence dimensions as level descriptors for practice (continued)

5) OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH NURSING – LEGAL & ETHICAL ISSUES		
COMPETENT	EXPERIENCED	EXPERT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use basic understanding of the general and specific legislation for health and safety, employment law and equality legislation, and be able to apply basic understanding of statutory and advisory guidance to ensure the health protection of the working population</li> <li>Use awareness of the Data Protection Act, and work to departmental policies and procedures as a guide to ethical and legal practice</li> <li>Manage inappropriate requests to disclose personal health information without informed consent of individuals, and manage the safe storage and retrieval of occupational health records</li> <li>Maintain accurate and appropriate occupational health records for individuals and groups</li> <li>Recognise when to report issues of conflict and seek guidance appropriately</li> <li>Understand the scope of 'Duty of Care' and at departmental level, manage, investigate and care for the occupational health and wellbeing of individual clients</li> <li>Utilise transferable nursing skills to seek out evidence to inform ethical and legal practice within occupational health settings</li> <li>Incorporate the standards of ethics and confidentiality set out by the NMC into everyday practice</li> <li>Comply with standards of practice and competence developed by the NMC, FOM, RCN and new legal standards</li> <li>Understand and apply the laws relating to disclosure of inappropriate professional practice and breaches of the NMC Code of Professional Conduct</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advise at departmental and operational levels on the general and specific legislation for health and safety, employment law and equality legislation</li> <li>Interpret and communicate key facts relating to the statutory and advisory guidance governing the ethical and legal aspects that ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of employers and employees</li> <li>Apply, advise and guide employers and employees on the principles of the Data Protection Act</li> <li>Develop safe systems of work for the recording, retrieval and storage of occupational health information and records across a broad spectrum of clinical and occupational settings</li> <li>Utilise appropriate knowledge and communication skills to protect and promote the ethical and legal consideration of occupational health nursing practice</li> <li>At departmental and operational level, work to the scope of 'Duty of Care' and manage, investigate and care for the occupational health and wellbeing of the individuals and groups</li> <li>Assist in the development and implementation of legal and ethical policies and procedures at departmental and operational levels</li> <li>Evaluate evidence and apply it to ethical and legal occupational health issues to inform practice</li> <li>Incorporate the standards of ethics and confidentiality into everyday practice as set out by the NMC</li> <li>Maintain standards of practice and develop knowledge and skills with reference to competences developed by the NMC, FOM, RCN and new legal standards</li> <li>Identify and act on breaches of legal, health, safety and professional standards; identify when unsafe practice occurs and know what action to take to make improvements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop expert understanding and networks and lead and advise at departmental, operational and strategic levels on general and specific legislation for health and safety, employment law and equality legislation</li> <li>Remain abreast of new and emerging guidance and legislation that governs legal and ethical aspects of occupational health practice; utilise evidence-based practice to guide interpretation of statutory and advisory guidance to ensure the health protection of the working population</li> <li>Play a key role as part of a multidisciplinary team in the development, implementation and monitoring of ethical and legal strategies and policies at corporate and departmental level; provide leadership in the management of conflict relating to confidentiality of data collection, recording, retrieval and dissemination</li> <li>Generate and disseminate effective management reports and other forms of verbal, written and visual communication relating to the ethical and legal considerations of managing the health, safety and wellbeing of the working population</li> <li>Utilise the principles of clinical governance, clinical supervision and clinical audit to lead, manage and develop the ethical and legal aspects of occupational health, safety and wellbeing</li> <li>Develop own and others skills and knowledge relating to practice ethics and confidentiality</li> <li>Integrate new standards of occupational health nursing practice, including legal and professional standards, into clinical supervision and occupational audit processes</li> <li>Develop systems and processes to correct unsafe practice and ensure staff are trained in how to disclose unsafe occupational health practice and health and safety systems</li> </ul>



