



## **Maternal and Neonatal Health Nursing Scope of Practice, Standards, and Competencies**

**2022**

## **The Jordanian Nursing Council**

The Jordanian Nursing Council (JNC) is a national governmental regulatory institution for nursing and midwifery in Jordan. The JNC is governed by a board headed by Her Royal Highness Princess Muna Al Hussein, as president of the council. The board is comprised of 14 key representatives of the health care institutions, through regulating and governing the nursing profession in education, practice and research.

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## **Foreword**

The “National maternal and neonatal health nursing framework: Scope of practice, standards and competencies” is a policy document developed by the Jordanian Nursing Council (JNC) to regulate and unify the standards for the practice of maternity nurses. It includes national standards and competencies for the general and advanced practice roles. The aim of this document is to standardize practice and safeguard the health and wellbeing of maternity and neonatal clients. The document is a guide for academic and practice institutions; educational institutions need to transfer the content of this very important document and deal with it as a national curriculum for the undergraduate and graduate education of maternity nurses to prepare them for fitness for practice roles, and create a generation that is responsive, ethically-committed, and supportive for the maternal and neonatal health. Maternity institutions - units need to take this document as a policy umbrella for the practice of maternity health and their commitment to implement and create a positive environment to allow maternity nurses to function within the agreed upon scope of practice and competencies stated in this document. Institutions need to use these competencies in finalizing job description, roles and responsibilities, as a tool for performance evaluation. This document was developed with distinguished efforts from national academic and service institutions. I would like to express my sincere appreciation for all who contributed to the development of this unique document. The implementation of this document at the national level by all institutions is a challenge, but we trust your good will and ability to take it forward and present Jordan as a regional model in the maternity nursing area.

**Secretary General**

**Prof. Hani Al nawafleh**

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## **Introduction**

The national professional standards for advanced and specialist Maternity and Neonatal Health Nurse (MNHN) was developed through the Maternity Health Nurses Committee within JNC as part of JNC's mission to promote the health status of the community through a sound regulatory system that assures quality services and safe practices. These standards aim to protect the public and the profession by strengthening maternity nursing care and practices in the country. In general, the JNC aims to enhance maternity health nursing services in Jordan which would protect community members and promote their health through a sound regulatory system that includes laws, bylaws, standards, and policies.

## **Methodology**

Maternity and neonatal nursing is a dynamic specialty profession that requires constant updating and strengthening practices to meet the emerging needs and challenges of maternal health issues and health system. The following standards and competencies were developed in collaboration with national team composed of experts in maternal health from universities, Ministry of Health, Private and Royal Medical Services health sectors, to develop a framework that is consistent with national regulatory mechanisms in Jordan. The outcomes are a set of standards of practice and competencies for advanced practice in maternity health.

The development of the scope of practice, standards and competencies was based on international and regional regulatory frameworks in addition to the best possible evidence of international models and frameworks, and consultations with national maternity health nursing and midwifery experts from various settings.

## **Purpose of the National Framework of Maternity and Neonatal Health Nursing**

JNC considers the professional standards and competencies as legal guidance to protect the public by regulating nursing practice, determine the entry and re-entry level to practice, clarify educational requirements, provide nurses professional guidance, provide a framework to assess professional performance, and address incompetence among maternity nurses.

## **Definition of Maternity Nurse**

**Maternity and Neonatal Health Nurse Specialist (MNHNS) is the person who:**

1. Practices in any setting including the home, community, hospitals, clinics or health units.
2. Partners with women and families to promote self-care and the health of mothers and neonates, up to six weeks after birth.
3. Respects human dignity and women's full human rights.
4. Advocates for women's needs.
5. Practices cultural sensitivity to protect women and neonates from harmful practices.
6. Focuses on health promotion and disease prevention that views pregnancy as a normal life event.

## **Qualifications:**

- Obtained a higher diploma or professional diploma in maternity nurse from an accredited university or educational institution.
- Registered with the Jordan Nurses and Midwives Council (JNMC) and is licensed to practice under the Public Health Law.

- Passed the evaluation mandated by JNC according to the provisions of the bylaw on specialization.

### **Advanced Maternity and Neonatal Health Nurse Specialist (AMNHNS)**

Practices with a high level of clinical skill, competence, and autonomous decision-making; and reflects a particular benchmark on the career development ladder.

- Applies expert clinical knowledge into best practice models, utilizing relevant data to analyze maternity and neonatal outcomes.
- Identifies gaps between evidence and practice and considers potential solutions to bridge gaps.
- Analyzes the process for health policy development, influential factors, and the impact of policy on clinical practice.
- Collaborates as an effective team member to promote positive change in the healthcare of women and neonates up to six weeks after birth.
- Utilizes information systems and other technologies to improve the quality and safety of healthcare for women and neonates up to six weeks after birth
- Identifies appropriate use of resources to manage a healthcare practice.

### **Qualifications:**

- Registered with JNMC and licensed according to the Public Health Law provisions.
- Obtained a minimum of a second university degree (master's degree) from an accredited university or educational institution in a field of specialty listed and recognized by JNC.
- Fulfilled the specific standards to achieve JNC certifications for this professional level.

## **Scope of Practice**

### **Scope of (MNHNS) Practice:**

- Is recognized as responsible, accountable, autonomous, has cognitive skills, used within ethically and culturally safe practices in primary and secondary healthcare settings and in rural and urban communities.
- Works in partnership with a woman and her family to provide the necessary support, care, and advice from preconception to six weeks after birth, including normal and high risk antenatal, perinatal, and postnatal periods.
- Applies therapeutic care; health surveillance; health promotion and prevention; shared decision-making; collaboration; bereavement support to promote the safety and well-being of the woman, neonate, and her family, by nurturing a therapeutic relationship with the woman and family.
- Works in collaboration with other healthcare team members and other disciplines to assess, plan, implement, and evaluate women-centered care, and adjusts the care plan to meet the woman's or family's needs.
- Advocates for women-centered care needs and respect for the diversity of women's and families' experiences, by individualizing care and incorporating ethical principles within ethically challenging situations.

