

# Nursing Workforce Standards Checklist



**This Nursing Workforce Standards Checklist is designed to support the nursing workforce and pre-registration nursing students in applying the RCN's Nursing Workforce Standards (the Standards).**

**The Standards are a blueprint for tackling nursing staff shortages across the UK. They support the nursing workforce to be safe and effective. They set the standards for high quality, evidence-based patient/service user care in all health and care settings in the UK, working with each nation's legislation.**

Evidence and experience have shown that having the right number of nursing staff, with the right skills, in the right place, at the right time improves health outcomes, the quality of care delivered, and patient/service user safety.

**There are 14 Nursing Workforce Standards with three key themes:**

Responsibility and accountability (Standards 1-4)

Clinical leadership and safety (Standards 5-10)

Health, safety and wellbeing (Standards 11-14)

The nursing workforce team consists of:

- **Registered nurses** from newly registered nurse to the most senior nurse such as the chief nurses/directors of nursing/executive level nurses.
- **Nursing support workers** nursing associates, assistant practitioners, health care assistants, clinical support workers and health care support workers.
- **Pre-registration nursing students**, BSc students, MSc students, PGDip students, student nursing associates and nursing apprenticeship students.

The **registered nurse (RN) lead** is the individual leading and supporting a team and/or service such as: team leaders, managers, charge nurses, sisters, matrons, senior nurses, and directors/associate directors of nursing.

The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Standards Checklist can be used:

- as a **self-evaluation tool** to identify training, learning and development needs by any member of the nursing workforce
- to **standardise** what is offered to nursing workforce and departments by a manager, matron, or team leader
- to give **frontline to board assurance** that supportive interventions are available and accessible to all the nursing workforce by a nurse director
- as a tool for registered nurses, nursing support workers and students to use as a **benchmark** for their workplace.

Please answer **Yes, No or N/A** as you explore the Standards Checklist.

The Checklist will help you to identify aspects of your current work that you should **continue to do** with pride. Celebrate, and share your successes!

You may also identify **areas of improvement**. Please speak with your line manager to seek their support in making local improvements that are meaningful to you, your colleagues and the patients and service users you support. Your local RCN representative and RCN staff can support you if you are having challenges.

There might be areas that may **not be applicable** at present. However, this may change later if you change roles or workplaces.

Please **provide evidence** of how you are or are not achieving the Standards in the examples and comments section. Thank you.

### The RCN Nursing Workforce Standards



[rcn.org.uk/nursingworkforcestandards](https://rcn.org.uk/nursingworkforcestandards)

# Health, safety and wellbeing checklist:

## Standards 11-14

### STANDARD 11

Working patterns for the nursing workforce must be based on best practice and safe working. Working patterns must be agreed in consultation with staff, and their trade union representatives.

		Yes	No	N/A	Comments and examples
11a	Do you work long hours? (i.e. more than 8 hours a day/night?)				
	Have you had a discussion with your line manager about the risks of working long hours? (e.g. work-related stress, loss of concentration, fatigue-related errors, and potential burnout)				
	From the discussions, have you identified any mitigations to reduce risks?				
	Has the discussion been recorded in your staff file?				
	Has this risk been reviewed and updated in your last annual review?				
	Do you routinely work three long days/nights in a row? (i.e. long days/nights are more than 8 hours?)				
	Do you have a full 48-hour rest period after completing a night shift and before starting a day shift?				
	Do you routinely work a mixture of night and day shifts in a week?				
	Do you undertake any on-call duties?				
	If so, after attending an on-call shift at night, do you have a full 48-hour rest period before starting a day shift?				
11b	Do you have a flexible working policy in your organisation?				
	Are you able to request fixed working days?				
	Are you able to request short days/nights? (i.e. 8 hours or less)				
	Do you have an opportunity to self/team roster?				
	Have you had a flexible working request rejected?				
	If so, did you get a response and explanation in writing?				
	Do you know what to do if you think the flexible working policy was not applied fairly/equitably in your workplace?				
	Are you regularly asked to work on your days off?				
	Are you regularly redeployed to other areas? (i.e. three or more times a month)				

