

General practice nurse competences framework – aligned to the *Knowledge and Skills Framework* version 7

Overview of the *Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF)* outline for the general practice nurse (GPN).

NHS KSF dimensions	Needed for post?	Level for post – GPN				
		1	2	3	4	Notes
Core dimensions (relate to all NHS posts)						
1. Communication	Yes			✓		
2. Personal and people development	Yes			✓		
3. Health, safety and security	Yes		✓			
4. Service improvement	Yes		✓			
5. Quality	Yes		✓			
6. Equality and diversity	Yes			✓		
Specific dimensions						
Health and well-being (HWB)						
HWB1 Promotion of health and well-being and prevention of adverse effects to health and well-being	Yes		✓			
HWB2 Assessment and care planning to meet people's health and well-being needs	Yes			✓		
HWB3 Protection of health and well-being	Yes		✓			
HWB4 Enablement to address health and well-being needs	Yes		✓			
HWB5 Provision of care to meet health and well-being needs	Yes			✓		

NHS KSF dimensions	Needed for post?	Level for post – GPN					Notes
		1	2	3	4		
HWB6 Assessment and treatment planning	Yes			✓			
HWB7 Interventions and treatments	Yes			✓			
Information and knowledge (IK)							
IK1 Information processing	Yes		✓				
IK2 Information collection and analysis	Yes	✓					
IK3 Knowledge and information resources	Yes		✓				
General							
G1 Learning and development	Yes	✓					
G2 Development and innovation	Yes	✓					
G3 Procurement and commissioning							
G4 Financial management							
G5 Services and project management							
G6 People management							
G7 Capacity and capability							
G8 Public relations and marketing	Yes	✓					

Core dimensions

Core dimension 1 – communication (level 3)

When working at this level GPNs are required to: 'develop and maintain communication with people about difficult matters and/or in difficult situations.'

This applicable to the GPN level because they are required to:

- *communicate with a wide range of people*
- *cope with communication differences and various contextual backgrounds*
- *communicate with people in a way that:*
 - *is consistent with their level of understanding, culture, background and preferred ways of communicating*
 - *is appropriate to the purpose of the communication and the context in which it is taking place*
 - *encourages effective communication between all involved*
- *recognise and reflect barriers to effective communication and modify communication in response*
- *provide feedback to other workers on their communication at appropriate times*
- *keep accurate and complete records of activities and communications consistent with legislation, policies and procedures*
- *communicate in a manner that is consistent with relevant legislation, policies and procedures.*

Application of level 3 – communication dimension to the GPN role

To demonstrate competence at this level the GPN:	Comments
Manages routine consultations with patients, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• initiating the consultation/time management• gathering the information/history taking• identifying problems appropriate for nurse management• clinical reasoning: deciding on course of action to undertake or the level and speed of referral• planning and exploration of next steps• closing the consultation• being aware of potential barriers to communication	
Recognises and communicates effectively with patients in sensitive or difficult situations, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• disability• bereavement• terminal illness• distressed or angry patients	
Communicates effectively with the practice team and other professionals to enhance patient care and the overall efficiency of the practice	

To demonstrate competence at this level the GPN:	Comments
Has an understanding of the ethical issues and clinical audit that impinge on general practice, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the responsibilities and obligations of the Data Protection Act (HMS) 1998, regarding patient confidentiality clearly represent the patient's viewpoint to others 	
Delegates clearly and appropriately using the principles of good delegation	

Core dimension 2 – personal and people development (level 3)

When working at this level GPNs are required to: 'develop oneself and contribute to the development of others.'

This applicable to the GPN level because they are required to:

- reflect on and evaluate how well they apply knowledge and skills to meet current and emerging work demands and the requirements of the KSF outline for the post*
- identify their own development needs and set their own personal development objectives in discussion and review*
- take responsibility for their own personal development and maintain a personal development portfolio*
- make effective use of learning opportunities within and outside the workplace, evaluating their effectiveness and feeding back relevant information*
- enable others to develop and apply their knowledge and skills in practice*
- contribute to the development of others in a manner that is consistent with legislation, policies and procedures*
- contribute to developing the workplace as a learning environment.*

Application of level 3 – personal and people development dimension to the GPN role

To demonstrate competence at this level the GPN:	Comments
Recognises and promotes the wide remit of the GPN	
Applies clinical governance principles and practice	
Recognises and understands the roles of individuals working within the primary health care team and understands the interface with the roles of other practitioners and agencies	
Works with the changing structures of health care provision and the key issues affecting a primary care-led NHS, including the <i>new General Medical Services (nGMS) contract</i>	
Has familiarity with local and national policies, including the <i>National Skills Frameworks (NSFs)</i> and incorporates these within practice	