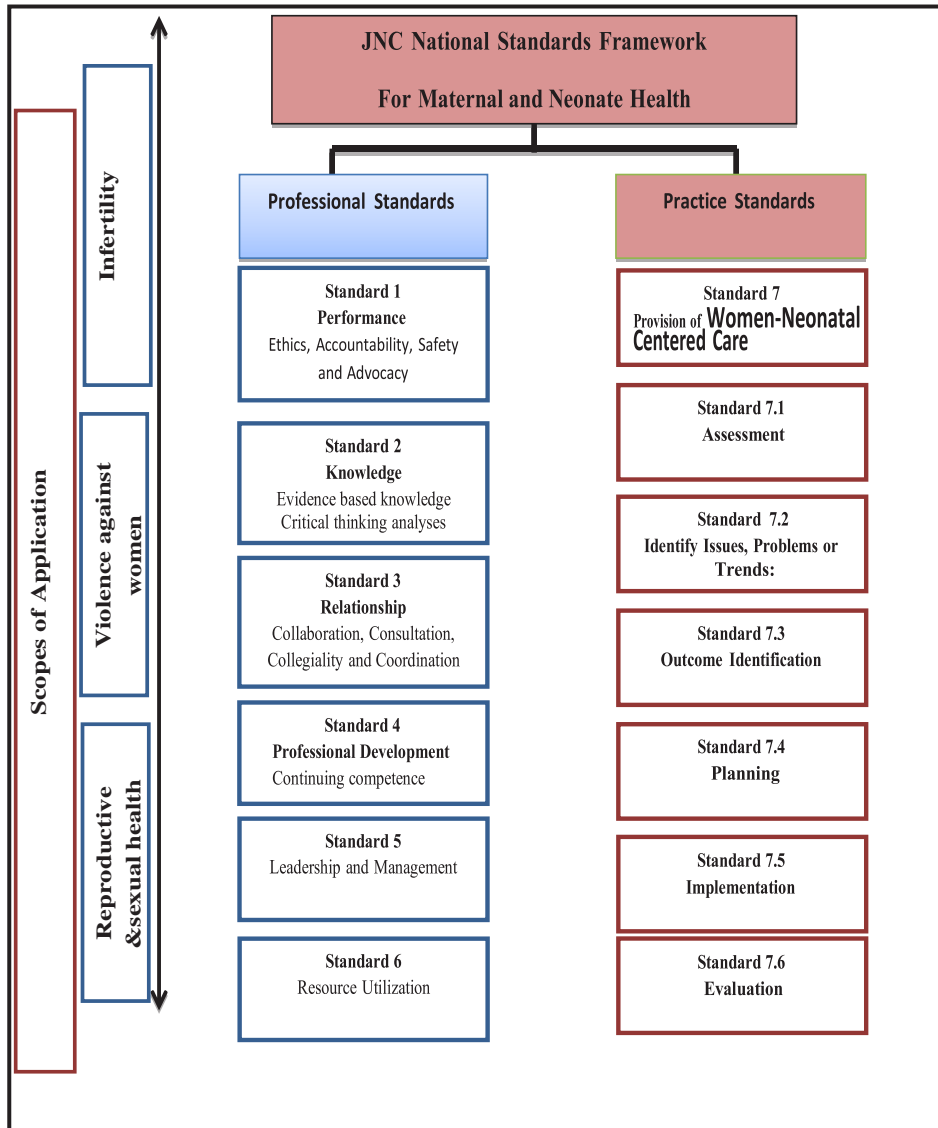
### **Scope of (AMNHNS) Practice:**

Advanced maternal and neonatal nurse specialist must have a vision of areas of maternal-neonatal nursing practice that can be developed beyond the current scope of maternal-neonatal nursing practice, and a commitment to

developing these areas in response to women's needs and healthcare service requirements at local, national, and international levels.

- Works within a defined scope of practice in an individual practice setting, and has an independent and interdependent role delineated through shared practices, clinical practice guidelines, policies, protocols, and procedures.
- Recognizes individual learning needs and obtains professional development opportunities to improve practice.
- Assists and supports colleagues in professional development through role-modeling and sharing of knowledge and expertise.
- Takes the initiative to clarify and address issues, explore options, facilitate change, and create new possibilities to improve care.
- Maintains skills and competencies related to developments in technology and informatics infrastructure.
- Has the ability to interpret, evaluate, and communicate research findings; test and apply the findings of research produced by others; and conduct independent research.

## The JNC National Framework of Maternal and Neonate Health Nurse



# Professional Standards

## **Standard 1: Performance (Ethics, Accountability, and Safety)**

The maternity and neonatal nurse meets the professional standards, legal and ethical responsibilities, accountability, safety, development activities, certification, and accreditation; articulates organizational policies and guidelines; and advocates for woman's, individual's, group's, and peer's rights in all scopes of applications.

### **1.1: The MNHNS practices within a professional, legal, and ethical maternal-neonatal nursing context**

#### **Competency 1:**

**Fulfills the responsibility and accountability of MNHNS professional activities within all relevant national legislation.**

#### **Measurement criteria:**

- Identifies and adheres to legislation governing the nursing profession.
- Identifies and adheres to the legal and regulatory framework governing reproductive health for women of all ages, including laws, policies, protocols, and professional guidelines.
- Identifies and adheres to the JNC maternity health standards and competencies.
- Demonstrates actions that show legal implications-awareness of maternal-neonate nursing practices.
- Recognizes maternity health nurse roles and responsibilities.
- Understands human rights and its effects on an individual's health including issues such as domestic violence and female genital mutilation (FGM).

## **Core Competency 2:**

**Practices in a way that acknowledges the dignity, culture, values, and beliefs of women within the national nursing code of ethics.**

### **Measurement criteria:**

- Assesses women and their families regardless of race, culture, religion, age, gender, physical or mental state.
- Protects women's privacy and confidentiality.
- Demonstrates respect and promotes women's rights to health, self-determination, being informed and making informed choices, beneficence, and justice.
- Maintains effective process of care when challenged by differing values, beliefs, and risks.
- Understands local culture and beliefs, including religious beliefs and gender roles.

