1. PURPOSE

The Health Authority of Abu Dhabi (HAAD) is responsible for regulating the practice of nursing in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. A system of licensing and examination has been established to ensure nurses are safe to practice within the guidelines as set by the HAAD Policy and Regulation Directorate. The purpose of the Scopes of Practice for the Registered Nurse (RN) and the Practical Nurse (PN), are to provide competency frameworks to guide professional practice, facilitate professional accountability and support HAAD’s regulatory licensing processes.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

2.1 HAAD mandates that all Registered Nurses and Practical Nurses must work within the Scopes of Practice as defined and detailed in Appendix I and II (Reference page 5 and 13)

2.2 HAAD requires all public and private health care facilities to refer to these Scope of Practice when developing clinical practice guidelines and job descriptions for nursing personnel

2.3 The HAAD Scope of Practice for the RN and PN describe the roles and responsibilities of the Licensed Nurses and underpin the regulatory framework for clinical practice

3. SCOPE

To provide Scopes of Practice and competency frameworks to guide and define nursing practice in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.

4. TARGET AUDIENCE

The Scopes of Practice apply to all Registered Nurses and Practical Nurses and their employing organizations (private and public) in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.
5. RESPONSIBILITY

HAAD to ensure implementation of the policy, monitor and audit compliance of the scope of practice by nursing professionals 
Health Care Facilities and staff to comply with the policy as per the Practice Scope

6. PROCEDURE

6.1 The Scopes of Practice have been developed giving consideration to international best practice
6.2 The documents have been endorsed by the HAAD Nursing and Midwifery Committee
6.3 All relevant stakeholders have been notified and the documents are available on the HAAD website and are attached in Appendix 1

7. DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>“...the combination of skills, knowledge, attitudes, values and abilities that underpin effective and/or superior performance in a profession / occupational area” (ANMC, 2006)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Guideline</td>
<td>Similar to a Procedure, may also contain instructions to carry out a policy statement but may not necessarily provide a specific or linear progression of steps or actions to be taken. Guidelines are frequently used to promote evidence-based practice.</td>
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| Nursing    | “...encompasses autonomous and collaborative care of individuals of all ages, families, groups and communities, sick or well and in all settings. Nursing includes the
**Subject:** Policy for the Scope of Practice: Registered Nurse and Practical Nurse

**Reference Number:** PPR/HP/EX/P0004/07  
**Issue Date:** November 2007  
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**Version:** I

**PQR**  
**Personnel Qualifications Requirements**

**Practical Nurse**  
“A second level nurse who provides nursing care within the limits specified by education and the registering authority’s license” (ANMC, 2007). The Practical nurse works under the supervision of a Registered Nurse, and “…is a graduate of a recognized nursing school with not less than 18 months study duration from an accredited program after high school” (HAAD, 2007)

**Registered Nurse**  
A first level nurse who is registered to practice without supervision and is responsible and accountable for all their own actions. The Registered Nurse has a “Bachelor degree in nursing or equivalent qualification of NLT 3 years study duration from an accredited program” after high school (HAAD, 2007)

**Scope of Practice**  
The term which defines and describes the roles and responsibilities of health professionals, to provide a framework for establishing competency standards which individuals are expected to demonstrate according to educational and clinical experience. Scopes of Practice may then be used for regulation and licensing processes of governing bodies.

**Standard**  
A basis for comparison; a reference point against which other things can be evaluated. A standard says how well you must do something.
8. CROSS REFERENCES


[http://www.icn.ch/definition.htm](http://www.icn.ch/definition.htm) International Council of Nurses. Available at:

9. APPENDIX I

Scope of Practice for Registered Nurses

Introduction

The Health Authority of Abu Dhabi (HAAD) is responsible for regulating the practice of nursing in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. A system of licensing and examination has been established to ensure nurses are safe to practice within the guidelines set by the HAAD Policy and Regulation Directorate. A Scope of Practice describes the roles and responsibilities of Licensed Nurses and provides a framework for establishing competency standards, which determine specific outcomes to be demonstrated by a professional nurse in practice.