## Part 2: OHN competence dimensions as level descriptors for practice (continued)

6) OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH NURSING – RISK ASSESSMENT		
COMPETENT	EXPERIENCED	EXPERT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribute to risk reduction and hazard analysis at the level of the individual</li> <li>Maintain competence by keeping up to date with current clinical issues and utilise awareness of how these impact on risk assessment and practice within the department</li> <li>Utilise knowledge of policies, the nature of work risk and hazards and the theory and practice of job roles</li> <li>Participate and contribute at a basic level to the monitoring, quality assurance, and communication of risk assessment</li> <li>Use basic understanding of risk assessment concepts, goal setting, common law, employment law and the Disability Discrimination Act</li> <li>Use basic understanding of corporate risk and resource limitations</li> <li>Undertake basic workplace risk assessment under supervision and working to protocols</li> <li>Adhere to professional accountability and limitations and refer as appropriate to higher authority</li> <li>Recognise the impact of cultural diversity when assessing risk in an organisation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribute to business objectives in risk reduction and hazard analysis at an operational level</li> <li>Assess, critically appraise and apply an evidence base for risk assessment, and promote an environment for using evidence-based care</li> <li>Gain additional academic and technical knowledge of risk assessment through personal and professional development and be able to provide advice on risk assessment control and design</li> <li>Assess and evaluate risk with minimal supervision and participate and contribute fully in the monitoring, quality assurance and communication of risk assessment at operational level</li> <li>Use experience to widen knowledge base on risk assessment information, case law, EU legislation, impact of devolution and operational strategies</li> <li>Generate and analyse data to identify employer/employee at risk</li> <li>Utilise health promotion activities to minimise risk</li> <li>Recognise the impact of cultural diversity when assessing risk in an organisation</li> <li>Manage a limited array of resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in strategic organisational decisions and contribute to organisational policy development for risk assessment</li> <li>Develop expertise of risk assessment through critical analysis of own practice, and utilise skills of recognition and control to contribute to the development of risk and control policy</li> <li>Have in depth knowledge of how to prepare, plan, participate and consult at strategic, local and national level; ensure that appropriate, evidence-based standards, benchmarks, protocols, clinical guidelines and procedures are in place</li> <li>Manage OH services, lead multidisciplinary teams and manage resources and income generation related to risk assessment</li> <li>Promote awareness of risk assessment and influence organisational change by utilising clinical and corporate governance, demographics and epidemiology and educational initiatives</li> <li>Align OH service with business objectives and advise organisation of risk and implication of corporate governance</li> <li>Have political awareness and ability to analyse professional accountability and needs assessment in order to develop inter-dependent practice through effective communication and lobbying</li> </ul>

# Part 2: OHN competence dimensions as level descriptors for practice (continued)

## 7) OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH NURSING – HEALTH PROMOTION, PROTECTION AND SURVEILLANCE

COMPETENT	EXPERIENCED	EXPERT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adhere to standards and polices and recognise limitations to own competence and scope of professional practice when implementing health surveillance programmes</li> <li>Have empathetic listening skills and be a competent and reflective listener; operate mainly in relationships with clients; participate in pre-employment health screening and assessment of fitness to work</li> <li>Understand legislation governing health protection and surveillance and be able to undertake pre-employment health screening and declare fitness for work, or refer when health issues have been declared</li> <li>Have specific training to undertake range of basic health protection/surveillance activities, e.g. vision screenings, audiometry, skin checks, spirometry, urinalysis, blood pressure, immunisations, and administration of medicine under client group directions/protocols, as required</li> <li>Accurately gather and record working history, workplace exposures and re-call for health surveillance requirements; able to collect accurate health surveillance data and maintain accurate records; maintain confidentiality of individual health information and security of health records</li> <li>Contribute to primary prevention and early intervention strategies for reducing adverse health effects</li> <li>Have knowledge of infection control and disposal of clinical waste within work place environments, and The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981</li> <li>Understand the public health role of the occupational health nurse and plan practice using public health principles</li> <li>Support the employee to make appropriate healthy lifestyle decisions, based upon current evidence and public health guidelines</li> <li>Participate in negotiation and facilitation for employee health and safety improvements between employee and employer</li> <li>Understand how to demonstrate the benefit of investment in health, safety and public health initiatives in the workplace and participate in delivering positive health outcomes for employees</li> <li>Contribute to identifying the risk of danger to individuals and others</li> <li>Report any suspicion of risk or abuse to adults or children to the appropriate people and/or organisations, consistent with legislation, policies and procedures</li> <li>Aware of own (and others') professional roles and boundaries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the needs of organisations and industry, contractual obligations and role of the OH service and OHN within operational context of organisation and key stakeholders</li> <li>Building upon the basic skills of the competent nurse, demonstrate analytical skills when assessing health and implementing health surveillance</li> <li>Conduct a full range of assessment of fitness to work at pre- and post-employment levels</li> <li>Use professional judgement and discretion to interpret health surveillance results and relate to occupational exposures and health protection strategies</li> <li>Have knowledge of and interpret health and safety legislation pertaining to health protection and health surveillance, and use knowledge to raise awareness of populations' and individuals' need for health protection and surveillance</li> <li>Understand business needs and culture, and contribute to the economic viability of the organisation by implementing appropriate health protection measures for the working population and providing evidence-based programmes based on cost benefit analysis</li> <li>Ensure practice incorporates strategies of primary prevention and early intervention of adverse health effects</li> <li>Influence behaviour change to improve individual, organisational and community public health outcomes</li> <li>Can articulate health protection and surveillance need at an operational level using negotiating skills and political awareness</li> <li>Develop strategies for incorporating healthy lifestyle choices and public health targets into occupational health interventions</li> <li>Act as a change agent to educate, motivate and support employees to make healthy lifestyle choices based upon current public health best practice and guidelines</li> <li>Facilitate the best employee health and safety outcomes which are achieved by negotiating with safety staff, employers, NHS trusts and general practitioners</li> <li>Report any suspicion of risk or abuse to adults or children to the appropriate people and/or organisations, consistent with legislation, policies and procedures</li> <li>Demonstrate an understanding of the economic case for employers to invest in the health of their workforce</li> <li>Is aware of own (and others') professional roles and boundaries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Influence, by negotiation and with political awareness of wider global issues, for health protection and health surveillance</li> <li>Possess corporate and operational knowledge of organisation; contribute to contract development and review; manage and secure budget for health protection and surveillance</li> <li>Incorporate clinical governance and clinical supervision in contract specification for health protection and health surveillance</li> <li>Establish, develop and evaluate health protection and health surveillance based on evidence; produce benchmarks for best practice; develop and implement policies and procedures</li> <li>Establish benchmarks for pre-employment health screening and assessment of fitness to work and generate and analyse data for continued improvements</li> <li>Liaise with and develop internal and external networks for support and referral Demonstrate leadership in review and audit of health surveillance strategies</li> <li>Communicate trends and advise on action plans to meet statutory and voluntary requirements for health protection, surveillance and statutory reporting</li> <li>Evaluate practice to ensure occupational health team are working within current public health guidelines and targets</li> <li>Critically appraise operational policies of the organisation to ensure that public health standards and targets are incorporated</li> <li>Ensure policies are in place to negotiate and facilitate the best health and safety outcomes for employees</li> <li>Demonstrate how the business case for public health initiatives in the workplace can improve performance and productivity and reduce employee turnover</li> <li>Put systems in place which allow the reporting of any suspicions of risk or abuse of adults or children to the appropriate people and/or organisations, consistent with internal guidance, legislation, policies and procedures</li> <li>Aware of own (and others') professional roles and boundaries</li> </ul>