### **In addition, the AMNHNS will perform the following**

- Enforce integration of national and international regulations, standards, and protocols.
- Enforce guidelines and policies in maternal health practice.
- Identify the need for new procedures, taking into consideration consumer demands, standards of safe practice, and availability of qualified personnel.
- Ensure there are no regulations or bylaws that would constrain the maternity nurse from incorporating new procedures into practice.
- Identify mechanism(s) for obtaining medical consultation, collaboration, and referral related to a procedure.
- Maintain documentation of the process used to achieve the necessary knowledge, skills, and ongoing competency of an expanded or new

procedure.

- Identify problems and utilize research evidence in nursing practice.
- Coach women and significant others into making informed choices of care by providing accurate clear information that considers benefits, risks, and outcomes.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of policies and strategies for managing ethical dilemmas, cultural issues in women's care, healthcare organizations, and research.

### **Core Competency 3:**

**Advocates for the rights of women (individuals and groups) and peers within institutional structures.**

#### **Measurement criteria:**

- Protects the rights of women (individuals and groups) and supports informed choices.
- Identifies insufficient resources to meet the needs of women (individuals and groups).
- Communicates the woman and group's needs to management and administration.
- Identifies procedures and practices which infringe the rights of women (individuals and groups).
- Illuminates and recommends policies and guidelines when women rights are compromised.
- Understands advocacy and empowerment strategies for women (individuals and groups).

**In addition, the advanced maternity and neonatal nurse will perform the following:**

- Advocate for a working culture that promotes motivation and enthusiasm towards professional development of knowledge and competencies as a requirement to achieve excellence in practice.
- Coach maternity nurses and multidisciplinary team members to improve women-centered competencies.
- Identify problems and utilize research evidence in nursing practice.

**1.2 : Undertakes safe responses and facilitates a physical, psychosocial,cultural and spiritual environment that promotes women's and individual/group safety.**

**Core Competency 1:**

**Ensures maternity nurse practices meet organizational safety and quality standards.**

**Measurement Criteria:**

- Adheres to national safety guidelines for women.
- Practices in accordance with approved quality standards and guidelines, reflecting recognized evidence-based best practice.
- Participates in organizational quality management processes and activities.
- Seeks evidence from a wide range of credible or reliable sources to maintain high quality and safety of maternity care.

## **Core Competency 2:**

**Ensures maternity nurse practices maintain a safe physical, psychosocial, cultural, and spiritual environment.**

- Articulates appropriate emotional and psychological responses with women in a professional manner.
- Provides a responsive environment by using effective interpersonal skills, psycho-behavioral counseling, and social care services.
- Identifies opportunities for continuous learning and improvement for patient safety.
- Identifies existing procedures or policies that may be unsafe or are inconsistent with best practices, and takes action to address those concerns.
- Assesses the immediate safety and care needs for the physical and emotional well-being of women and their families, and provides intervention as appropriate.
- Reduces or manages the risk of further harm to women affected by adverse events.
- Uses incident reports to report unsafe health midwifery practices.

**1.3: Ensures and promotes presence of systematic effective mechanisms for maternal-neonatal professional development programs.**

## **Core Competency 1:**

**Drives quality improvement programs and activities.**

**Measurement Criteria:**

- Participates in evaluation and regulation processes of individuals

through privileging, credentialing, certification, and accreditation.

- Incorporates organizational policies and guidelines using current best evidence.
- Ensures the presence of effective mechanisms and programs for implementing and evaluating professional maternal-neonatal standards.
- Maintains continuing education programs based on the JNC continuing education framework.
- Promotes strategies and techniques for a learning and research environment

## **Core Competency 2:**

**Participates in ongoing professional development that improves care for women and their families.**

### **Measurement Criteria:**

- Identifies the need for a new procedure, taking into consideration consumer demand, standards for safe practice, and availability of other qualified personnel.
- Ensures there are no institutional or governmental regulations or bylaws that would constrain a MNHNS from incorporating a procedure into practice.
- Obtains or maintains professional certification.
- Participates in educational activities related to appropriate knowledge bases and professional issues for self and others.
- Demonstrates commitment to lifelong learning through self-reflection and inquiry to identify learning needs.
- Acquires knowledge and skills appropriate to specialty area, practice setting, role or situation.

- Uses creativity and innovation in maternal-neonatal professional activities to improve delivery of care.

**In addition, the AMNHNS will perform the following:**

- Promote strategies and techniques for a learning and research environment.
- Challenge and create innovative and resourceful programs to share and promote good practices.
- Promote advance roles to meet advance needs of practice as a leader, coordinator consultant case manager, and educator.
- Develop initiatives to improve quality of care and health outcomes.
- Educate other staff members and colleagues in the conduct of quality and performance improvement projects.
- Pinpoint opportunities for using data generated from evidence-based practice and research.
- Evaluate the clinical practice environment and quality of nursing care provided in relation to existing evidence-based knowledge.
- Reflect on and evaluate own practice and role performance by modeling self-improvement and by sharing insights with peers and professional colleagues.

## **Standard 2: Knowledge**

The maternal and neonatal nurse demonstrates a satisfactory knowledgebase; reflects evidence-based practice; and uses analytical skills, clinical judgment, critical thinking and analysis, and self-appraisal in all scopes of applications. Bases education and practice on current evidence reflected frommaternity nursing, midwifery, and other sciences.

### **Core Competency 1:**

**Has in-depth knowledge regarding the concept of maternal health as a holistic approach for appropriate health promotion, maintenance, and restoration strategies to reduce mortality rates using evidence-based practice.**

#### **Measurement criteria:**

- Understands the social determinants of health.
- Understands the principles of community-based primary care using health promotion, disease prevention, and control strategies.
- Understands the direct and indirect causes of maternal and neonatal mortality and morbidity in the local community and strategies to reduce them.
- Understands the methods of infection prevention and control appropriate to the service being provided.
- Understands the beneficial and harmful traditional and modern health practices.
- Understands birth planning methods.

### **Core Competency 2:**

**Participates and utilizes research to create or cultivate evidence in the field of nursing and/or other sciences and humanities.**

#### **Measurement Criteria:**

- Provides evidence-based rationale for all decisions and actions.
- Knows how and where to access information to support knowledge development for the nursing profession.
- Supports and contributes to maternal healthcare research by identifying problems suitable for research or by participating in research.