Nursing as a profession internationally, exists in diverse and changing social contexts, which are experiencing the impact of globalisation more so than in previous decades. Rapid technological developments, increasing inter-country workforce mobility and ongoing discovery of new evidence based health care practices, creates challenges for Governments as they strive to ensure the maintenance and continuation of high quality health care delivery. HAAD’s Vision statement is ‘Reliable Excellence in Healthcare” and its Mission is, “To ensure excellent quality healthcare for the community” (HAAD, 2007)

Thus in the development of Scopes of Practice and competency standards frameworks for Registered Nurses and Practical Nurses in Abu Dhabi, consideration has been given to international best practice, while ensuring relevance of competency standards to the UAE context to support the achievement of both the HAAD’s Vision and Mission.
### Background for Registered Nurses

The Examination Section in the Health Professionals Licensing Department of the Health Authority Abu Dhabi (HAAD), in consultation with nursing professionals from the education and clinical sectors in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, have worked together in developing the following Competency Standards framework for Registered Nurses. This underpins the Scope of Nursing Practice, which assumes holistic care delivery in contexts, which are ever changing and complex.

As health care evolves, so too does the role of the registered nurse. Here in the UAE, the additional challenge is to ensure that the Scope of Practice has room for flexibility to accommodate such changes, while giving consideration to the diverse socio-cultural mix of both population and nursing workforce. In developing the competency standards framework, national and international systems of regulation, including the UAE Federal Department of Nursing, Ministry of Health, Scope of Nursing and Midwifery Practice (2004), Core Practice Standards (2005) and Code of Conduct (2001), together with the International Council of Nursing Competencies for the Generalist Nurse, have all been referred to.

HAAD recognises that the Registered Nurse is a first level nurse who is registered to practice without supervision and is responsible and accountable for all their own actions. It is expected that the RN works within current legislative and licensing authority guidelines and is educated to a minimum level of three years general nurse training from an accredited program which must be at post-secondary school level (HAAD, 2007).

Competency standards provide a framework for identifying relevant knowledge, skills and behaviours that reflect the role and responsibilities of the professional nurse. Competency standards also form the basis of licensing and regulation, and serve as a guide for the performance of an individual professional nurse who assumes accountability and responsibility for his/her own practice. Nurses work in diverse capacities, at times independently and others as members of health care teams, and it is imperative that they are educationally prepared and able to demonstrate a level of ongoing competence and ethical practice that is culturally sensitive and promotes health and wellbeing within the community.
Nursing Defined

Nursing in the UAE needs to be considered within an international framework, and HAAD recognises and acknowledges the following International Council of Nurses’ Definition:

“Nursing encompasses autonomous and collaborative care of individuals of all ages, families, groups and communities, sick or well and in all settings. Nursing includes the promotion of health, prevention of illness, and the care of ill, disabled and dying people. Advocacy, promotion of a safe environment, research, participation in shaping health policy and in patient and health systems management, and education are also key nursing roles” (ICN Website, accessed May 2007)

Together with the World Health Organization statement on nursing:

“Nursing is both an art and a science. It requires the understanding and application of specific knowledge and skills, and it draws on knowledge and techniques derived from the humanities and the physical, social, medical and biological sciences” (1996, p. 4)

Domains of Nursing

The role and responsibilities of the Registered Nurse are broad and complex. For this reason, the competency standards for practice have been organised into three Domains of Nursing:

1. Management of Nursing Care

   This domain relates to aspects of a registered nurse’s performance and behaviour which is required to provide appropriate and safe care to patients/clients in a manner which is responsive to individual needs and is supported by evidence based nursing knowledge and skills.
2. **Professional and Ethical Practice**

This domain reflects the registered nurse’s understanding of the professional code of conduct and their ability to work independently and in collaboration with others while maintaining professional standards.

3. **Professional Development**

This domain acknowledges that each nurse is accountable for establishing, maintaining and evaluating their own lifelong learning needs including a commitment to the development of others and the profession.

