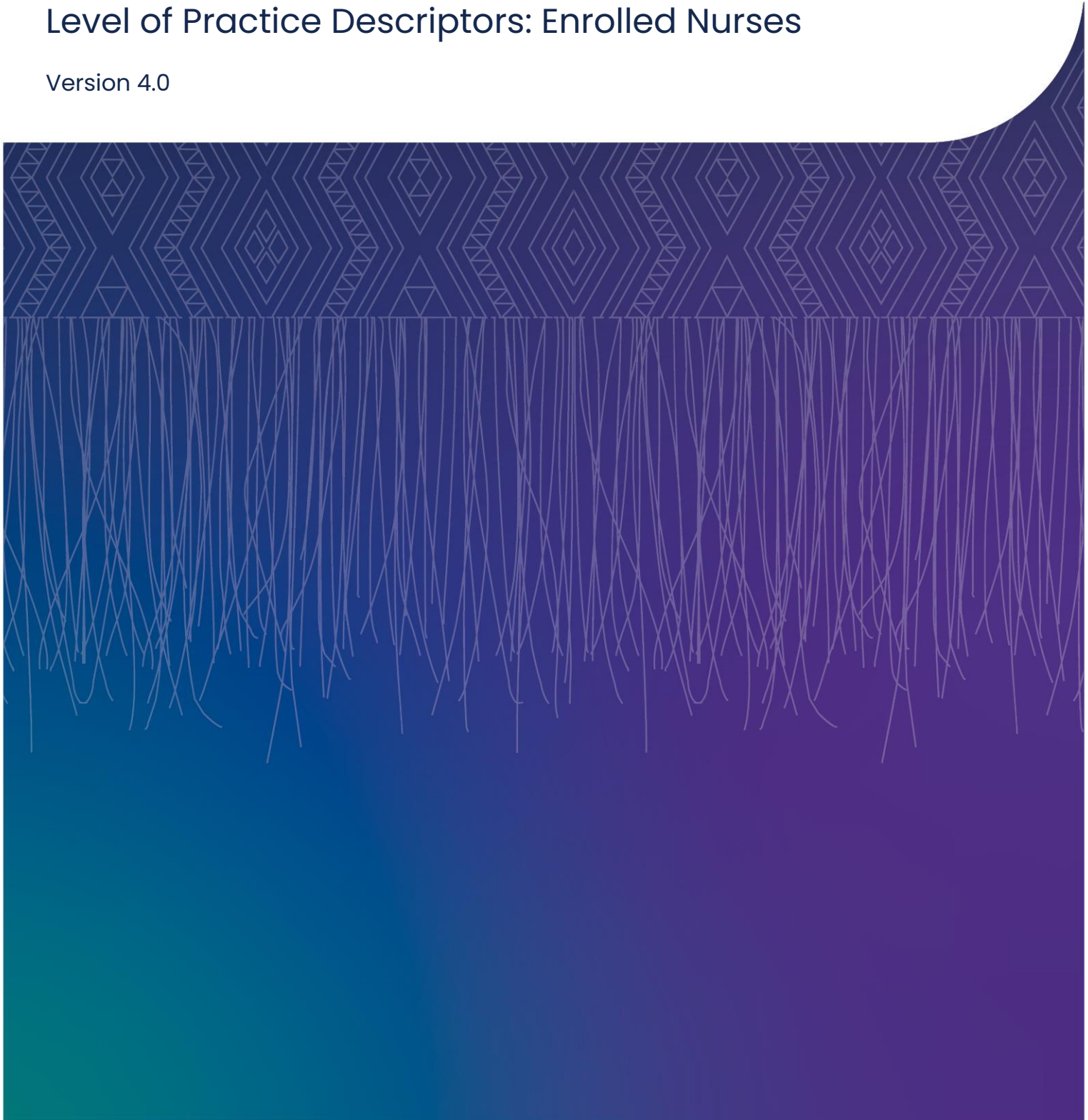


# Nursing Professional Development Recognition Programme

Level of Practice Descriptors: Enrolled Nurses

Version 4.0



## Contents

Nursing Professional Development Recognition Programme.....	1
Revision History .....	2
Introduction .....	3
Contributors.....	3
How to use this document .....	3
Nursing Council of New Zealand Pou (Standards of Competence) for Enrolled Nurses .....	5
PDRP Levels of Practice .....	6
<b>Pou One: Māori Health .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Pou Two: Cultural Safety .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Pou Three: Whanaungatanga, Partnership and Communication .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Pou Four: Pūkengatanga &amp; Knowledge-informed Nursing Practice .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Pou Five: Mana hautū, Professional Accountability and Responsibility .....</b>	<b>12</b>