- Uses relevant literature and research findings to update the nursing profession and practice.
- Updates and recommends guidelines and procedures based on current evidence.

### **Core Competency 3:**

#### **Demonstrates critical thinking, analytical skills, and evidence-based knowledge to promote an inspired environment**

##### **Measurement Criteria:**

- Collects information from a variety of sources using assessment skills, and valid and reliable data collection instruments and methods.
- Identifies, analyzes, and uses relevant and valid information when making decisions.
- Uses the best available evidence, respecting the values and beliefs of individuals/groups when providing maternal health services.
- Understands the knowledge required to meet the needs of complex situations and identifies a full range of options based on a depth and breadth of knowledge.
- Analyzes how bio-psychosocial needs and cultural background relates to healthcare needs.
- Critically evaluates research related to outcomes and advocates for its application in practice, and integrates research findings into professional service and practice.

**In addition, the AMNHNS will perform the following:**

- Prepare, facilitate, and conduct perinatal morbidity and mortality review meetings according to standards, including appropriate dissemination of recommendations and information.
- Analyze the effect of social, political, and economic issues on the environment and human health exposures.
- Update and recommend guidelines and procedures based on current evidence.
- Use current healthcare research findings and other evidence to expand clinical knowledge, skills, abilities, and judgment, to enhance role performance, and to increase knowledge of professional issues.
- Contribute to maternal-neonatal knowledge by conducting or synthesizing research and other evidence that examines and evaluates current practice, knowledge, theories, criteria, and creative approaches to improve healthcare outcomes.
- Disseminate research findings through activities such as presentations, publications, consultations, and journal clubs.
- Continue to change healthcare needs in a progressive complex healthcare environment.

### **Standard 3: Relationship**

The Maternity and Neonatal Health Nurse Specialist (MNHNS) establishes professional communication, collaboration, consultation, and coordination with women and their families, and the interdisciplinary healthcare team, to provide maternal and neonatal healthcare services.

**3.1: Demonstrates professional communication with women (individuals and groups) and peers within institutional structures to collaborate, coordinate, and consult, to provide the best professional services.**

**Core Competency 1:**

**Promotes and maintains professional communication in all professional interactions.**

**Measurement Criteria:**

- Treats women (individuals and groups) in a professional manner.
- Recognizes and respects the contribution of others within institutional structures.
- Initiates, maintains, and terminates the nurse relationship with women (individuals and groups) in a professional manner.

**Core Competency 2:**

**Establishes therapeutic relationships that are goal directed and recognizes professional boundaries.**

**Measurement Criteria:**

- Uses effective verbal and non-verbal communication and listening skills.
- Builds trust and rapport with women (individuals and groups) and other healthcare professionals.
- Understands and manages women's (individuals and groups) emotions.
- Includes women (individuals and groups) in the plan and provision of healthcare.

- Understands women's abilities, limitations, and needs related to her health condition and women's needs for nursing care or services.
- Listens to, and talks to women and their families, to give good/bad news in a sensitive manner.
- Assists and supports women, families and groups in making informed healthcare decisions that keeps them informed on healthcare progress and care plan.
- Maintains effectively the limits or boundaries in nurse-women (individuals and groups) relationship.
- Stays informed and objective about the various MNHNS roles and their relationship to one another.

### **Core Competency 3:**

**Collaborates with the interdisciplinary healthcare team to provide comprehensive, specialized maternity and neonatal healthcare.**

#### **Measurement Criteria:**

- Communicates effectively with women (individuals and groups) to facilitate provision of care.
- Communicates women's assessments and decisions to the interdisciplinary healthcare team and other relevant service providers.
- Collaborates with peers within institutional structures to inform policy and guideline development.
- Communicates, collaborates and consults with women (individuals and groups) and other members of the healthcare team about women's care.

### **Core Competency 4:**

**Coordinates women's care, educational activities, strategies, and other associated processes to achieve professional outcomes.**

**Measurement Criteria:**

- Organizes interventions with other healthcare team members.
- Maintains current information to ensure continuity of care.
- Contributes to the improvement of healthcare team performance outcomes.
- Directs and refers women (individuals and groups) to appropriate governmental/non-governmental organizations, to ensure continuity of care.
- Uses the most recent available research evidence on the safety and effectiveness of specific practices to help guide maternity care decisions and to ensure optimal outcomes in women and newborns.
- Incorporates professional development programs to meet the needs of the profession.
- Coordinates learning activities that reflect current evidence to improve Maternity and Neonatal Health Nurse skill competencies and professional development.
- Coordinates humans, clinical settings, and community resources and strategies, including policies, services, and environmental modifications for developed professional care.
- Promotes open communication systems for professional organization, including three levels of continuity of care: informational, longitudinal and interpersonal.

**In addition, the Advance Maternity and Neonatal Health Nurse Specialist (AMNHNS) will perform the following:**

- Partners with other disciplines to enhance optimal healthcare outcomes through inter-professional activities, such as education, consultation,

management, technological development or research opportunities.

- Leads in establishing, improving, and sustaining collaborative relationships to achieve safe and quality healthcare.
- Documents, communicates, and provides rationales for the plan of care within the institutional structure.

## **Standard 4: Leadership and Management**

The Maternity and Neonatal Health Nurse Specialist (MNHNS) demonstrates leadership and management skills to uphold the responsibility of maternal neonatal health services in scope of applications.

### **4.1: Demonstrates professional leadership and management skills**

#### **Core Competency 1:**

Promotes self-awareness of values, beliefs, self-development, and personal resilience.

#### **Measurement Criteria:**

- Possesses experience in establishing and leading a team.
- Exhibits creativity and flexibility through times of change.
- Able to function competently and professionally in the crises and pandemic situations.
- Maintains and advocates for women's autonomy and confidentiality within the legal and ethical framework of emergency care, and the women's access to emergency care.
- Demonstrates energy and passion for quality work.
- Accepts mistakes by self and others to create a practice-culture in which risk-taking is promoted and expected.