Performance outcomes for these Domains are then aligned with each competency, with it being expected that achievement of these criteria indicate that the professional nurse has the knowledge, skills and attributes to safely and competently provide evidence-based nursing care to patients throughout the lifespan.

**Domain 1: Management of Nursing Care**

**Competency 1.1**

**Promotes patient optimum health and wellbeing**

*Performance outcomes*

1.1.1 Identifies, promotes and assists patients to understand major determinants of health

1.1.2 Educates patients on health risk factors

1.1.3 Teaches patients and families strategies to develop healthy living behaviour

1.1.4 Identifies and implements health promotion strategies for early detection and screening for communicable diseases

1.1.5 Reduces the risk of disease transmission through applying standard (universal) infection control principles
1.1.6 Identifies, records and take appropriate action to reduce incidence of disease transmission

1.1.7 Uses the nursing process in the promotion of patient holistic health and well-being

Competency 1.2
Promotes an environment that maximizes patient safety

*Performance outcomes*

1.2.1 Identifies environmental and behavioural factors which may compromise patient safety

1.2.2 Identifies and implements appropriate actions to reduce risk and harm

1.2.3 Intervenes and follows-up on incidents to reduce likelihood of reoccurrence

Competency 1.3
Promotes patient physiological and psychological integrity

*Performance outcomes*

1.3.1 Assesses, plans and manages nursing interventions to optimise outcomes care for patients throughout the lifespan in various states of health and illness

*Sub outcomes*

1.3.1.1 Implements general nursing care and comfort measures

1.3.1.2 Provides care for patients with acute and chronic physical health conditions

1.3.1.3 Provides care for patients with acute, chronic and persistent mental health disorders

1.3.1.4 Provides care for the pregnant woman from conception to birth and for the normal newborn
1.3.1.5 Provides care for acute and chronic conditions of a child from birth to adolescence

1.3.1.6 Demonstrates evidence based practice in use of pharmacological agents in treatment

1.3.1.7 Demonstrates ability to accurately calculate drug doses for administration

1.3.2 Documents care and patient outcomes

1.3.3 Evaluates and manages nursing care, altering delivery and priorities according to patient needs and outcomes ensuring continuity of care

Domain 2: Professional and Ethical Practice

Competency 2.1

Demonstrates professional behaviour when working with people

Performance outcomes

2.1.1 Provides nursing care that demonstrates respect for human rights

2.1.2 Recognises the responsibility to work within professional standards and ethical codes of practice

2.1.3 Protects the patient from risks, harm, abuse or neglect within the boundaries of nursing care

2.1.4 Demonstrates knowledge of policies and procedures that guide practice

2.1.5 Recognises and acts upon policies, procedures or orders that might put at risk a patient’s therapeutic outcomes or is not at best practice standards

2.1.6 Advocates sensitively for patients rights based on current legislation and ethical principles

2.1.7 Ensures confidentiality of patient information

2.1.8 Demonstrates a sensitivity to diversity in cultural and religious beliefs
2.1.9 Utilises effective time management strategies to organise workload

2.1.10 Draws on evidence-based research to perform safe, effective and efficient nursing interventions whilst taking patient’s preferences into consideration

2.1.11 Establishes and maintains professional boundaries with patients and members of the health care team

2.1.12 Recognises limitations in own professional knowledge and skills and takes appropriate action

2.1.13 Assumes accountability for delegation of nursing care

**Competency 2.2**

**Upholds and contributes to the maintenance of professional nursing standards**

*Performance outcomes*

2.2.1 Initiates and/or participates in research that contributes to continual improvement in standards of care and extending the nursing professional body of knowledge

2.2.2 Identifies scientific advances and uses technology as appropriate to enhance patient care

2.2.3 Demonstrates a standard of personal health which ensures that patient care is not compromised

2.2.4 Demonstrates the ability to self-regulate through ongoing reflection and assessment of competency to practice

**Competency 2.3**

**Actively contributes to collaborative working relationships with members of the interdisciplinary health care team**
Performance outcomes