11c	Do you have an annual leave policy?				
	Do you have a cap on the maximum numbers of days/weeks you can take off in one go?				
	Is there any flexibility with the above? (e.g. for the workforce with friends and families in other continents)				
	Have you been allocated annual leave without consent?				
11d	Do you have sight of your rota or work schedule at least <b>8 weeks</b> in advance?				
11e	Do you know what to do if you think the skill mix in your workday/ workplace is not right to meet patients' and service users' needs?				
11f	Do you have any disabilities or long-term health conditions that affect your daily activities?				
	Have you had a workplace individual health risk assessment?				
	Were any reasonable adjustments identified from this assessment?				
	Do you know what to do if your identified reasonable adjustments are not applied?				
11g	Do you have a breaks policy?				
	Are you able to take breaks away from your working area?				
	Do you take your allocated number of uninterrupted breaks?				
	Are you able to claim time owed in lieu (TOIL) or overtime for any missed breaks?				
	Are you aware of the health risks to you for not taking enough breaks during your working day? (e.g. fatigue, dehydration and work-related stress)				
	Are you aware of the risks to your patients/ service users, and/or your colleagues for not taking enough breaks during your working day?				
	Do you report and record your missed break on your rota or schedule?				

**STANDARD 12**

The nursing workforce should be treated with dignity and respect and work in environments where equity, diversity, and inclusion are embedded in the workplace culture.

		Yes	No	N/A	Comments and examples
<b>12a</b>	Did you receive training on equity, diversity, human rights, and inclusion as part of your induction?				
	Is training on equity, diversity, human rights, and inclusion included as part of your ongoing mandatory training?				
	Do you feel like you work in an open and inclusive workplace where you can safely raise concerns?				
	Do you have a grievance policy?				
	Do you have a whistle blowing policy?				
	Do you know how to raise a concern or complaint?				
	Can you raise complaints, incidences, concerns or near misses anonymously?				
	Do you have Freedom to Speak Up Guardians or the equivalent if working in a non-NHS workplace?				
	Do you have avenues to raise concerns collectively with your colleagues? (e.g. monthly team meetings, shared decision-making councils, staff feedback, etc.)				
	Do you receive feedback and responses to concerns you have raised?				
<b>12b</b>	Does your organisation have policies on discrimination, bullying, harassment (including sexual harassments), incivility, violence, and aggression?				
	Do you think your workplace is anti-discriminatory and anti-racist?				
<b>12c</b>	Are you treated with dignity at work by your managers, colleagues, patients and service users, relatives, and carers?				
	Do you feel valued at work?				
	Do you feel included? (e.g. team events and team activities)				
	Do you engage in team building activities?				
	Do you feel respected at work by your manager, colleagues, patients, and service users, relatives, and carers?				
	Are you encouraged to suggest and/or contribute to innovative ideas and solutions?				
	Do you feel that your line manager listens to you?				

12d	Have you received training that supports and promotes inclusive workplaces? (e.g. RCN Cultural Ambassador Programme)				
12e	Do you have accessible and supportive support networks, forums, and groups at work? (e.g. networks dealing with race, LGBTQ+, disability awareness, women's forums, substance dependency support, money management etc.)				
12f	Does your organisation collect workforce data on protected characteristics? (e.g. age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnerships, pregnancy, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation)				
12g	Do you have staff recruited through <b>international recruitment programmes</b> ?				
	Are you aware of the 2010 WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel?				
12h	Are you a nursing staff recruited through an international recruitment programme?				
	If so, were you offered pastoral support to enable you to adapt well to the UK culture?				
	If so, are your prior knowledge, skills, and expertise valued through fair pay?				
	If so, are you able to access career development and progression?				
	If so, do you know how to get support for your career development and progression?				
	If so, did you know that you can join a trade union and professional body like the Royal College of Nursing?				
12i	Do you have access to continued professional development (CPD)?				
	Do you think that the allocations for CPD are equitable?				
	If not, do you know how to raise it and what support is available for you?				