To demonstrate competence at this level the GPN:	Comments
Demonstrates awareness of the legal issues pertinent to working as a GPN, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accountability and delegated responsibility • consent (www.dh.gov.uk) • duty of care • vicarious liability • record keeping • use of clinical guidelines/protocols/patient group directions 	
Is involved in clinical supervision at individual, organisational and service levels	
Uses the principles of reflective practice to support and maintain a personal portfolio and professional development plan	
Identifies any specific training and support required and works with the practice to access this	
Acts as a mentor/teacher/assessor to others (under direction) in a clinical situation, if qualified to do so	

Core dimension 3 – health, safety and security (level 2)

When working at this level GPNs are required to: ‘monitor and maintain the health, safety and security of self and others.’

This applicable to the GPN level because they are required to:

- *identify and assess the potential risks involved in work activities and processes for self and others*
- *identify how best to manage the risks*
- *undertake work activities consistent with:*
 - *legislation, policies and procedures*
 - *the assessment and management of risk*
- *take the appropriate action to manage an emergency, summoning assistance immediately when it is necessary*
- *report actual or potential problems that may put health, safety and security at risk and suggest how they might be addressed*
- *support others in maintaining health, safety and security.*

Application of level 2 – health, safety and security dimension to the GPN role

To demonstrate competence at this level the GPN:	Comments
Ensures safe storage, rotation and disposal of vaccines and drugs under your control	
<p>Deals with emergency situations when appropriate, and uses local guidelines to manage the emergency response and treatment for conditions including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • anaphylaxis and resuscitation techniques • acute chest pain • hypo/hyperglycaemia • exacerbation of asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease • haemorrhage • trauma 	
<p>Applies infection control measures within the practice according to local and national guidelines, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hand washing • universal hygiene precautions • collection and handling of laboratory specimens • segregation and disposal of waste materials • decontamination of instruments and clinical equipment • reporting and treatment of sharps injuries • dealing with blood and body fluid spillages 	
Works with patients and colleagues, adhering to and encouraging robust infection control measures	
Identifies and takes action (where appropriate) on the risks to health of microbiological and chemical hazards within the working environment according to COSHH regulations (COSHH 1994)	
<p>Knows, adheres to and promotes safe practices including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • health and safety procedures and documentation within the workplace, • fire procedures • personal security systems • the monitoring and reporting of the state of equipment and furniture • current recommendations for the safe use of VDU screens 	
Identifies and reports any concerns	

Core dimension 4 – service improvement (level 2)

When working at this level GPNs are required to: 'contribute to the improvement of services.'

This applicable to the GPN level because they are required to:

- *discuss and agree with the work team:*
 - *the implications of direction, policies and strategies on current practice*
 - *the changes that can be made as a team*
 - *the changes that can be made as an individual*
 - *how to take changes forward*
- *agree on constructive changes to work in an agreed timescale, seeking support as and when necessary*
- *support others in understanding and implementing agreed changes – evaluate their own and other's work when required to do so, completing relevant documentation*
- *make constructive suggestions as to how services can be improved for users and the public*
- *constructively identify issues with direction, policies and strategies in the interests of patients and the public.*

Application of level 2 – service improvement dimension to the GPN role

To demonstrate competence at this level the GPN:	Comments
Knows the audit policies of local general practice; is involved in clinical audits and uses these to support the setting and monitoring of standards of care	
Contributes to the preparation of local guidelines, protocols and standards and understands how such documents are developed	
Is aware of current research approaches into patient care and incorporates these in practice	
Is aware of the current approaches to the management of patient care within general practice and the role of the 'expert patient'	
Works with others as appropriate on the development of current and new services and other initiatives	

Core dimension 5 – quality (level 2)

When working at this level GPNs are required to: 'maintain quality in your own work and encourage others to do so.'