2.3.1 Establishes collaborative relationships with other members of the interdisciplinary team to optimise patient outcomes

2.3.2 Identifies, reports and documents health care practices that may compromise patient care, privacy or dignity and take appropriate remedial action

2.3.3 Demonstrates respect for variations in competence and professional knowledge between members of a multidisciplinary health care team

2.3.4 Provides and seeks constructive feedback in and between team members

Domain 3: Professional Development
Competency 3.1
Demonstrate a commitment to development of self

Performance outcomes

Reflects upon and evaluates own nursing practice

Actively seeks new knowledge and information to ensure ongoing professional development and competency to practice

Participates in ongoing professional development activities

Seeks and acts upon constructive feedback from other health care professionals

Maintains record of all learning and professional development activities attended

Maintains current license to practice as an outcome of self-regulation

Competency 3.2:
Demonstrates a commitment to development of others
Performance outcomes

3.2.1 Collaborates and shares professional knowledge with others

3.2.2 Acts as preceptor and/or mentor to others new to the profession or less experienced

3.2.3 Participates in teaching and education programs when relevant

Competency 3.3:
Demonstrates a commitment to development of the profession

Performance outcomes

3.3.1 Contributes to nursing and health care policy

3.3.2 Represents the nursing profession on relevant committees and taskforces

3.3.3 Identifies opportunities and contribute to nursing research

3.3.4 Collaborates and shares new nursing knowledge and research findings
9. APPENDIX II

Scope of Practice for Practical Nurses

Introduction

The Health Authority of Abu Dhabi (HAAD) is responsible for regulating the practice of nursing in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. A system of licensing and examination has been established to ensure nurses are safe to practice within the guidelines set by the HAAD Policy and Regulation Directorate. A Scope of Practice describes the roles and responsibilities of Licensed Nurses and provides a framework for establishing competency standards, which determine specific outcomes to be demonstrated by a professional nurse in practice.

Nursing as a profession internationally, exists in diverse and changing social contexts, which are experiencing the impact of globalization more so than in previous decades. Rapid technological developments, increasing inter-country workforce mobility and ongoing discovery of new evidence based health care practices, creates challenges for Governments as they strive to ensure the maintenance and continuation of high quality health care delivery. HAAD’s Vision statement is ‘Reliable Excellence in Healthcare” and its Mission is, “To ensure excellent quality healthcare for the community” (HAAD, 2007).

Thus in the development of Scopes of Practice and competency standards frameworks for Registered Nurses and Practical Nurses in Abu Dhabi, consideration has been given to international best practice, while ensuring relevance of competency standards to the UAE context to support the achievement of both the HAAD’s Vision and Mission.
Nursing Defined

Nursing in the UAE needs to be considered within an international framework, and HAAD recognizes and acknowledges the following International Council of Nurses’ Definition:

“Nursing encompasses autonomous and collaborative care of individuals of all ages, families, groups and communities, sick or well and in all settings. Nursing includes the promotion of health, prevention of illness, and the care of ill, disabled and dying people. Advocacy, promotion of a safe environment, research, participation in shaping health policy and in patient and health systems management, and education are also key nursing roles” (ICN Website, accessed May 2007)

Together with the World Health Organization statement on nursing:

“Nursing is both an art and a science. It requires the understanding and application of specific knowledge and skills, and it draws on knowledge and techniques derived from the humanities and the physical, social, medical and biological sciences” (1996, p. 4)

Background for Practical Nurses

The following Scope of Practice is applicable for the second level or Practical Nurse (PN)\(^1\) who provides nursing care as delegated and supervised by the first level or Registered Nurse (RN). The PN is not licensed for independent practice and remains responsible and accountable for his/her own actions.

The HAAD acknowledges and refers to the Australian Nursing Council statement on the Enrolled Nurse, to define the Practical Nurse as “…a second level nurse who provides nursing care within the limits specified by education and the registering authority’s license to practice” (2007).