## STANDARD 13

The nursing workforce is entitled to work in healthy and safe environments to protect their physical and psychological health and safety.

		Yes	No	N/A	Comments and examples
13a	Do you have access to occupational health services in your workplace?				
	Have you had occupational health clearance for your role?				
	Are you aware of specific risk assessments and protocols/ procedures for your role/ work activities? (e.g. moving and handling activities, work-related stress, handling hazardous substances, and violence and aggression)				
	Have you received training on violence and aggression? (including e.g. de-escalation techniques, conflict resolution, breakaway, etc.)				
	Has your workplace conducted an organisational stress risk assessment?				
	Have you had health and safety training? [e.g. fire safety, infection prevention and control (IPC), moving and handling, violence and aggression, hazardous substances etc.]				
	If so, is the training up to date?				
	If so, are you able to access the training in working hours?				
	If so, do you feel the training was effective and equipped you to manage the risks?				
	Would you class your work environment as a hazardous work environment? [e.g. overcrowding, "corridor care," the presence of RAAC (reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete), mould, excessive heat etc.]				
	If that is the case, do you know how to raise a concern about this to get support?				
13b	Are you pregnant, have you given birth in the last 6 months, or are you breastfeeding?				
	Have you had your workplace pregnancy, new parent, breastfeeding risk assessment completed?				
	Are you having support with reasonable adjustments at work?				
	Are you able to attend your pre-natal appointments with support?				
	Do you have rest facilities for new mothers to express and store breast milk?				

13c	Do you have a physical or mental health condition that affects your day-to-day activities?				
	Are you supported with any reasonable adjustments in the workplace?				
	Do you have a health ability passport? (i.e. a document that details the reasonable adjustments needed for staff with a health or disability issues need at work)				
	Do you feel that good staff physical and mental health is promoted in your workplace?				
	Are you supported to take time off when you are unwell to avoid presenteeism?				
13d	Do you have access to suitable changing rooms/facilities?				
	Do you have access to personal lockers to keep your possessions safe at work?				
	Do you know how to escalate if these essential facilities above are not available to you?				
	Do you have the right equipment and training to undertake manual moving and handling? [e.g. slide sheets, hoist, patient-assisted transfer (PAT) slide, etc.]				
	Have you had your Infection Prevention and Control training and update in the last 12 months?				
	Do you know what personal and protective equipment (PPE) is required as mandatory in your workplace?				
	Do you have access to the right identified PPE at work as identified in the relevant risk assessment?				
	Have you been trained in the use of PPE? (e.g. donning and doffing PPE)				
	Have you had training on the specific makes and models of the equipment you use at work? (e.g. observation machines, blood glucose machines, safer sharps devices, intravenous pumps etc.)				
	Is there access to sufficient equipment for the number of patients and service users you support?				
	Are you given advice on skin care and reducing the risk of work-related dermatitis?				
	Are skin health checks carried out to look for early warning signs of dermatitis?				
	Are there emergency procedures in place to follow up a needlestick/sharps injury or splashes to the mucosa/eyes?				
	Can you access help 24/7 following such incidents?				