This applicable to the GPN level because they are required to:

- *act consistently with legislation, policies, procedures and other quality approaches, and encourage others to do so*
- *work within the limits of their own competence and levels of responsibility and accountability*
- *work as an effective and responsible team member*
- *prioritise their own workload and organise their own work accordingly*
- *use and maintain resources efficiently and effectively, and encourage others to do so*
- *monitor the quality of work in their own area and alert others to quality issues.*

Application of level 2 – quality dimension to the GPN role

To demonstrate competence at this level the GPN:	Comments
Ensures work is aligned with current evidence-based practice for general practice nursing through reflective practice and training and work within own recognised scope of practice and Nursing and Midwifery Council <i>Professional Code of Conduct</i>	
Contributes to team development with suggestions based on clinical experience	
Gives and receives feedback professionally	
Defuses difficult situations using problem resolution skills to reduce potential for formal complaints	
Ensures that difficult situations are reported to the appropriate personnel	
For areas within own clinical responsibility: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is aware and manages situations of potential risk in accordance with the principles of clinical governance • reports any significant critical incidents • knows and implements the practice policies including the 'whistle blowing' policy • practices in accordance with professionally benchmarked standards of care • facilitates patient access to appropriate professionals in the practice team and beyond 	
Is able to manage own time effectively	
Controls and orders stock items to ensure supplies are available in treatment and consulting rooms	
Demonstrates cost implications of the work undertaken, ensuring compliance with local prescribing policies	

Core dimension 6 – equality and diversity (level 3)

When working at this level GPNs are required to: 'promote equality and value diversity.'

This applicable to the GPN level because they are required to:

- *interpret equality, diversity and rights in accordance with legislation, policies, procedures and relevant standards*
- *evaluate the extent to which legislation is applied in the culture and environment of own sphere of activity*
- *identify patterns of discrimination and take action to overcome discrimination and promote diversity and equality of opportunity*
- *facilitate the promotion of equality and diversity and a non-discriminatory culture*
- *support people who need assistance in exercising their rights.*

Application of level 3 – equality and diversity dimension to the GPN role

To demonstrate competence at this level the GPN:	Comments
<p>Understands and adopts the latest guidelines issued by professional bodies with patients, patients' relatives and colleagues. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • confidentiality • consent • personal preferences and beliefs (the patient's and your own) • the patient's right to make their own decisions • other ethical issues 	
<p>Ensures adherence to local chaperoning policies</p>	
<p>Recognises the signs of, and adheres to, local policies on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • family violence • vulnerable adults • substance abuse • addictive behaviour • child abuse • making referrals as appropriate 	
<p>Understands the basic legal issues concerning child abuse, including being aware of statutory child health procedures and statutory local guidance</p>	
<p>Guides and supports patients in accessing relevant information about voluntary and statutory services at both local or national levels (eg Patient Advice and Liaison Service [PALS])</p>	
<p>Provides information to all patients in an appropriate way, recognising any difficulties there may be and referring to alternative sources where appropriate</p>	

Specific *KSF* NHS dimensions

Health and well-being

HWB1 – Promotion of health and well-being and prevention of adverse effects on health and well-being (level 2)

When working at this level GPNs are required to: 'plan, develop and implement approaches to promote health and well-being and prevent adverse effects on health and well-being.'

HWB2 – Assessment and care planning to meet health and well-being needs (level 3)

When working at this level GPNs are required to: 'assess health and well-being needs and develop, monitor and review care plans to meet specific needs.'

HWB3 – Protection of health and well-being (level 2)

When working at this level GPNs are required to: 'contribute to protecting people at risk.'

HWB4 – Enablement to address health and well-being needs (level 2)

When working at this level GPNs are required to: 'enable people to meet ongoing health and well-being needs.'

HWB5 – Provision of care to meet health and well-being needs (level 3)

When working at this level GPNs are required to: 'plan, deliver and evaluate care to meet people's health and well-being needs.'

HWB6 – Assessment and treatment planning (level 3)

When working at this level GPNs are required to: 'assess physiological and/or psychological functioning and develop, monitor and review related treatment plans' (Gateway 3/4).

HWB7 – Interventions and treatments (level 3)

When working at this level GPNs are required to: 'plan, deliver and evaluate interventions and/or treatments.'

Application of HWB1 (level 2), HWB2 (level 3), HWB3 (level 2), HWB4 (level 2), HWB5 (level 3), HWB6 (level 3/4) and HWB7 (level 3) to the GPN role

To demonstrate competence at this level the GPN:	Comments
<p>Undertakes clinical assessment</p> <p>Undertakes, records and follows guidelines for the following procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • urinalysis and preparation of specimens for the laboratory • the measurement of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – blood pressure. – pulse rate and rhythm – temperature – height and weight – visual acuity – leg measurements prior to prescribing of support hosiery • electrocardiograms (ECGs) • blood glucose monitoring • venepuncture • body mass index • patient's inhaler techniques and peak flow readings • spirometry 	
<p>Following recommended processes, is able to obtain samples and/or swabs from patients as a delegated task or based on clinical presentation (eg ear, chlamydia, high vaginal swabs)</p>	
<p>With the appropriately sensitive communication style, ensures the patient is fully informed and understands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the background and rationale for the test • the process for obtaining and communicating results 	
<p>Management of long-term conditions</p> <p>Knows the high-risk indicators for patients with undiagnosed long-term conditions and either undertakes routine diagnostic tests with the patient's consent or refers as appropriate</p>	
<p>Assists in the diagnosis, monitoring and management of patients with long-term conditions, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • diabetes • chronic obstructive pulmonary disease • hypertension • coronary heart disease • asthma • epilepsy • neurological conditions (eg multiple sclerosis) 	
<p>Has a working knowledge of the above diseases as required to fulfil designated clinical role in the practice – designated role to be agreed with the senior nurse and/or GP</p>	