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\(^1\) As titled – Practical Nurse, Assistant Nurse, Nursing Assistant etc
It is recognized that it is the registered nurse who remains responsible for planning, implementation and evaluation of nursing care, while also being responsible for supervision of all delegated care provided by a PN. The practical nurse works as a valuable member in a collaborative health care team and contributes to the overall planning and delivery of nursing care at evidenced based standards. The PN is required to ensure s/he does not work outside the HAAD PN Scope of Practice, and remains responsible for recognizing limitations in their own level of competency. It is expected that a PN abides by the MOH (2001) Code of Professional Conduct and demonstrates a standard of practice which promotes the health and wellbeing of all in her/his care.

PN education and training programs in relation to medication administration vary greatly throughout the world. Due to the large expatriate nursing workforce in the UAE and the absence of an accredited national Practical Nurse education program, HAAD excludes medication administration from the PN Scope of practice. It is not expected that PNs have a role in preparation, administration or documentation of medications, as this element of performance lies outside their scope of clinical practice competency.

The following document details the Competency framework for the Practical Nurse or Assistant Nurse as defined in the HAAD Personnel Qualifications Requirement (PQR)².

The competencies have been organized into three main Domains of Nursing in alignment with those of the registered nurse. While the broad Competency areas of the RN and PN are similar, the performance outcomes differ somewhat according to the knowledge and skill level expected in practice.

**Domain 1: Management of Nursing Care**

This domain relates to aspects of a practical nurse’s performance and behavior which is required to provide appropriate and safe care under the direction of a registered nurse. This care is delivered to patients/clients in a manner which is responsive to individual needs and is

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² As “…a graduate of a recognised nursing school with not less than 18 months study duration from an accredited program” after high school
supported by evidence based nursing knowledge and skills within the scope of practice for a practical nurse.

**Domain 2: Professional and Ethical Practice**

This domain reflects the practical nurse’s understanding of the professional code of conduct and their ability to work collaboratively under the direction of a registered nurse (or licensed physician or dentist), while maintaining professional standards.

**Domain 3: Professional Development**

This domain acknowledges that each nurse is accountable for establishing, maintaining and evaluating their own life long learning needs including a commitment to the development of others and the profession.

**Domain 1: Management of Nursing Care**

**Competency 1.1**

**Promotes patient optimum health and wellbeing**

*Performance outcomes*

1.1.1 Promotes and supports patient understanding of major health determinants

1.1.2 Contributes to patient education on health risk factors

1.1.3 Contributes to patient and family education on development of behavioral strategies related to healthy living

1.1.4 Participates in implementation of health promotion strategies for early detection and screening for communicable diseases

1.1.5 Reduces the risk of disease transmission through applying standard (universal) infection control principles

1.1.6 Identifies, records and takes appropriate action to reduce incidence of disease transmission
### Competency 1.2

**Promotes and environment that maximizes patient safety**

**Performance outcomes**

1.2.1 Identifies environmental and behavioral risk factors that may potentially compromise patient safety

1.2.2 Identifies and acts to reduce risk and harm

1.2.3 Intervenes and reports incidents to reduce likelihood of re-occurrence

### Competency 1.3

**Promotes patient physiological and psychological integrity**

**Performance outcomes**

1.3.1 Collaborates with the registered nurse to participate in the planning and management of nursing interventions to optimize outcomes for patients through the lifespan in various states of health and illness.

**Sub outcomes (as guided by the RN)**

1.3.1.1 Provides basic care and comfort within the defined scope of competency

1.3.1.2 Provides care for patients with acute and chronic physical health conditions

1.3.1.3 Provides care for patients with acute, chronic and persistent mental health disorders

1.3.1.4 Provides care for the pregnant woman and family, including care of the normal newborn

1.3.1.5 Provides care for acute and chronic conditions of a child from birth to adolescence

1.3.1.6 Demonstrates basic understanding of pharmacological interventions
1.3.1.7 Recognizes changes in patient’s health status and responds in a timely and appropriate manner