<b>13e</b>	Do you work in a <b>community setting</b> ?				
	Are there detailed risk assessments and protocols for community workers?				
	As a community worker, are you trained in how to carry out a dynamic risk assessment and supported to withdraw from unsafe situations?				
<b>13f</b>	Are you a <b>lone worker</b> ? (i.e. alone with patients or service users in an office, single room or in their home, providing 121 care, home working, etc.)				
	As a lone worker, do you have access to supervision to support your wellbeing?				
	As a lone worker, do you always have access to support and advice?				
	As a lone worker, has your employer provided you with safety devices? (e.g. mobile phones, high-vis jackets, torches, GPS Safety devices, SOS/panic alarms, etc.)				
<b>13g</b>	Do you <b>drive</b> as part of your work?				
	Have you had a driver's risk assessment?				
	Have you had additional training to support your safe driving and wellbeing?				
	Do you have access to safe parking?				
	Do you have access to free parking?				
	If you arrive or leave work in the dark, do you have access to enhanced security for your safety and wellbeing? (e.g. security personnel, CCTV, good lighting, etc.)				
	Do you have at least 15 minutes rest after driving for 2 hours?				

## STANDARD 14

Employers must actively protect, promote, and support the wellbeing of the nursing workforce.

		Yes	No	N/A	Comments and examples
14a	Do you have access to an area where you can have restorative time? (e.g. wellbeing hub, quiet rooms, prayer rooms, wobble room, chillout rooms etc.)				
	Are you supported with debriefs after difficult and challenging situations at work? (e.g. violence and aggression, complaints, allegations, medical emergencies such as cardiopulmonary resuscitation etc.)				
	Do you have access to proactive opportunities to support your psychological and emotional wellbeing at work? [e.g. Schwartz Rounds (i.e. where staff come together to discuss the emotional and social aspects of their work), coping skills, compassion fatigue, coaching, reflections, supervision, etc.]				
	Do you have an easily accessible breakroom away from your working environment?				
	Do you have comfortable seating in your break room?				
	Do you have readily available access to drinking water? (e.g. hydration stations, water fountains, water coolers, water dispensers, etc.)				
	Do you have access to cutlery and crockery?				
	Do you have access to dishwashing facilities?				
	Do you have access to handwashing facilities?				
14b	Regardless of where you work and what hours and days you work, do you have access to food preparation and storage facilities? (e.g. microwave oven, kettle, fridge and/or a 24-hour canteen, etc.)				
	Do you always have access to hot and cold healthy food options in your workplace?				
14c	Does your workplace actively work to prevent work-related stress?				
	Do you know how to access support for work-related stress and anxiety if you experience it?				
	Do you have access to support services in your workplace? [e.g. counselling, occupational health, confidential care (CIC), professional nurse advocate (PNA), coaching, clinical supervision, or clinical psychologist]				

<b>14d</b>	Do you have initiatives focused on the promotion of your physical health? [e.g. menopause support, blood pressure management, dietary advice, exercise programmes (e.g. Zumba, swimming, aerobic), musculoskeletal health and weight loss programmes, etc.]				
	Are you able to talk about your mental health and wellbeing comfortably with your line manager?				
	Do you have access to spiritual support at work? (e.g. access to prayer rooms and chaplaincy services and/or faith leaders)				
	Do you engage in inclusive team building activities at work?				
	Do you engage in facilitated team study/ learning days?				
	Do you engage in team engagement activities or events? (e.g. shared decision-making councils, Schwartz rounds, at least monthly team meetings, etc.)				
<b>14e</b>	Do you have access to occupational health support/employee assistance programmes with regards to your physical and mental health and wellbeing? (e.g. Help@Hand, HealthHero, ShinyMind, etc.)				
	Are you up to date with all health screening, vaccines, and immunisation requirements for your role?				
<b>14f</b>	Do you feel that your workload is manageable for you to be able to deliver safe and effective care? Please include how many patients/service users are you responsible for?				
	If not, do you know how to escalate this at work?				
	Has your employer offered training and information on what is burnout?				
	If so, did the training include how to prevent burnout and any available support for staff?				
	Has your employer offered training and information on what is moral injury?				
	If so, did the training include how to reduce the risk of moral injury and the available support for staff?				