## **Core Competency 2:**

**Provides professional leadership and management skills.**

### **Measurement Criteria:**

- Assumes key roles in work setting by participating in committees, councils, and administrative roles.
- Delegates professional practices and aspects of care to others according to their competence and scope of practice.
- Accepts changes based on evidence and addresses emerging situations.
- Develops innovative solutions and takes actions to resolve conflict.
- Uses evaluation methods to measure safety and effectiveness for interventions and health.
- Promotes communication of information through writing, publishing, and presentations for professional and lay audiences.

**In addition, the Advance Maternity and Neonatal Health Nurse Specialist (AMNHNS) will perform the following:**

- Model expert practice to inter-professional team members and healthcare users.
- Mentor peers within institutional structures in acquiring clinical knowledge, skills, abilities, and judgment.
- Influence decision-making bodies to improve the professional practice environment and healthcare users' outcomes.
- Use the mechanism of *emotion work* and learn self-protective coping strategies to manage feelings of distress and grief, using a task-oriented approach to care with the women, colleagues and organization.
- Delegate activities to peers within institutional structures according to their abilities and scope of practice.
- Supervise aspects of care delegated to peers within institutional structures and

give support as needed.

- Uphold accountability and responsibility when delegating aspects of care to peers within institutional structures.
- Influence decision-making agencies to improve healthcare services for women (individuals and groups).

## **Standard 5: Resource Utilization**

The maternal and neonatal nurse makes equitable decisions to utilize and administer beneficial cost-effective resources to plan and provide nursing services that are safe, effective, and financially responsible in all scopes of application.

### **5.1: Utilize and administer beneficial cost-effective resources to plan and provide maternal nursing services.**

#### **Core Competency 1:**

**Evaluates factors such as safety, effectiveness, availability, cost-benefits, efficiencies, and impact, on the profession and practice.**

#### **Measurement Criteria:**

- Participates in evaluation strategies regarding cost-effectiveness and cost-benefits of nursing services and its impact on the environment.
- Uses evaluation methods to measure safety and effectiveness of health interventions and available resources.
- Monitors resource allocation and utilization.

#### **Core Competency 2:**

**Makes equitable decisions about the allocation of resources based on the needs of women and individuals.**

**Measurement Criteria:**

- Knows how to access and evaluate resources.
- Participates in allocation of human, financial, and material resources based on identified needs and goals.
- Assists colleagues, managers, and stakeholders to identify and secure appropriate available human, financial, and material resources.

**Core Competency 3:**

**Manages human resources, facilities, materials, equipment, and technologies for better healthcare practices.**

**Measurement Criteria:**

- Participates in innovative solutions that address effective resource utilization and quality maintenance.
- Develops proficiency with current and advanced technology and applications.
- Promotes activities that assist others in becoming informed about costs, risks, and benefits of plans and solutions.
- Incorporates perspectives of woman and other stakeholders on services and service quality.
- Participates in managing nursing human resources, including distribution and delegation, based on knowledge, skills, abilities, and complexity of work.

**Standard 6: Provider of Maternal and Neonatal-Centered Care**

The maternal and neonatal nurse should work in partnership with women and provide effective and competent women-centered care. The maternal and

neonatal nurse should be responsive to the needs of women and their families throughout the antenatal, intrapartum, postnatal, and neonatal periods. Provided care should be based on scientific approaches of assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation of care.

#### **Sub-standard 6.1**

**Assessment: The maternity and neonatal nurse conducts a holistic assessment to support women throughout the preconception, antenatal, intrapartum, and postpartum periods.**

- Uses evidence-based assessment tools or frameworks to collect physical, psychological, cultural, and economic data on the mothers and their families.
- Uses a range of assessment techniques to collect relevant and accurate data.
- Uses best-practice guidelines to address concerns and needs.
- Shares need-assessments with other health professional teams.
- Initiates and interprets necessary investigations in a variety of care settings and within her scope of practice.
- Initiates partnerships with women to assess their healthcare needs and determine appropriate intervention strategies to address them.
- Documents data collected in a special format.

#### **Sub-standard 6.2:**

**The maternity and neonatal nurse analyzes the assessment data to define the issues, problems or trends.**

- Analyses assessment data accurately.
- Interprets data in accordance to the scientific body of knowledge to make decisions and accurate diagnoses for problems, trends or issues.

- Compares clinical findings with normal and abnormal variations in formulating a differential diagnosis.
- Integrates clinical, psychological, cultural, and economic data to support problem identification.
- Examines and synthesizes complex information and data.
- Prioritizes problems from assessment data.
- Documents issues and problems in a manner that facilitates determining the plan and expected outcomes.
- Communicates findings with involved healthcare team effectively to ensure optimum healthcare provided.

#### **Sub-standard 6.3:**

**Outcome Identification: The maternal and neonatal nurse identifies expected outcomes according to the maternal and neonatal needs.**

- Develops context-specific outcomes based on assessment data and evidence-based research in relation to ethical consideration, women's preferences, cost, resources, and risk-benefit ratio, in collaboration with other health professional teams.
- Involves mothers, their families, and healthcare providers in formulating expected outcomes.
- Reviews and updates expected outcomes based on continuous change in the mother's condition.
- Documents expected outcomes as measurable goals.

#### **Sub-standard 6.4**

**Planning: The maternal and neonatal nurse develops individualized plans based on assessments to achieve expected outcomes in coordination with the inter-professional team and other disciplines.**

- Determines women's goals for care in collaboration with family and other members of the healthcare team, while considering the women's needs, values, beliefs, preferences, culture, and environment.
- Formulates objectives for the plan of care that are specific, measurable, achievable, outcome-oriented, and women-centered.
- Identifies areas for collaboration, networking, and referral.
- Outlines, selects, and prioritizes intervention in providing care according to the women's care plan.
- Mobilizes and organizes resources to carry out the planned activities.
- Documents the plan of action to facilitate communication with other healthcare providers for continuity of care.

### **Sub-standard 6.5**

**Implementation: The maternal and neonatal nurse implements the plan in a comprehensive, safe, realistic, effective, evidence-based, and timely manner, to achieve the identified maternal and neonatal health outcomes.**

- Initiates and carries out direct care to women and their families seeking reproductive health services.
- Utilizes available resources to measure and record women's data, implement the nursing process, and enhance nursing practice, in collaboration with women's families and healthcare providers.
- Provides evidence-based care in line with national protocols, procedure manuals, and institutional policies.
- Documents interventions and progress of women's status to facilitate continuity of care.
- Provides community-based healthcare with accurate, complete, and relevant health information, to empower the family in decision-making.