# Part 2: OHN competence dimensions as level descriptors for practice (continued)

8) OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH NURSING – ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT, CASE MANAGEMENT AND REHABILITATION		
COMPETENT	EXPERIENCED	EXPERT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practice within the standards set out in the law relating to equality and employment</li> <li>Support the monitoring of sickness and absence as a part of holistic 'total management' approach</li> <li>Foster good communications with human resources departments to maintain appropriate involvement of occupational health services in the assessment, support and rehabilitation of employees</li> <li>Utilise basic skills and competencies to monitor and assess sickness and absence; construct OHN care plans and support the rehabilitation of employees</li> <li>Utilise an awareness of the importance of building up network of external specialists and agencies to support employee rehabilitation; liaise with external agencies which support rehabilitation and early return to work</li> <li>Deliver practice within an agreed case management system</li> <li>Take account of the statement of 'Fitness to Work' when delivering rehabilitation care plans</li> <li>Contribute to the development and implementation of a 'placement in work' health assessment in relation to pre- and post-employment</li> <li>Generate data and produce reports to agreed format</li> <li>Develop clinical skills and expertise in occupational health which enable the provision of links between the workplace, primary care and public health services, to support maximum workplace participation by employees</li> <li>Explain the potential implications to employees and employers where an employee is unable to resume work due to a health problem</li> <li>Support the employee to facilitate an appropriate work-life balance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrate relevant standards of the law relating to equality and employment within occupational health practice</li> <li>Utilise experience of shared case management to monitor and assess sickness and absence, construct OHN care plans and support the rehabilitation of employees as part of a holistic 'total management' approach</li> <li>Maintain good communications with human resources department to ensure the appropriate involvement of occupational health services in the assessment, support and rehabilitation of employees</li> <li>Liaise with, and maintain external links with, external agencies to support rehabilitation and early return to work. (e.g. physiotherapists, occupational therapists, occupational physicians, general practitioners, etc)</li> <li>Analyse data and identify trends in sickness and absence, generate reports and act upon reports provided by others</li> <li>Contribute to the management of attendance and rehabilitation within a business culture</li> <li>Develop occupational health care plans, to support rehabilitation and early return to work of employees, which utilise the multidisciplinary team and external agencies</li> <li>Implement occupational health interventions and secure adaptation to working practices which supports and facilitates return to work, taking into account the recommendations in the 'Fitness to Work' statement</li> <li>Work with the employer to develop work modifications to enable fitness to work statements are acted upon where this is reasonable and practicable</li> <li>Collaborate with the general practitioner and HR departments to support and facilitate return to work following ill health or disability</li> <li>Utilise the organisational case management systems and integrate occupational health care with that of external health care providers such as general practitioners</li> <li>Develop employment 'placement in work plans' for employees and potential employees</li> <li>Provide access to early intervention strategies for common occupational health conditions which meet nationally agreed standards for early intervention</li> <li>Support and motivate employees to return to work following ill health and injury, ensuring clinical continuity between the workplace and external health providers</li> <li>Advise employees and employers on how to manage the potential implications where an employee is unable to resume work due to a health problem</li> <li>Identify interventions to ensure employers and employees manage appropriate work-life balance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilise an evidence base and expert understanding to monitor and evaluate processes that ensure occupational health practice complies with the law relating to quality and employment</li> <li>Develop strategies within a quality assurance framework of clinical governance and clinical supervision in respect of attendance management and rehabilitation</li> <li>Generate data which demonstrates the cost benefit analysis of occupational health interventions in the management of sickness absence and rehabilitation</li> <li>Communicate effectively at operational and strategic levels and maintain good communications with human resources departments to develop the understanding and involvement of occupational health services in the assessment, support and rehabilitation of employees</li> <li>Can lead in monitoring sickness and absence as a part of holistic 'total management' approach; and manage the development of skills and competencies required for monitoring and assessing of sickness and absence</li> <li>Develop case management processes for the organisation and monitor, review and evaluate their effectiveness</li> <li>Develop policies of