## Revision History

Date	Author	Summary of Changes	Version
17.02.2026	Mahi tahi project group	First draft	1.0
27.02.2026	NNPC	Second draft	2.0
13.03.2026	Diane Bos	Final draft	3.0
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## Approvals

Approver	Signature	Issue Date	Version
Nadine Gray			4.0

## Introduction

Nursing practice is recognized across a continuum of competence, encompassing both Enrolled Nurses and Registered Nurses. Each nurse brings a unique scope of practice, shaped by their education, experience, and regulatory requirements.

All nurses who hold a current Annual Practicing certificate are deemed Competent by Nursing Council NZ. Competence is defined as the standard required for safe and effective nursing practice and the descriptors in this document for Competent level are set by Nursing Council NZ.

Descriptors for Proficient, Expert and Designated Senior Nurse levels have been written by a cross sectorial group of nurses to reflect the diversity of practice areas within the profession.

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## How to use this document

Nurses completing PDRP will provide examples from their practice that demonstrate how they meet each of the standards of competence (Pou). At Proficient and Expert Enrolled Nurse use

the extra descriptors in this document as a guide to write at the level you are applying for. You are not required to provide evidence against each descriptor; however, the descriptors will provide guidance to the breadth of evidence required for each Pou for each level of practice.

## Nursing Council of New Zealand Pou (Standards of Competence) for Enrolled Nurses



Nursing Council of New Zealand (2025). *Standards of Competence for Enrolled Nurses*



## PDRP Levels of Practice

This is a guide to support nurses to understand the requirements at each PDRP level and make an informed decision about the level they apply for. It is intended to support Managers to verify practice at each level.

Assessors will use this document to guide assessment. They should be able to see the attributes below within the body of evidence.

### Competent EN

- Incorporates knowledge-informed nursing into practice, contributing to assessment, planning, delivery and evaluation of nursing care
- Understands Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Kawa Whakaruruhau and cultural safety, using this to develop partnerships with health consumers
- Demonstrates confidence in familiar situations
- Manages and prioritises assigned health consumer care/workload appropriately, demonstrating increasing efficiency and effectiveness in practice
- Responds effectively in unpredictable, challenging and/or complex situations
- Participates in quality improvement activities and/ or change initiatives in the practice setting

### Proficient EN

- Demonstrates advancing knowledge and skills in a specific clinical area
- Role models partnerships with health consumers that reflect Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Kawa Whakaruruhau and/ or cultural safety
- Has an in-depth understanding of EN scope and applies this to practice.
- Acts as a role model to their peers and contributes to the education and /or preceptorship of others.
- Supports and guides the health care team in day-to-day health care delivery
- Is involved in service, professional or organisational activities.
- Provides effective management of unpredictable, challenging and/or complex situations
- Actively contributes to quality improvement activities and/ or change initiatives in practice initiative

### Expert EN

- Utilises broad experiential and evidence-based knowledge to provide care
- Leads others to apply the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Kawa Whakaruruhau and/ or cultural safety
- Advocates for the EN scope and practice
- Undertakes leadership roles within a clinical/quality team, e.g. shift lead, champion roles, health and safety representative, etc.
- Contributes to the management of changing workloads.
- Contributes to clinical decision making within the interdisciplinary team
- Initiates and leads quality improvement activities and/or change initiatives in the practice setting
- Ensures safety of the health consumer and team in unpredictable, challenging and/or complex situations

## Pou One: Māori Health

Reflecting a commitment to Māori health, enrolled nurses support, respect and protect Māori rights while advocating for equitable and positive health outcomes. Nurses are also required to demonstrate kawa whakaruruhau by addressing power imbalances and working collaboratively with Māori.

### Competent EN

- **Engages** in ongoing professional development related to Māori health and the relevance of Te Tiriti o Waitangi articles and principles.
- **Advocates** for health equity for Māori in all situations and contexts.
- **Understands** the impact of social determinants, such as colonisation, on health and wellbeing.
- Uses te reo and **incorporates tikanga Māori** into practice where appropriate.

