A Continuing Professional Development Framework for Swaziland
SWAZILAND NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
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Developing a CPD framework

CPD STANDARD for Nurses

✓ Introduction
✓ Definition of CPD
✓ Rationale for CPD
✓ Principles
✓ Whether voluntary or mandatory
✓ Requirement (in terms of points or hours)
✓ Scope (what activities are acceptable)
✓ How are those activities to be recorded
✓ How activities are to be assessed
✓ How compliance is to be monitored
✓ Is there a penalty for non-compliance
✓ Is there an appeals process
✓ How can exemptions be sought
INTRODUCTION

• The Swaziland Nursing Council as the regulatory body for nurses recognises the importance of a national Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program that assures the public that nurses are continually improving their skills, knowledge and competencies in order to provide a quality health service.

• Ensuring quality health care is available to the community is the responsibility of individual health care professionals, regulatory bodies, employers and government. The Swaziland National Health Policy (February 2007) requires all health professionals in the country to engage in continuing education as a prerequisite to renewing their practising license.

• CPD is a means for nurses to maintain and acquire new and updated levels of knowledge, skills and ethical attitudes that will be of benefit in professional practice and will enhance and promote professional integrity, ensuring that nurses are up to date with the latest scientific and technological advances in health care. The underlying value of CPD in nursing is to promote and maintain professionalism. The beneficiary will ultimately be the individual, the profession, the patient and the community.
CPD is a purposeful process by which members of a profession are committed to maintain, improve and broaden their knowledge, skills and competence throughout their careers to ensure they retain their capacity to practice safely, effectively, competently and legally within their evolving scope of practice.
RATIONALE

Nurses have a professional obligation to maintain their competence and to aim for continuous improvement in the standard of service they provide. CPD is a critical mechanism to ensure that nurses have opportunities to pursue and achieve professional growth throughout their careers. The knowledge, information and skills acquired by health care professionals as students become obsolete at some point in time. CPD programmes are designed to promote on-going, safe, ethical and competent practice for nurses and to ensure they remain up to date with today’s rapid technological advances, discoveries, health sector reforms and standards of nursing education and practice and are able to meet the demands and expectations of their patients which are continually expanding. CPD contributes to the personal development of the nurse; to the integrity of the profession; to quality health services; and to protection of the public.
PRINCIPLES

Continuing professional development:

• is a continuous process,
• is self-directed,
• is based on learning needs identified by the individual, as well as by the institution, the employer, and the SNC.
• is based on activities planned in advance through a personal development plan,
• builds on an individual’s existing knowledge and experience to improve performance,
• acknowledges varying preferred teaching and learning methods and styles and includes a wide range of formal and informal activities,
• links an individual’s learning to their practice,
• includes an evaluation of the individual’s development,
• is relevant to the nurses context of practice and their current and future professional practice,
• applies adult education learning principles,
• is well planned, structured and budgeted for,
• applies to all clinical and non-clinical roles related to the delivery of nursing and health care services, and
• actively seeks to improve a nurses skills, knowledge and performance.
Participation in the CPD program for nurses in Swaziland is currently voluntary in nature although there is a requirement in the Swaziland National Health Policy for all health professionals in the country to engage in continuing education as a prerequisite to the renewal of their practising license. It is anticipated that in the future there will be a legislated requirement for nurses to participate in a specified amount of CPD each year.
Nurses registered with Swaziland Nursing Council will be expected to undertake at least 10 hours of continuing professional development each year prior to renewing their practising license. One hour of active learning will equal one point of CPD so each nurse will be required to accrue 10 CPD points each year. CPD points will only be allocated on completion of the CPD activity. A record must be kept by the nurse of the CPD undertaken which is verified by the provider of the CPD. CPD activities will include both formal and informal learning.
SCOPE

A wide range of activities, both formal and informal, classroom and workplace based, will be recognised toward meeting the CPD requirement. CPD activities must be relevant to current or future practice. Listed below are some examples of CPD activities.