employment 'placement in work plans' in collaboration with the employer, employees' representatives and the human resources department</li> <li>Ensure that organisational policies take into account 'Fitness to Work' statements and that workplace interventions are based upon appropriate occupational health, safety and rehabilitation best practice</li> <li>Ensure that employers understand the need to utilise services external to the workplace to improve health outcomes for their employees</li> <li>Develop policies which support occupational health staff and employers to ensure a smooth integration back to work of sick, injured or disabled workers</li> <li>Provide evidence-based specialist opinions for workers and employers which can be used during legal proceedings</li> <li>In collaboration with the employer and employee representatives, ensure HR departments and operational policies incorporate strategies to facilitate and manage an appropriate employee work-life balance</li> <li>Develop a health and wellbeing strategy in collaboration with employee and employer representatives and ensure the effectiveness of the strategy is implemented, monitored and evaluated within a process of continuous improvement</li> <li>Ensure occupational health services are available to all staff on an equitable basis</li> </ul>

## Part 2: OHN competence dimensions as level descriptors for practice (continued)

9) OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH NURSING – PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PSYCHO-SOCIAL INTERVENTIONS		
COMPETENT	EXPERIENCED	EXPERT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilise knowledge of the principles of primary, secondary and tertiary measures required for care of mental health in the workplace at the level of the organisation, individual and groups</li> <li>Consider research, legislation, organisational culture, work design, internal and external resources and multidisciplinary team work when assessing and controlling psycho-educational risk</li> <li>Interact with workplace managers and individual employees to assess psycho-educational risk, and support development and interpretation of psycho-educational policies in the workplace</li> <li>Utilise basic counselling skills, when required, to support managers and employees</li> <li>Can profile specific groups in a working population and identify individuals at potential psycho-educational risk</li> <li>Can plan and deliver psycho-social health education packages</li> <li>Identify and advise on external sources for specialist psycho-social support</li> <li>Adhere to standards and policies and recognise limitations to own competence and scope of professional practice related to psycho-social practice</li> <li>Ensure practice supports the development of good mental health based on appropriate standards and clinical guidelines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilise knowledge and interpret the principles of primary, secondary and tertiary measures required for care of mental health in the workplace at the level of the organisation, individual and groups</li> <li>Can draw upon research, legislation, organisational culture, work design, internal and external resources and multidisciplinary team work when assessing and controlling psycho-social risk</li> <li>Interact at an organisational level as well as with individual workplace managers and individual employees to assess psycho-educational risk, and support development and interpretation of psycho-social policies in the workplace</li> <li>Utilise basic counselling skills with specialist psycho-social skills to support managers and employees</li> <li>Can work autonomously and independently, collect and analyse data, accurately profile psycho-social needs of the working population, and identify groups and individuals at potential risk</li> <li>Plan and deliver psycho-educational health education packages within a health promotional strategic framework; identify, advise and refer to external sources for specialist psycho-social support as appropriate</li> <li>Contribute to the development of standards and policies related to psycho-educational practice</li> <li>Implement, review and evaluate mental health at work interventions and ensure that they are based on appropriate clinical guidelines and standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interpret and advise on research, legislation, organisational culture, work design, internal and external resources and multidisciplinary team work in the assessment and control of psycho-social risk</li> <li>Operate at a strategic level in the assessment of psycho-social risk, and take a key role in the development and implementation of psycho-educational policies and standards in the workplace</li> <li>Work inter-dependently with others</li> <li>Utilise specialist psycho-social skills when supporting workplace managers and employees</li> <li>Develop links and working arrangements with external sources for specialist psycho-social support</li> <li>Support others to work autonomously to collect and analyse psycho-educational data profiles and be able to identify health trends which require interventions for groups and individuals at risk</li> <li>Utilise business and management skills to plan and deliver psycho-educational health education packages within a health promotional strategic framework</li> <li>Develop and implement audit of psycho-educational interventions, and be able to demonstrate cost effectiveness of interventions</li> <li>Develop, review and evaluate support and intervention strategies for the management of good mental health in the workplace</li> </ul>