1.3.2 Contributes to nursing assessment of patients through data collection and reporting (including documentation)

1.3.3 Participates with the RN to evaluate and alter nursing care to ensure patient needs and outcomes are accurately prioritized

**Domain 2: Professional and Ethical Practice**

**Competency 2.1**

**Demonstrates professional behavior when working with people**

*Performance outcomes*

2.1.1 Implements nursing care that demonstrates respect for human rights

2.1.2 Recognizes and assumes responsibility to work within professional standards and ethical codes of practice

2.1.3 Protects the patient from risks, harm, abuse or neglect

2.1.4 Demonstrates accurate knowledge of policies and procedures that guide practice

2.1.5 Recognizes and acts upon policies, procedures or orders that might put at risk a patient’s therapeutic outcomes

2.1.6 Provides guided nursing care that is sensitive to the needs and rights of individuals/groups and is within current legislation and ethical principles

2.1.7 Ensures confidentiality of patient information

2.1.8 Demonstrates a sensitivity to diversity in cultural and religious beliefs

2.1.9 Utilizes effective time management strategies to organize workload

2.1.10 Performs safe, effective and efficient nursing interventions under the guidance of the RN, while ensuring patient’s preferences are taken into consideration
2.1.11 Establishes and maintains professional boundaries with patients and members of the health care team

2.1.12 Recognizes limitations in own professional knowledge and skills and takes appropriate action

2.1.13 Assumes accountability for own practice

**Competency 2.2**

Upholds and contributes to the maintenance of professional nursing standards

*Performance outcomes*

2.2.1 Participates in ongoing education to contribute to continual improvement of nursing care standards

2.2.2 Incorporates latest scientific and technological advances of relevance into clinical practice

2.2.3 Demonstrates a standard of personal health which ensures that patient care is not compromised

2.2.4 Demonstrates the ability to self-regulate through ongoing reflection and assessment of competency to practice

**Competency 2.3**

Actively contributes to collaborative working relationships with members of the interdisciplinary health care team

*Performance outcomes*

2.3.1 Establishes collaborative relationships with other members of the interdisciplinary team to optimize patient outcomes
2.3.2 Identifies, reports and documents health care practices that may compromise patient care, privacy or dignity and takes appropriate remedial action within the PN competency framework.

2.3.3 Demonstrates respect for variations in competence and professional knowledge between members of a multidisciplinary health care team.

2.3.4 Seeks and acts upon constructive feedback related to professional performance from colleagues.

Domain 3: Professional Development

Competency 3.1

Demonstrate a commitment to development of self

Performance outcomes

3.1.1 Reflects upon and evaluates own nursing practice
3.1.2 Actively seeks new knowledge and information to ensure ongoing professional development and competency to practice
3.1.3 Participates in ongoing professional development activities
3.1.4 Seeks and acts upon constructive feedback from other health care professionals
3.1.5 Maintains record of all learning and professional development activities attended
3.1.6 Maintains current license to practice as an outcome of self-regulation

Competency 3.2:

Demonstrates a commitment to development of others

Performance outcomes

3.2.4 Collaborates and shares knowledge and information with others
3.2.5 Supports and mentors other PNs less experienced or new to the profession

3.2.6 Participates in relevant education programs

Competency 3.3:

Demonstrates a commitment to development of the profession

Performance outcomes

3.3.5 Contributes to nursing and health care policy

3.3.6 Represents the nursing profession within own scope of competency and knowledge on relevant committees and taskforces

3.3.7 Identifies opportunities for, and contributes to, nursing education programs

3.3.8 Collaborates and shares new and emerging nursing knowledge

References:


Federal Department of Nursing, MOH, UAE (2004) Scope of Practice Registered Nurse and/or Midwife. Abu Dhabi: Author
**Health Authority – Abu Dhabi**

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Federal Department of Nursing, MOH, UAE (2005) *Core Practice Standards for the Registered Nurse and/or Midwife*. Abu Dhabi: Author


International Council of Nurses (accessed May 2007) [http://www.icn.ch/definition.htm](http://www.icn.ch/definition.htm)


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