- Uses different communication skills to promote relationships with mothers, families, healthcare providers, and health resources, to provide context for open discussion and improve the women's health.

### **Sub-standard 6.6**

**Evaluation: The maternal and neonatal nurse evaluates the progress to achieve the implemented care in collaboration and consultation with the healthcare team.**

- Determines the effectiveness of the care given based on intended outcomes.
- Reviews the reproductive health services to make necessary changes.
- Monitors progress and evaluates the intervention outcomes on the physical, psychosocial, and emotional needs, in collaboration with the women, families, and involved healthcare providers.
- Evaluates the accuracy in diagnosing the problem and the data collected, and the effectiveness of the implemented care.
- Documents and disseminates evaluation results with involved healthcare providers.

# **Maternity and Neonatal Nurse Specialist & Advanced Maternity and Neonatal Nurse Specialist Competencies**

## **Antenatal Care**

### **Core Competency**

**Provides high-quality antenatal care that includes early detection and treatment, or referral of selected complicated cases.**

### **Measurement Criteria:**

**The maternity and neonatal nurse specialist have the following knowledge and/or understandings:**

- Anatomy and physiology of the human body.
- Biology of human reproduction, the menstrual cycle, and the process of conception.
- Signs and symptoms of pregnancy.
- Examinations and tests to confirm pregnancy.
- Signs and symptoms of a possible ectopic pregnancy necessitating referral for further diagnosis.
- Principles of dating pregnancy by menstrual history, size of uterus, and fundal growth patterns.
- Components of a health history and focused physical examination for antenatal visits.
- Normal findings (results) of basic screening laboratory tests commonly used in the national context, (e.g., Hb, blood group and Rh, iron levels, urine test for sugar, protein, acetone, and bacteria).
- Normal progression of pregnancy, (e.g., body changes, common

discomforts, and expected fundal growth patterns).

- Implications of deviation from expected fundal growth patterns, including but not limited to intrauterine growth retardation/restriction, oligo- and polyhydramnios, and multiple fetuses.
- Fetal risk factors requiring transfer of the woman to higher levels of care prior to labor and birth.
- Normal psychological changes in pregnancy, indicators of psychosocial stress, and impact of pregnancy on the woman and the family.
- Safe and available non-pharmacological substances to relieve common pregnancy discomforts.
- Fetal well-being during pregnancy, including fetal heart rate and fetal activity patterns.
- Nutritional requirements of a pregnant woman.
- Health promotion and education needs in pregnancy, (e.g., information about relief of common discomforts, hygiene, sexuality, and work inside and outside the home).
- Basic principles of pharmacokinetics of drugs prescribed, dispensed or furnished to women during pregnancy.
- Effects of prescribed medications, street drugs, traditional medicines, and over-the-counter drugs on pregnancy and the fetus.
- Effects of smoking, second-hand smoke, alcohol abuse, and illicit drug use on the pregnant woman and fetus.
- Signs and symptoms of the onset of labor including women's perceptions and symptoms.
- Signs, symptoms, and potential effects of life-threatening conditions to the pregnant woman and/or her fetus, (e.g., pre-eclampsia/eclampsia,

vaginal bleeding, premature labor, severe anemia, Rh isoimmunization or syphilis).

- Means and methods of advising about care, treatment, and support for HIV-positive pregnant woman, including measures to prevent.
- Maternal-to-child transmission, including feeding options.
- Indications for referral of selected complications and conditions of pregnancy that affect either mother or fetus.
- Physiology of lactation.
- Methods to prepare women for breastfeeding.

**The maternity and neonatal nurse specialist has the skill and/or ability to:**

- Obtain an initial and ongoing health history for each antenatal visit.
- Perform a comprehensive physical examination of the pregnant woman.
- Explain findings of a health assessment to the pregnant woman.
- Assess maternal vital signs including temperature, blood pressure, pulse, and respiratory rate.
- Assess maternal nutrition and its relationship to fetal growth.
- Provide proper education about nutritional requirements during pregnancy.
- Perform a complete abdominal exam including Leopold's maneuvers.
- Identify fetal heart rate with a fetal Doppler monitor (if available).
- Palpate uterus for fetal activity and interpret findings.
- Calculate the estimated date of birth.
- Provide health education to women and families about normal pregnancy progression, danger signs and symptoms, and when and how to contact the maternity nurse.

- Educate women about health promotion aspects during pregnancy, (e.g., work conditions, travel, and sexuality).

- Prepare women and family for labor, birth, and parenting.
- Identify variations from normal during the course of pregnancy and institute appropriate first-line independent or collaborative management based upon evidence-based guidelines, local standards, and available resources for:
  - low and/or inadequate maternal nutrition,
  - inadequate or excessive uterine growth, including suspected oligo- or polyhydramnios, or molar pregnancy,
  - elevated blood pressure, proteinuria, presence of significant edema, severe frontal headaches, visual changes or epigastric pain associated with elevated blood pressure,
  - vaginal bleeding,
  - multiple gestation, abnormal lie/malpresentation at term,
  - intrauterine fetal death, or
  - rupture of membranes prior to term.
- Upon medical advice, dispense or administer selected, life-saving drugs (e.g., antibiotics, anticonvulsants, anti-hypertensives or insulin) to women in need because of a presenting condition.
- Identify deviations from normal during the course of pregnancy, and initiate the referral process for conditions that require higher levels of intervention.

**In addition, the advanced maternity and neonatal nurse specialist has the ability to:**

- Prepare and administer life-saving drugs (e.g., antibiotics, anticonvulsants, antimalarials, antihypertensives, and antiretrovirals) to women in need because of a presenting condition.

- Provide counseling regarding all family planning methods as indicated according to the woman's health status after taking the required specialized courses.
- Counsel high-risk pregnant women (e.g., cardiac case, PET, hemoglobinopathies and infectious disorder) by providing one-to-one care through pregnancy, childbirth, and post-delivery.