## Part 2: OHN competence dimensions as level descriptors for practice (continued)

10) OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH NURSING – ERGONOMICS		
COMPETENT	EXPERIENCED	EXPERT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilise transferable nursing knowledge of anatomy and physiology to assess workers' physical capability in work place environments</li> <li>• Identify potential issues between medical assessment and person-environment fit</li> <li>• Utilise knowledge of organisational behaviour relating to person-environment fit and use of equipment</li> <li>• Use awareness that task, equipment, environment, work organisation and people are interdependent elements in ergonomic assessment.</li> <li>• Develop the basic skills and experience to deliver training in manual handling</li> <li>• Use basic understanding of assessment and use of work place equipment to give advice</li> <li>• Utilise basic understanding of personal protective equipment (PPE) and able to apply understanding when assessing person-environment risk</li> <li>• Utilise transferable nursing interpersonal skills for effective communication of basic ergonomic principles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building upon competent practice, acquire good working knowledge of relevant legislation relating to ergonomic assessment, control and advice</li> <li>• Develop awareness at operational level of the business implications of ergonomic assessment and management, and influence and advise on ergonomic factors to secure additional resources within budgetary constraints</li> <li>• Work autonomously and within teams, and mentor less experienced nurses and members of the workforce, in ergonomic assessment activities.</li> <li>• Utilise awareness of task, equipment, environment, work organisation and people when participating in ergonomic assessment</li> <li>• Identify specific and general ergonomic issues and be able to present solutions for problems</li> <li>• Develop and utilise a network of expert colleagues to support and enhance ergonomic practice</li> <li>• Work proactively and introduce ergonomic preventative programmes within the workplace</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop knowledge and skills in ergonomics through personal and professional development, and may, dependent upon role, meet the admission criteria for membership of a professional body in the field of ergonomics</li> <li>• Participate at strategic level in the development of operational and strategic policy relating to ergonomic assessment and management</li> <li>• Analyse and articulate the cost-benefit of adopting sound ergonomic strategies within a business culture, and be able to lead and participate in proactive ergonomic programmes across the organisation</li> <li>• Take full account of task, equipment, environment, work organisation and people in the development of ergonomic assessment and management; use own expertise in conjunction with internal and external resources to evaluate, interpret and solve ergonomic problems</li> <li>• Utilise expert ergonomic knowledge and a wide evidence base when responding to ergonomic issues; develop an extensive network of professional and technical sources for ergonomic advice, support and referral</li> <li>• Generate and communicate ergonomic data by appropriately designed evaluation trials and effective dissemination</li> <li>• Develop and lead nursing and/or multidisciplinary teams in sound ergonomic principles within a framework of clinical governance, supervision and audit</li> </ul>