To demonstrate competence at this level the GPN:	Comments
According to practice need and having undertaken appropriate training, provides clinical care for the monitoring and review of long-term conditions, especially those specified overleaf	
Where appropriate, provides support and encouragement to patients to self manage their conditions	
Recognises the benefits of, and works in alignment with, the 'well-informed' and 'expert' patient	
<p>Therapeutic monitoring</p> <p>Uses a holistic patient approach to check compliance with and adherence to prescribed treatments and is able to identify abnormalities</p>	
<p>Has knowledge of and works within practice guidelines to monitor and advise patients regarding the review processes for the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hypothyroid • hyperthyroid • rheumatoid arthritis • iron deficiency anaemia • pernicious anaemia • epilepsy • mental health conditions • anticoagulant therapy 	
<p>Wound management</p> <p>Is able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the healing process • undertake initial assessment of patients presenting with minor injuries • assess and care for uncomplicated wounds, referring when appropriate • apply a range of dressings according to assessed needs • assess pain and recommend or refer as appropriate • undertake suture removal • be aware of and use the current guidelines on tetanus prophylaxis • educate the patient in wound self care and monitor as appropriate • undertake Doppler Assessment and compression bandaging for leg ulcer management, having completed appropriate training • fulfil infection control principles and practice 	

To demonstrate competence at this level the GPN:	Comments
<p>Family planning and sexual health</p> <p>Is aware of, implements and provides advice on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protocols and patient group directions (PGDs) for dispensing emergency contraception • local agencies providing advice for unwanted pregnancies • referral for insertion of IUD/IUS • local health improvement and modernisation programme policies for reducing teenage pregnancies • local infertility guidelines and referral pathways • sexually transmitted infections – local referral pathways and associate lifestyle risk factors • local HIV/AIDS policies and referral pathways • local genitourinary medicine clinical service provision. 	
<p>Is able to advise on precautions and contraindications regarding the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • oral contraception • emergency contraception • hormone injections • IUDs/IUS • hormone implants • natural methods • barrier methods • male and female sterilisation 	
<p>Women's health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides support, advice and, if appropriate is involved with care for patients presenting with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – vaginal discharge – urinary incontinence 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes an initial assessment, referring as appropriate, of patients presenting with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the effects of the menopause, management of symptoms, hormone replacement therapy, osteoporosis – abnormalities of menstruation, including pre-menstrual syndrome – the effects of hysterectomy – infertility and pre-conceptual issues 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaches and encourage patients to be 'breast aware' 	

To demonstrate competence at this level the GPN:	Comments
<p>Men's health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is aware of the morbidity and mortality statistics relevant to Men's Health (<i>Saving Lives: Our Healthier Nation</i>); (HMSO 1999) • Provides support, advice and, if appropriate, manages or is involved in care for patients presenting with or for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – well-man checks – sexual health problems – testicular cancer – prostate disease, including cancer – breast cancer – erectile dysfunction 	
<p>Health promotion</p> <p>Assesses patient's readiness to change; provides support and management or refers as appropriate in cases of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • smoking • exercise • diet • sexual health • women's and men's health • healthy living for older people <p>Is familiar with sources of reliable information, for example, NHS Direct and the National Electronic Library.</p>	
<p>Health screening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertakes new patient checks recognising health promotion opportunities • Is familiar with the workings of 'The NHS breast screening service', especially local implementation 	
<p>Performs (after undertaking appropriate training and updates) cervical cytology sampling according to NHSCSP (NHS cervical screening programme) standards, including audit, and understands the national and local call-and-recall system</p>	
<p>Travel health</p> <p>Supported by a senior colleague, assesses travel health needs of patients and delivers a holistic approach to travel health, providing comprehensive advice for patients prior to travel, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vaccinations and medications • malarial prophylaxis and bite avoidance • safe sex/sexual health • food hygiene • sun protection • first aid and emergency medication • risk of travel/need for health insurance • appropriate written information • self care measures 	