## Intra-partum Care

### Core Competency:

**Provide comprehensive, high quality, and culturally sensitive intra-partum care for women and their newborns (with the exception of skills that fall under the specialty of a midwife).**

### Measurement Criteria:

**The advanced maternity and neonatal nurse specialist & maternity and neonatal nurse specialist have the following knowledge and/or understandings:**

- Physiology of first, second, and third stages of labor.
- Factors affecting the process of labor and childbirth.
- Psychological and cultural aspects of labor and birth.
- Indicators of the latent phase and the onset of active labor.
- Indications to stimulate the onset of labor and augment uterine contractility.
- Normal progression of labor.
- Use of the partograph (i.e., completing the record and interpreting information to determine timely and appropriate labor management).
- Measures to assess fetal well-being in labor.

- Measures to assess maternal well-being in labor.
- Process of fetal passage (descent) through the pelvis during labor and birth, and mechanisms of labor in various fetal presentations and positions.
- Comfort measures in first and second stages of labor (e.g., family presence/assistance, positioning for labor and birth, hydration, emotional support, or non-pharmacological methods of pain relief).
- Pharmacological measures to manage and control labor pain, including the relative risks, disadvantages, safety of specific methods of pain management, and their effect on the normal physiology of labor.
- Signs and symptoms of complications in labor, (e.g. bleeding, labor arrest, malpresentation, eclampsia, maternal distress, fetal distress, infection or prolapsed cord).

**The advanced maternity and neonatal nurse specialist and maternity and neonatal nurse specialist have the skills and/or ability to:**

- Demonstrate a warm welcoming attitude, and provide comfort and psychological support to a woman and her family.
- Conduct routine admission procedures and relevant procedures as determined by the woman's needs.
- Take a specific history and maternal vital signs in labor.
- Perform a focused physical examination in labor.
- Assess effectiveness of uterine contractions and recognize timing of contractions.
- Monitor progress of labor using the partograph or similar tool for recording.
- Provide physical and psychological support for the woman, and

facilitate the presence of a support person during labor and birth.

- Provide adequate hydration, nutrition, and non-pharmacological comfort measures during labor and birth.
- Implement appropriate nursing interventions to provide pain management using pharmacological and non-pharmacological measures.
- Provide appropriate nursing interventions for women receiving different methods of labor induction or augmentation.
- Identify any deviation from normal progress of labor, and initiate appropriate and timely intervention and/or referral.
- Inspect the placenta and membrane for completeness.
- Perform fundal massage to stimulate postpartum uterine contraction and uterine tone.
- Provide a safe environment for the mother and infant to promote attachment (bonding).
- Estimate and record maternal blood loss.
- Identify signs and symptoms of postpartum bleeding and hemorrhage, and initiate appropriate interventions until help arrives.
- Dispense or administer selected, life-saving drugs upon medical advice, (e.g., antibiotics, anticonvulsants, antihypertensives) to women in need because of a presenting condition.
- Identify signs and symptoms of shock and initiate appropriate interventions.
- Arrange for and undertake timely referral and transfer of women with serious complications to a higher-level health facility, taking appropriate drugs and equipment, and arranging for a companion care-giver on the journey to continue giving emergency care as required.
- Perform cardio-pulmonary resuscitation for women as relevant during pregnancy and after birth.
- Document deviations from normal through stages of labor in a way that

facilitates developing strategies and alternatives to achieve expected outcomes.

- Involve the woman and her family and healthcare provider in formulating expected outcomes and care.
- Document and communicate assessment findings with the healthcare team using standard procedures and the partograph to provide continuity of qualified care.

**The advanced maternal and neonatal health nurse specialist has the skill and/or ability to:**

- Provide non-pharmacological pain management during labor (e.g., Armory Therapy and complementary medicine) after taking specialized courses.
- Provide counseling for high-risk cases during labor.
- Select appropriate nursing interventions to respond to urgent and emergency situations in the intra-partum period.
- Provide appropriate nursing interventions for the woman experiencing planned or emergency cesarean birth, (e.g., physical, emotional, and psychological).
- Identify indications for and risk factors associated with induction of labor.
- Identify risk factors for a potentially compromised newborn.
- Implement nursing interventions to manage a compromised newborn, (e.g., neonatal resuscitation).
- Assign and interpret the Apgar score.

- Implement appropriate nursing interventions to promote newborn transition to extra-uterine life.
- Facilitate maternal and family interaction with the newborn.
- Facilitate early skin-to-skin contact.
- Provide appropriate nursing interventions to facilitate initiation of breastfeeding.

## **Postpartum**

### **Core Competence:**

**Provides comprehensive, high quality, culturally sensitive postpartum care for women.**

### **Measurement Criteria:**

**The advanced maternity and neonatal nurse specialist & maternity and neonatal nurse specialist have the following knowledge and/or understandings:**

- Physical and emotional changes that occur following childbirth, including the normal process of involution.
- Physiology and process of lactation and common variations, including engorgement, lack of milk supply, etc.
- Importance of early breastfeeding for the mother and child.
- Maternal nutrition, rest, activity, and physiological needs (e.g., bowel and bladder) in the immediate postpartum period.
- Principles of parent-infant bonding and attachment, (e.g., how to promote positive relationships).
- Indicators of subinvolution, (e.g., persistent uterine bleeding, and infection).

- Indicators of maternal breastfeeding problems or complications, including mastitis.
- Signs and symptoms of selected complications in the postnatal period (e.g., persistent anemia, hematoma, depression, thrombophlebitis); incontinence of feces or urine; urinary retention, obstetric fistula, rubella non-immune infections (e.g., wound, uterine, breast and urinary tract infections); or substance use.
- Principles of interpersonal communication and support for women and/or their families who are bereaved, (e.g., maternal death, stillbirth, pregnancy loss, neonatal death or congenital abnormalities).
- Approaches and strategies for providing special support to adolescents or victims of gender-based violence including rape.
- Methods of family planning appropriate for use in the immediate postpartum period (e.g., LAM or progestin-only OCs) and counseling on indications for switching to another family planning method (e.g., no longer exclusively breastfeeding).
- Postpartum services available to the woman and her family and how they can be accessed.