## Part 2: OHN competence dimensions as level descriptors for practice (continued)

1) OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH NURSING – OCCUPATIONAL HYGIENE		
COMPETENT	EXPERIENCED	EXPERT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is sufficiently aware of the effect of the environment upon health and health outcomes (e.g. occupational induced diseases mapped to occupational exposures in employing organisations, for example occupational hearing loss and occupation lung disease) to provide advice</li> <li>Utilise basic understanding of control measures for both personal protection and environmental protection (e.g. personal protection, removal of hazard, ventilation, shielding, guarding, substitution, etc.) and basic knowledge of principles of hazard identification/definition and the assessment of residual risk, taking account of control measures, to provide advice</li> <li>Understand the complementary roles the occupational health adviser (occupational health promotion and ill health prevention) and that of the occupational hygienist, and contribute information towards departmental and operational reports relating to occupational hygiene and environmental surveys</li> <li>Advise individuals on occupational hygiene preventative measures, and participate in environmental surveys with the support of others</li> <li>Be able to find and understand statutory and advisory standards relating to occupational hygiene and environmental control</li> <li>Contribute to occupational hygiene measurement, control and education by following guidance in policies and procedures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use knowledge of occupational and environmental hazard identification, risk assessment and control measures to provide advice</li> <li>Assess and utilise specialist information and support for hazard identification and risk control as required (e.g. noise assessments, ventilation assessment ,etc)</li> <li>Utilise experience, skills and knowledge of the principles and practice of risk assessment, to advise both individuals and departments at operational level on occupational hygiene matters</li> <li>Advise when and what specialist occupational hygiene input is required, and be competent to undertake environmental surveys that are applicable to the local requirements of the employing organisation</li> <li>Contribute to the management of occupational hygiene by participating in multidisciplinary working across the extended occupational health team (including external agencies and advisers)</li> <li>Utilise accurate and up to date information to inform practice, and be able to apply knowledge of statutory and advisory standards in the assessment of occupational hygiene hazard/ risk assessment</li> <li>Produce accurate, effective and helpful occupational hygiene and environmental survey reports for management at operational level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilise excellent skills and knowledge of occupational and environmental hazard identification, risk assessment and control measures</li> <li>Utilise a wide and appropriate evidence base to inform a higher level of occupational hygiene practice and be competent to undertake detailed occupational hygiene and environmental survey activities</li> <li>Interpret statutory and advisory guidance for occupational hygiene and occupational environmental matters and be able to provide occupational health advice and leadership at strategic level</li> <li>Lead on development, implementation and management of occupational health nurse policies and procedures in occupational hygiene and environmental survey activity, and contribute as a key partner to the development and implementation of occupational hygiene and environmental health policies and procedures at the strategic level</li> <li>Produce effective management reports which impact upon occupational hygiene and environmental safety activities and resources</li> <li>Maintain and develop internal and external networks to inform occupational hygiene and environmental knowledge and activities; obtain and disseminate knowledge and information on occupational hygiene and environmental monitoring by attendance and contribution at national and international venues</li> </ul>

## Part 2: OHN competence dimensions as level descriptors for practice (continued)

12) OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH NURSING – MAINTAINING SAFETY AND ACCIDENT CONTROL		
COMPETENT	EXPERIENCED	EXPERT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow a personal development plan to develop knowledge and skills in the areas of health and safety legislation (including the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR), organisational safety and training, accident reporting, report writing, pre-employment selection and placement, health and safety surveillance, and organisational and departmental health and safety policies and procedures</li> <li>Practice under the guidance of occupational health nursing policies and protocols and health and safety policies and procedures</li> <li>Gather information and communicate health and safety information within the occupational health team and with clients</li> <li>Acquire knowledge and skills to be able to provide basic advice on safe systems of work, personal and protective equipment (PPE), environmental safety, employee job placement safety, employee health surveillance, and rehabilitation following health and safety-related sickness absence</li> <li>Acquire knowledge and skills to be able to provide psychological support following accident/incidents, and to provide health and safety education for employees and groups within the organisation</li> <li>Comply with measures to implement strategies for emergency response to serious public health threats such as serious accidents or incidents, influenza and other communicable diseases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building upon competent practice, be able to communicate and negotiate for health and safety strategies at operational level, and contribute to the development and implementation of health and safety policy within an organisation</li> <li>Utilise experience and enhanced skills to interpret health and safety legislation, apply the principles of hazard and risk control, and undertake a range of risk assessment strategies without supervision</li> <li>Gather and interpret health and safety data, and articulate cost benefit analysis of effective health and safety behaviour to individuals and groups</li> <li>Advise on safe systems of work, personal and protective equipment (PPE), environmental safety, employee job placement safety, employee health surveillance, and rehabilitation following health and safety-related sickness absence</li> <li>Provide psychological support following accident/incidents; provide health and safety education to employees and groups within the organisation and contribute to health and safety promotion at a strategic level</li> <li>Act as an advocate for occupational health and safety within the organisation, and work autonomously within a framework of clinical governance and clinical supervision</li> <li>Develop, implement and evaluate strategies that facilitate emergency preparedness and response to public health threats and serious accident or incidents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Possess additional knowledge and experience to provide expert interpretation and advice on health and safety legislation and hazard and risk control</li> <li>Communicate and negotiate for health and safety strategies at operational level and strategic levels and contribute to the development and implementation of health and safety policies throughout the organisation and within the occupational health department</li> <li>Have advanced interpretative skills and be able to manage and lead on the gathering, interpretation and dissemination of health and safety data; to articulate the cost benefit analysis of effective health and safety behaviour for individuals and groups, and to influence safety behaviour at an organisational level</li> <li>Use a wide range of risk assessment strategies and be able to generate and disseminate effective health and safety management reports</li> <li>Take the occupational health nursing lead for advice on safe systems of work, personal and protective equipment (PPE), environmental safety, employee job placement safety, employee health surveillance, and rehabilitation following health and safety-related sickness absence</li> <li>Utilise advanced practice when providing psychological support following accident/incidents, and lead on occupational health and safety promotion at organisational and strategic level</li> <li>Collaborate with the employer and wider occupational health team to plan strategies which ensure the organisation is prepared and able to respond to serious public health threats, accidents or incidents</li> </ul>