### Proficient EN

- Actively builds Māori Health skills and knowledge to effectively serve Māori patients / whānau, communities to achieve optimum health outcomes and experience.
- **Role models** and applies Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles and kawa whakaruruhau in the delivery of care
- **Advocates** for equitable health outcomes using a strength-based approach that **engages and involves** Māori, whānau, communities, recognising that mana Motuhake (autonomy) and rangatiratanga (authority) are critical to achieving Māori health equity.
- **Contributes** to Te Tiriti o Waitangi education development, to include impacts of social determinants of health, such as colonisation on health outcomes and wellbeing.
- **Role models** and protects Māori custom and position of wairuatanga and te reo me ōna tikanga as fundamental aspects and enablers of health and wellbeing for Māori.

### Expert EN

- Understands that racism is an important driver of Māori health and inequities and **applies** this understanding in their practice.
- **Leads and supports others** to embed Māori health principles and Te tiriti principles for the health system.
- **Leads and role models** kawa whakaruruhau in practice, delivery of care.
- **Champions and guides** colleagues to support Māori rights and Hauora Māori aspirations i.e. individual and or whānau mana Motuhake (autonomy) and rangatiratanga (authority).
- **Leads quality initiatives** contributing to the improvement of equity of access, quality of care, outcomes and or experience for Māori.

## Pou Two: Cultural Safety

Cultural safety in nursing practice ensures that enrolled nurses provide culturally safe care that is inclusive, responsive and equitable. This requires nurses to reflect on their practice, understand their cultural identity and the power imbalances between the nurse and the recipient of care.

### Competent EN

- Practises **culturally safe** care which is determined by the recipient.
- **Challenges** racism and discrimination in the delivery of nursing and health care.
- Engages in partnership with individuals, whānau and communities for the provision of health care.
- **Advocates** for individuals and whānau by including their cultural, spiritual, physical and mental health when providing care.
- **Contributes** to a collaborative team culture which respects diversity, including intersectional identities, and protects cultural identity by acknowledging differing worldviews, values and practices

### Proficient EN

- Understands how cultural safety and competence benefits all patients and communities. This may include communities based on indigenous status, age or generation, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, religious or spiritual belief and disability.
- **Role models** safe care and understands that cultural competency and cultural safety are both necessary to achieve Hauora Māori however they are not restricted to Hauora Māori
- **Identifies and addresses** power imbalance that obstructs health equity or generates culturally unsafe or biased practice.
- **Supports and role models** inclusive practices across the team recognizing that cultural safety and competency apply to more than just clinical encounters.
- **Role models and or mentor'** others in the advocacy of rights of patients, whānau, communities and colleagues that differ from them to recognize and address cultural risks or bias.
- **Contributes** to the development of cultural safety and competence education.

### Expert EN

- **Develops** cultural safety and competence training, audit and practice within the service.
- **Contributes** to cultural safety initiatives within the service.
- **Leads initiatives** that strengthen culturally safe practice.
- **Coaches'** others to embed culturally safe practice.

### Pou Three: Whanaungatanga, Partnership and Communication

A commitment to whanaungatanga, partnership and communication requires enrolled nurses to work in partnership, using a range of communication techniques, to work effectively with individuals, whānau, communities and the interprofessional healthcare team.

#### Competent EN

- Uses a range of communication techniques to establish, maintain and conclude professional and/or therapeutic relationships with individuals, whānau and the healthcare team.
- Demonstrates understanding of when to seek guidance and assistance from the healthcare team to inform decision-making and the provision of care.
- Demonstrates **leadership** including direction and coordination of care, **as appropriate**.
- Identifies, assesses and responds to emerging risks and **challenging situations and escalates appropriately**.

#### Proficient EN

- **Role models and supports** effective communication (including therapeutic) that fosters and concludes positive relationships with tāngata whaiora, whānau and interdisciplinary connections inclusive of students to benefit whānau.
- **Actively contributes** to multi-disciplinary team (MDT) meetings.
- **Reflects and adapts** own communication style to ensure effective communication with others, accessing interpreting services, cultural support services relevant to the individual, whānau and or colleagues needs.
- **Leads** communications related to the direction and coordination of care, as appropriate.
- Identifies, assesses and collaboratively responds to **emerging risks and challenging situations**, escalating appropriately

#### Expert EN

- **Leads** in building strong team and patient/ whānau relationships.
- **Leads** colleagues in therapeutic communication and de-escalation.
- **Leads and supports** development of interpersonal dynamics with professionalism.
- **Leads quality initiatives** that strengthen whanaungatanga and communication strategies.