**The advanced maternity and neonatal nurse specialist & maternity and neonatal nurse specialist have the following skills and/or abilities:**

- Interpret data to establish maternal health status during the postpartum period including:
  - pre-existing medical and mental health conditions (e.g., diabetes, obesity or depression),
  - pregnancy and childbirth history (e.g., previous and current),

- social history (e.g., substance use, smoking, violence, financial resources and family support).
- Select nursing interventions to promote healthy parenting and family development related to:
  - promoting attachment,
  - identifying learning opportunities (e.g., mother and baby care), evaluating learning outcomes (e.g., mother/self-care and baby care),
  - preparation for transition to home.
- Perform a focused physical examination of the mother.
- Provide information and support for women and/or their families who are bereaved, (e.g., maternal death, stillbirth, pregnancy loss, neonatal death or congenital abnormalities).
- Assess for uterine involution and healing of lacerations and/or repairs.
- Initiate and support early breastfeeding (within the first hour).
- Teach mothers how to express breast milk and how to handle and store it.
- Educate mother on care of self, neonate, and infant up to three months after childbirth, including signs and symptoms of impending complications and community-based resources.
- Educate a woman and her family on sexuality and family planning following childbirth.
- Provide family planning services concurrently as an integral component of postpartum care.
- Provide appropriate and timely first-line management for any

complications detected during the postpartum examination (e.g., anemia, hematoma, maternal infection), and refer for treatment as necessary.

- Provide advanced obstetric critical care and management skills of postpartum complications:
  - post-epidural/spinal complications,
  - hemorrhage (e.g., disseminated intravascular coagulation),
  - thromboembolic events (e.g., pulmonary embolism or deep vein thrombosis),
  - hypertensive disorders of pregnancy (e.g., seizures or HELLP),
  - systemic sepsis,
  - retained placenta tissue, and postpartum psychosis.
- Provide counseling services for high-risk pregnant women post childbirth.

## **Neonate and infant up to three months of care:**

### **Core Competency:**

**The advanced maternity nurse specialist and maternity nurse specialist will provide high quality and comprehensive care essential for a healthy infant from birth to 90 days of life.**

### **Measurement Criteria:**

**The advanced maternity and neonatal nurse specialist & maternity and neonatal nurse specialist have the following knowledge and/or**

**understandings:**

- Elements in assessing the immediate and subsequent condition of newborn (including Apgar scoring system or other method of assessing breathing and heart rate).
- Principles of newborn adaptation to extra-uterine life, (e.g., physiologic changes that occur in pulmonary and cardiac systems).
- Basic needs of newborn: established breathing, warmth, nutrition, and attachment (bonding).
- Advantages of various methods of newborn warming including skin-to-skin contact.
- Methods and means of assessing the gestational age of a newborn.
- Characteristics of low birthweight infants and their special needs.
- Characteristics of healthy newborn (appearance and behavior).
- Characteristics of normal growth and development of the preterm infant.
- Selected variations in the normal newborn, (e.g., caput succedaneum, molding or Mongolian spots).
- Elements of health promotion and disease prevention in newborns and infants, including essential elements of daily care, (e.g., cord care, nutritional needs or patterns of elimination).
- Infant immunization needs, risks, and benefits.
- Traditional or cultural practices and behaviors related to a newborn.
- Principles of nutrition, feeding cues, and feeding options for infants.
- Signs, symptoms, and indications for referral or transfer for selected newborn complications (e.g., jaundice, sepsis, hematoma, adverse molding of the fetal skull, hemangioma, hypoglycemia, hypothermia or dehydration).

**The advanced maternity and neonatal nurse specialist & maternity and neonatal nurse specialist have the following skills and abilities:**

- Provide immediate care to the newborn, including drying, warming, ensuring breathing is established, and cord clamping and cutting when pulsation ceases.
- Assess the immediate condition of the newborn (e.g., Apgar scoring or other assessment method of breathing and heart rate).
- Promote and maintain normal newborn body temperature through covering (e.g., blanket and cap), environmental control, and promotion of skin-to-skin contact.
- Give appropriate care including *kangaroo mother care* to a low birth weight baby, and arrange for referral if potentially serious complications arise, or very low birth weight.
- Perform a gestational age assessment.
- Provide routine care for a newborn, in accord with local guidelines and protocols, (e.g., identification, eye care, screening tests, administration of vitamin K, and birth registration).
- Position newborn to initiate breastfeeding within one hour after birth and support effective and exclusive breastfeeding, (e.g., cues, latch, feeding assessment, feeding patterns, and adequate intake).
- Address newborn safety issues in the hospital and/or at home related to infant security, sleep safety, environment (e.g., second-hand smoke or room temperature), and equipment (e.g., car seat and crib).
- Educate parents about danger signs in a newborn and when to bring the infant for care.
- Assist parents with accessing available community resources.
- Support parents during grieving process for loss of pregnancy,

stillbirth, congenital birth defects or neonatal death.

- Support parents during transport/transfer of newborn or during times of separation from their infant (e.g., NICU admission).
- Support and educate parents who have given birth to multiple babies about special needs and community resources.
- Document and communicate appropriately the implemented care to parents and other healthcare providers.
- Perform hearing assessment and report deviation and make appropriate referral.
- Complete a child immunization schedule to start post-delivery to five years of age.
- Recognize infant behaviors.
- Document deviations from normal physiological and developmental growth of neonate and infant up to two months of age.
- Involve parents and healthcare provider in formulating expected outcomes for neonatal care.

**The advanced maternity and neonatal health nurse specialist has the skill and/or ability to:**

- Apply advanced life support for high-risk neonates.
- Perform advanced immediate and emergency critical care for high-risk neonates.
- Provide appropriate nursing assessments and interventions to deal with common breastfeeding challenges related to a newborn (e.g., sleepy or fussy, prematurity, tongue tie or candidiasis, cleft lip and palate), and mother (e.g., sore nipples, engorgement, breast surgery, mastitis or candidiasis).

- Apply emergency measures for respiratory distress (e.g., newborn resuscitation or suctioning in case of airway obstruction), hypothermia or hypoglycemia.
- Use evidence-based assessment tools to assess and screen early physiological and neurobehavioral warning signs.
- Recognize indications of need, stabilize, and transfer the high-risk newborn to NICU and emergency care facility.

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