# The Nursing Workforce Standards Champions (Standards Champions)

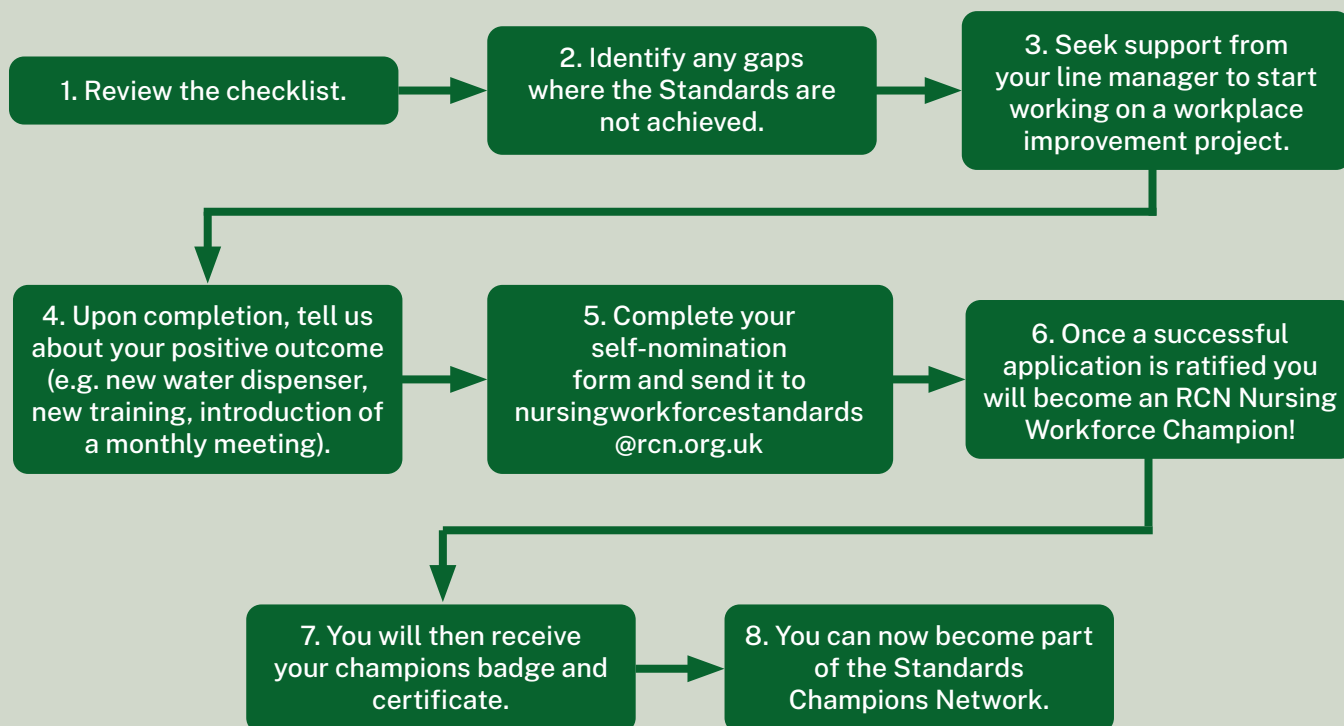
**Standards Champions are individuals who have made positive workplace changes by using the RCN Nursing Workforce Standards.**

## **Role of a Standards Champion:**

- To support workplace improvements.
- To share success and promote best practice.
- To raise concerns when the Standards are not met.
- To work with an RCN representative, local RCN branches and RCN staff in promoting and using the Standards.
- To be part of the network of Standards Champions who support others, promote best practice, and work with organisations to implement the Standards in practice.
- Attend quarterly meetings for updates, support, and networking.

The chart below shows the steps to becoming a Standards Champion.

## **Become a Nursing Workforce Standards Champion**



# Expression of Interest

To become a Nursing Workforce Standards Champion



[rcn.org.uk/join-the-rcn/Become-a-nursing-workforce-standards-champion](https://rcn.org.uk/join-the-rcn/Become-a-nursing-workforce-standards-champion)