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# APPENDIX 1: Mapping of RCN OHN competences against NMC standards for specialist community public health nursing

## The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) New Standards and register

In 2004 the NMC determined that there would be three parts to the register for nurses, midwives, and specialist community public health nurses, the latter forming Part 3 of the register. These standards will be reviewed by the NMC in 2011.

### Development of standards

The NMC decided to establish a part of the register for specialist community public health nurses because it took the view that this form of practice has distinct characteristics that require public protection. These include the responsibility to work with both individuals and a population, which may mean taking decisions on behalf of a community or population without having direct contact with every individual in that community. The primary purpose of standards for registration is to provide the mechanism through which the NMC can exercise its main function of protecting the public.

### Entry to Part 3 of the register

The new third part of the register is currently open to the three groups of nurses designated as having a significant role as public health nurses; they are health visitors; school nurses and occupational health nurses. Those OHN who already hold an NMC recordable qualification (at certificate, diploma or degree) will automatically be transferred to Part 3 of the register. Those nurses wishing to train as a qualified OHN, will in future, will be required to complete a programme of study at a minimum of 1st degree, that has been approved by the NMC as meeting their Standards of Proficiency. (Go to [www.nmc-uk.org](http://www.nmc-uk.org) for full information on the New Part 3 of the register and the *Standards of Proficiency for Specialist Community Public Health Nurses*, (NMC, August 2004).

### Standards of proficiency

Proficiency for entry to the register is reflected in the new *Specialist Community Public Health Nursing Programme* (NMC, August 2004), which is underpinned by ten key principles of public health practice and grouped into four domains. The following tables have mapped these key principals and domains against the RCN OHN Competences which were identified by OHN stakeholders as the essential elements for practice.

## Mapping

The following mapping exercise demonstrates that there is a close correlation between the aspirations of OHN key stakeholders and the NMC on determining proficiency and competence to practice as a specialist OHN.