## Pou Four: Pūkengatanga & Knowledge-informed Nursing Practice

Pūkengatanga and knowledge-informed practice requires enrolled nurses to use clinical knowledge and expertise to undertake a nursing assessment, inform clinical decision-making and provide safe care to individuals, whānau and communities. Enrolled nurses integrate clinical and cultural expertise and acknowledge people's unique and diverse values and circumstances.

### Competent EN

- Understands and works within their scope of practice and seeks guidance to ensure safe practice.
- **Promotes** health behaviours and **provides health education** to support people to achieve their health and wellness goals.
- Undertakes a nursing assessment incorporating scientific and nursing knowledge and, where appropriate, initiates and documents a plan of care in collaboration with the healthcare team.
- Applies nursing knowledge to identify and assess the deterioration or improvement of a person's condition, escalating any findings.
- Demonstrates digital health literacy and capability to support individuals, whānau and communities to use technology for managing health concerns and promoting wellbeing.
- Demonstrates safe and competent administration of medicines in accordance with policies and best practice guidelines.
- Ensures individuals and whānau have an adequate explanation of the effects, consequences and alternatives to proposed treatment options. Refers to the interprofessional team as required.
- Understands and works within the limits of their expertise and seeks guidance to ensure safe practice.
- Applies infection prevention and control principles in accordance with policies and best practice guidelines.
- Understands the impact of healthcare provision on global and local resources, demonstrates and supports the constant assessment and improvement of sustainability practices

### Proficient EN

- **Contributes** to health behaviours and health education to **support** people to achieve their health and wellness goals.
- **Coordinates and prioritises complex care needs** of tangata whaiora / whanau with colleagues, responds to changes in conditions and supports clinical decisions.
- **Mentors and shares clinical knowledge, contributes** to education development and team learning.
- Participates in service improvement activities.
- Utilises and **role models** clinical/cultural-based **knowledge and critical thinking** to inform care decisions to colleagues and students.
- Utilises digital literacy and capability to supports individuals, whānau, communities or colleagues to use digital technology in delivery of care, promotion of wellbeing.

- Provides formalised **preceptor or peer mentoring** relationship with colleagues.

### Expert EN

- Uses **advanced** practical skills, **supporting and assessing** others with these skills,
- **Leads or coordinates** care delivery on shift or within workstream.
- **Initiates and/or leads** quality improvement and evidence-based projects.
- **Initiates and leads** policy or procedure development where relevant.
- Utilises broad experiential and clinical / cultural-based knowledge to provide care.
- **Leads education** development and delivery.
- **Leads** others in **preceptorship**.
- **Leads** in EN knowledge development to have a world view of person and whanau.

## Pou Five: Mana hautū, Professional Accountability and Responsibility

Mana hautū, professional accountability and responsibility in nursing practice, requires enrolled nurses to provide care within professional, ethical and legal boundaries to ensure safe quality nursing practice that upholds people's rights, confidentiality and dignity.

### Competent EN

- Works within professional, legal and ethical boundaries, and accepts responsibility for decision-making and actions in accordance with level of assessed competence.
- Demonstrates understanding of professional responsibilities and adheres to the Nursing Council of New Zealand Code of Conduct and relevant organisational policies and procedures.
- Ensures documentation is legible, relevant, accurate, professional and timely.
- Identifies and responds appropriately to risk that could impact the health, safety and wellbeing of self and others and affect the ability to practise safely.
- **Reflects** on own practice and **engages** in ongoing professional development and learning to meet continuing competence requirements
- Promotes an environment of safety and participates in continuous quality improvement activities.
- Is an effective **role model, preceptor and mentor as appropriate.**

### Proficient EN

- **Role models** accountability and reliability.
- Acts as a **resource and role model** in daily practice.
- **Supports** orientation and formal coaching of colleagues.
- Upholds professional standards consistently.
- **Role models** the ability to identify and respond appropriately to risk that could impact the wellbeing of self and others and affect the ability to practice safely.

### Expert EN

- Acts as a **mentor and role model** for professional behaviour.
- **Leads** peer development, in-service teaching, and/or coaching.
- **Supports** workforce development and service improvement.
- Promotes a culture of high standards, respect, and accountability.
- Applies legal and ethical boundaries, working within their assessed level of expertise.