- Formal education programs leading to a qualification outcome, undergraduate or postgraduate
- Short courses (face to face, distance or online)
- Presenting at or attending conferences, seminars or workshops
- Writing or reviewing educational materials, journal articles or books
- Reading and reviewing professional journal articles and books and sharing the information formally with groups, colleagues or the community
- Keeping a self-reflection journal
- Developing work related policies, protocols or guidelines
**SCOPE**

- Acting as a mentor or preceptor or supervising students
- Undertaking supervised practice for skills development
- Participating in clinical audits, critical incident monitoring, case reviews and clinical meetings
- Conducting or participating in research
- Participating in committees such as quality improvement, occupational health and safety, infection control, accreditation or audit committees
- Active membership of professional groups and committees
- Project work or project management
- Lecturing or teaching if it is not part of your job description
- Being an examiner
- Organising journal clubs or other specialist groups
- Planning or running a course, seminar or workshop
- Mandatory in-service education that is directly related to context of practice
- Voluntary work if it is relevant to scope of practice
All nurses are required to keep a record of all CPD activities they participated in that demonstrates they have met the CPD requirement. Documentation of CPD activities must include the date of the CPD activity; a brief description of the activity and the outcomes; and the number of hours spent in each activity. This evidence must be verified in writing by the provider of the CPD activity and their name, status and contact details recorded. Certificates for CPD activities undertaken may also be provided however must state on the certificate the contact hours for the activity.

- The documentation must demonstrate that the nurse has:
  - Identified and prioritised their learning needs, based on an evaluation of their practice against the relevant competency or professional practice standards.
  - Developed a learning plan based on identified learning needs.
  - Participated in effective learning activities relevant to their learning needs.
  - Reflected on the value of the learning activities or the effect that participation will have on their practice.

It is the nurses’ responsibility to demonstrate that they participate in CPD activities. The Swaziland Nursing Council may examine, from time to time, an individual’s CPD record.
Nurses undertaking formal undergraduate or postgraduate education at an accredited institution of learning, school of nursing or university (either face to face, distance or online) leading to the award of a certificate, diploma, advanced diploma, degree, post graduate certificate, post graduate diploma, masters or PhD, may claim CPD points in each year they are undertaking the course providing:

• they have undertaken at least ten hours of active learning during the year that CPD points are being claimed,
• they have successfully completed course requirements for the year in which CPD points are being claimed, and
• the course is directly relevant to the nurses’ current or future professional practice.

Nurses claiming CPD points for formal learning must be able to provide an academic transcript of subjects undertaken during the year in which CPD points are being claimed as well as their assessment results or academic certificate at the conclusion of their course.
ACCREDITATION - EXPERIENTIAL AND SELF DIRECTED LEARNING

For accreditation of experiential or self-directed learning and recognition by the Swaziland Nursing Council for allocation of CPD points, certain standards and criteria must be met. Experiential and self-directed learning is that which occurs either in the workplace or similar environment or learning undertaken by the nurse outside the work environment.

Experiential learning may include:
• Acting as a mentor or preceptor or supervising nursing students
• Undertaking supervised practice for skills development
• Participating in clinical audits, critical incident monitoring, case reviews and clinical meetings
• Conducting or participating in research
• Participating in committees such as quality improvement, occupational health and safety, infection control, accreditation or audit committees and other relevant committees
• Active involvement in professional groups and committees
Self-directed learning may include:

- Participating in distance education or online short courses
- Writing or reviewing educational materials, journal articles or books
- Keeping a self-reflection journal
- Presenting at conferences, seminars or workshops
- Developing work related policies, protocols or guidelines
- Active involvement in professional groups and committees
- Project work or project management
- Lecturing or teaching if it is not part of your job description
- Being an examiner in a health related field
- Organising journal clubs or other specialist groups
- Voluntary work if it is relevant to scope of practice
For accreditation, all experiential or self-directed learning must consist of at least one hour of active learning. Nurses claiming CPD points for experiential or self-directed learning must document in log book:

- The purpose or reason for undertaking the CPD activity.
- The learning objective(s).
- The specific content area(s) covered in the activity consistent with the learning objectives.
- The type of activity.
- The time spent undertaking the activity.
- The learning gained from undertaking the activity.
- The date the activity was undertaken.
- Verification in the log book from managers, supervisors, in-service coordinator or CPD provider including name, designation and signature.
ACCREDITATION - SHORT COURSE CONTENT

For approval and recognition from the Swaziland Nursing Council as quality CPD and allocation of CPD points, certain standards and criteria must be met. For credit points to be granted, all short courses must consist of at least one hour of active learning. One hour of active learning equals one CPD point. An application from a CPD provider should meet the following requirements:

• A written statement which includes the course description, purpose or reason for offering the CPD, learning objectives, content area(s) and relevance to practice, target group of professionals, type of activities planned and expected outcomes.
• Content is related to and consistent with objectives and each objective has a corresponding content and expected outcome.
• Time allocated for content is consistent with objectives and appropriate for content to be presented.
• Teaching strategies are congruent with the objectives and content to be presented.
• Principles of adult learning are evident in the selected strategies.
• Presenters of the CPD have knowledge and expertise in the content area and take an active part in planning their presentations and shall provide evidence of academic preparation and/or experience in the content area.

• The evaluation tool used by the CPD provider is based on the learning objectives and the overall purpose of the educational activity.

• The CPD provider uses evaluation results to plan future offerings and for quality improvement planning.

• The CPD provider clearly indicates in the application form the number of hours in the course of active learning.

• Written confirmation of attendance must be provided to participants who successfully complete an educational activity with verification of attendance recorded in their log book. Such verification must include the name of the CPD provider; date of activity; and signature. A certificate of attendance may also be issued.
• The provider has an established and maintained record storage system that assures confidentiality, and easy retrieval by authorised personnel.
• The provider maintains a record of CPD points earned by the participants.

The Swaziland Nursing Council will determine the fees it will charge from time to time for processing applications for approval and recognition of short courses for CPD points. Application fees are to be paid by the CPD provider at the time of application for accreditation of a CPD activity or program.
When applying for renewal of their practising license with the Swaziland Nursing Council, all nurses (both public and private) should submit their log book of CPD activities undertaken throughout the year which demonstrates they have met the 10 CPD point requirement, that is 10 hours of active learning.

The Swaziland Nursing Council each year will randomly audit 5% of nurses to verify their CPD activities. The random audit should include a fair representation from all regions of the country.

This audit will require the nurse to provide further information regarding:
- The type of CPD activity (formal, short course, experiential or self-directed)
- What was learned from the activity
- Any challenges faced in undertaking the activity
- Whether they were able to obtain release from work
- How their attendance was funded
- Their analysis of the cost benefit to themselves, their patients and their employer
- Whether undertaking the activity was part of their personal professional development plan
- Any suggestion for improvements to the CPD program
- Suggestions for future CPD topics
EVALUATION

1. A biennial survey (questionnaire) of a random sample of 5% of all nurses (public and private) will be undertaken by the Swaziland Nursing Council in order to determine:
   • The number of nurses who met the 10 CPD points in the year
   • The type of CPD undertaken (formal learning, short courses, experiential, self-directed learning)
   • The nurses’ satisfaction with their learning experience and whether the learning objectives were met,
   • The nurses’ perception of whether the learning gained was beneficial,
   • The nurses’ ease of accessing CPD,
   • How the nurses’ attendance at the CPD was funded,
   • Whether the nurse was able to obtain release from work to undertake the CPD,
   • Whether the CPD was part of an individual assessment of learning needs and a professional development plan,
   • The nurses’ perception of the CPD program,
   • Any suggestions for improvement to the CPD program or other CPD topics.

2. As part of the evaluation, the Swaziland Nursing Council will collate, report on and disseminate in a timely manner the results of the evaluation survey and include the results of their random annual monitoring survey of 5% of nurses. The evaluation report should be made publicly available on the SNC website.