To demonstrate competence at this level the GPN:	Comments
Administers injections as appropriate according to local guidelines and policies	
Provides guidance in accordance with policies and identifies any potential problems for the patient	
Immunisation of children and adults Assesses and if appropriate administers injections under an individualised prescription or PGD (child and adult)	
Contributes to the development of practice guidelines	
Minor surgery Assists senior practitioners in providing minor surgery sessions	
Ear care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertakes ear care based on knowledge of the latest evidence-based practice in relation to ear care • Provides advice for patients on safe ear care in accordance with national guidelines 	
Mental health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administers appropriate prescribed therapies and monitors for side effects • Understands the role of the key worker and communicates as required 	
Provides care and support for patients and carers in accordance with the <i>NSF for Mental Health</i> and is able to recognise mental illness and promote mental health	
Has a basic understanding of the following conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • depression • post-partum affective disorders • schizophrenia • dementia • substance abuse • eating disorders 	

Information and knowledge

IK1– Information processing (level 2)

When working at this level GPNs are required to: 'modify, structure, maintain and present data and information.'

IK2 – Information collection and analysis (level 1)

When working at this level GPNs are required to: 'input, store and provide information.'

IK3 – Information collection and analysis (level 2)

When working at this level GPNs are required to: 'maintain knowledge and information resources, and help others to access and use them.'

Application of IK1 – information processing (level 2), IK2 – information collection and analysis (level 1) and IK3 – information collection and analysis (level 2) to the GPN role

To demonstrate competence at this level the GPN:	Comments
Ensures accurate documentation/record keeping procedures in line with practice policy and NMC guidelines	
Uses a computer and manages files	
Records, retrieves and accesses information	
Reviews and processes data using accurate read codes about patients in order to ensure easy and accurate retrieval for monitoring and audit purposes (eg QMAS, the Quality Management and Analysis System) including the appointment system	
If appropriate, is able to make appointments for patients electronically	
Is able to access and send e-mail, including attachments	
Manages information searches using the internet and local library databases, for example the retrieval of relevant information for patients on their condition/diagnosis	
Understands and is able to describe the role of the Caldicott Guardian and knows the name of their local nominated health care professional	
Is familiar with and understands own responsibility to the individual and the organisation regarding the Freedom of Information Act	

General

Dimension G1 – learning and development (level 1)

When working at this level GPNs are required to: 'assist with learning and development activities.'

This applicable to the GPN level because they are required to:

- *identify with the relevant people the activities to be undertaken to support learning and development*
- *undertake the task effectively and timely with legislation, policies and procedures*
- *report any difficulties or problems at an appropriate time to a team member.*

Application of G1 – learning and development dimension (level 1) to the GPN role

To demonstrate competence at this level the GPN:	Comments
Contributes to the provision of learning opportunities for colleagues	
Acts as a mentor/coach for more junior staff (eg pre-registration nurses or health care assistants) assessing competency against set standards, as requested, if appropriately qualified	
Disseminates learning and information gained to other team members in order to share good practice and inform others about current and future developments (eg courses and conferences)	
Undertakes specific training exercises such as observed clinical practice, as requested, and facilitates shadowing of role	

Dimension G2 – development and innovation (level 1)

When working at this level GPNs are required to: 'appraise concepts, models, methods, practices, products and equipment as developed by others.'

This applicable to the GPN level because they are required to:

- *identify new developments made by others that might be relevant to own area of work*
- *critically evaluate and review developments to determine if and how they could be applied within own area of work*
- *propose the adoption of relevant developments within own work area to relevant decision makers.*

Application of G2 – development and innovation dimension (level 1) to the GPN role

To demonstrate competence at this level the GPN:	Comments
Critically evaluates and reviews innovations and developments that are relevant to own area of work	
Keeps up-to-date with new developments locally and nationally, identifying those that will enhance the team's work. Influence other team members to undertake trials of changes in care delivery	

Dimension G8 – public relations and marketing (level 1)

When working at this level, the GPNs are required to: 'assist with public relations and marketing activity.'

This applicable to the GPN level because they are required to:

- *identify with the team the tasks related to public relations and marketing that need to be undertaken*
- *undertake the task effectively to time and consistent with legislation, policy and procedures*
- *report any difficulties or problems at an appropriate time to a team member.*

Application of G8 – public relations and marketing dimension (level 1) to the GPN role

To demonstrate competence at this level the GPN:	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Markets how the role of the GPN enhances the services offered by general practice to the public, other health care professionals and wider stakeholders and policy makers• Discusses, highlights and works with the team to create opportunities to promote the team, the practice and its services in the local community	