<p><b>NMC PRINCIPLE 1</b> Surveillance and assessment of the population's health and wellbeing</p> <p><b>NMC DOMAIN 1: SEARCH FOR HEALTH NEEDS</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collect and structure data and information on the health and wellbeing and related needs of a defined population.</li> <li>2. Analyse, interpret and communicate data and information on the health and wellbeing and related needs of a defined population.</li> <li>3. Develop and sustain relationships with groups and individuals with the aim of improving health and social wellbeing.</li> <li>4. Identify individuals, families and groups who are at risk and in need of further support.</li> <li>5. Undertake screening of individuals and populations and respond appropriately to findings.</li> </ol>	<p><b>EMBEDDED IN RCN OHN COMPETENCY DESCRIPTORS FOR:</b></p> <p>OHN – Core transferable skills</p> <p>OHN – Core quality assurance and research skills</p> <p>OHN – Risk assessment</p> <p>OHN – Health promotion, protection and surveillance</p> <p>OHN – Case management, retention and rehabilitation</p> <p>OHN – Ergonomics</p> <p>OHN – Occupational hygiene</p>
<p><b>NMC PRINCIPLE 2</b> Collaborative working for health and wellbeing; working with, and for, communities to improve health and wellbeing</p> <p><b>NMC DOMAIN 2: STIMULATION OF AWARENESS OF HEALTH NEEDS</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Raise awareness about health and social wellbeing and related factors, services and resources.</li> <li>2. Develop, sustain and evaluate collaborative work.</li> <li>3. Communicate with individuals, groups and communities about promoting their health and wellbeing.</li> <li>4. Raise awareness about the actions that groups and individuals can take to improve their health and social wellbeing.</li> <li>5. Develop capacity and confidence of individuals and groups, including families and communities, to influence and use available services, information and skills, acting as advocate where appropriate.</li> <li>6. Work with others to protect the public's health and well being from specific risks.</li> </ol>	<p><b>EMBEDDED IN RCN OHN COMPETENCY DESCRIPTORS FOR:</b></p> <p>OHN – Core transferable skills</p> <p>OHN – Core leadership and management skills</p> <p>OHN – Core quality assurance and research Skills</p> <p>OHN – Health promotion, protection and surveillance</p> <p>OHN – Risk assessment</p> <p>OHN – Case management, retention and rehabilitation</p> <p>OHN – Psychological and psychosocial interventions</p>
<p><b>MC PRINCIPLE 3</b> Developing health programmes and services and reducing inequalities; policy and strategy development and implementation to improve health and wellbeing; research and development to improve health and wellbeing</p> <p><b>NMC DOMAIN 3: INFLUENCE POLICIES AFFECTING HEALTH</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work with others to plan, implement and evaluate programmes and projects to improve health and wellbeing.</li> <li>2. Identify and evaluate service provision and support networks for individuals, families and groups in the local area or setting.</li> <li>3. Appraise policies and recommend changes to improve health and wellbeing.</li> <li>4. Interpret and apply health and safety legislation and approved codes of practice with regard for the environment, wellbeing and protection of those who work with the wider community.</li> <li>5. Contribute to policy development.</li> <li>6. Influence policies affecting health.</li> <li>7. Develop, implement, evaluate and improve practice on the basis of research, evidence and evaluation.</li> </ol>	<p><b>EMBEDDED IN RCN OHN COMPETENCY DESCRIPTORS FOR:</b></p> <p>OHN – Core transferable skills</p> <p>OHN – Core leadership and management skills</p> <p>OHN – Core quality assurance and research skills</p> <p>OHN – Legal and ethical issues</p> <p>OHN – Risk assessment</p> <p>OHN – Maintaining safety and accident control</p>

<p><b>NMC PRINCIPLE 4:</b> Promoting and protecting the population's health and wellbeing; developing quality and risk management within an evaluative culture; Strategic leadership for health and wellbeing; ethically managing self, people and resources to improve health and wellbeing.</p> <p><b>NMC DOMAIN 4:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work in partnership with others to prevent the occurrence of needs and risks related to health and wellbeing.</li> <li>2. Work in partnership with others to protect the public's health and wellbeing from specific risks.</li> <li>3. Prevent, identify and minimize risk of interpersonal abuse or violence, safeguarding children and other vulnerable people, initiating the management of cases involving actual or potential abuse or violence where needed.</li> <li>4. Apply leadership skills and manage projects to improve health and wellbeing.</li> <li>5. Plan, deliver and evaluate programmes to improve the health and wellbeing of individuals and groups.</li> <li>6. Manage teams, individuals and resources ethically and effectively.</li> </ol>	<p><b>EMBEDDED IN RCN OHN COMPETENCY DESCRIPTORS FOR:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Core transferable skills</li> <li>Core leadership and management skills</li> <li>Core quality assurance and research skills</li> <li>Legal and ethical issues</li> <li>Risk assessment</li> <li>Case management, retention and rehabilitation</li> <li>Psychological and psychosocial interventions</li> <li>Ergonomics</li> <li>Occupational hygiene</li> </ul>
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## APPENDIX 2: Acknowledgements

### **The RCN competency review group comprised:**

*Cynthia Atwell* – Former Chair of the RCN Society of Occupational Health Nursing and RCN Public Health Forum

*Carol Bannister* – Independent Practitioner and Researcher and author of the document

*Tammie Daly* – Nurse Consultant in occupational health nursing, Derby Hospitals NHS Trust

*Mairi Gaffney* – Manager, NHS Services Scotland, committee member of the RCN Public Health Forum

*Rebecca Elliot* – Senior Lecturer, Leeds Metropolitan University

*Cathy Harrison* – Senior Professional Advisor, Occupational Health, Health & Work Health Improvement and Protection Directorate, Department of Health

*Graham Johnson* – Clinical Lead - Nursing, Clinical Quality and Governance, Bupa Health and Wellbeing, UK

*Helen Kirk* – NHS Health & Wellbeing Champion, committee member of the RCN Public Health Forum

*Jan Maw* – RCN Adviser in Public Health

*Kev O'Connor* – Head of Occupational Health Northern HSC Trust

*Caroline Whitaker* – Lecturer, Glamorgan University



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