

# A Competency Framework for Rheumatology Nurses: Specialism Specific Practitioner

This document should be used in conjunction with the first edition of the RCN's Competency Framework for Rheumatology Nurses (2020) as guidance, this includes advice on the assessment process and on providing evidence. The competency framework is available at: [www.rcn.org.uk/professional-development/publications/pub-009004](http://www.rcn.org.uk/professional-development/publications/pub-009004)

Level of competency attainment guidance	Level
Cannot perform/demonstrate this activity satisfactorily or participate in the clinical environment	1
Can perform/demonstrate this activity but not without constant supervision and assistance	2
Can perform/demonstrate this activity with some supervision or assistance – and in clinical settings discussing cases as needed	3
Can perform without supervision or assistance demonstrating more than acceptable speed and quality showing initiative and adaptability to special problem situations – and in clinical settings discussing only difficult cases	4
Can perform without supervision or assistance demonstrating more than acceptable speed and quality showing initiative and adaptability to special problem situations and can lead others in undertaking this activity – and in clinical settings bringing pertinent cases to MDT meetings or appropriate clinician as required	5

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Competency 1: Specialism knowledge				
Performance criteria	Evidence	Level achieved	Date	Assessor/self-assessed

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Understands bone health, including the importance of diet, vitamin D, micronutrients, exercise and associated risk factors and their importance within the				



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Knowledge of the non-MSK manifestations of rheumatological pathologies.				
Knowledge of the potential psychological and social implications of living with a rheumatological condition.				
Understands falls risk implications and the importance of assessment.				
<b>Skills and behaviours</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Level achieved</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Assessor/self-assessed</b>
Can interpret infection risks and implications for patient treatment and escalates to appropriate clinician.				
Carries out physical MSK objective examination (where appropriate) interpreting and acting on findings.				
Requests investigations appropriately and recognises unexpected findings and reports these appropriately.				
Ability to carry out venepuncture or cannulation if appropriate.				
Identifies and supports patients to manage acute and				

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Consistently initiates shared decision making in partnership with the patient based on experience and expertise to achieve the best outcome. Making Every Contact Count.				
Develops clinical assessment skills of other systems				

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Competency 3: Disease management				
Performance criteria	Evidence	Level achieved	Date	Assessor/self-assessed
<b>Knowledge and understanding</b>				
Knowledge of the implications of long-term conditions, their ongoing management and effects on patients and families.				
Understands public health issues regarding the potential for the misuse of drugs.				
Understands the of the mode of action and aims of use of therapies, screening, side effects, monitoring requirements, pre-treatment safety checks and reporting side effects complying with local policy.				
Knowledge of side effects of treatment and complies with local policy on reporting side effects.				
Understands the implications of the use of patient group directions (PGDs) and non-medical prescribing.				
Knowledge of the use of over the counter (OTC) medication and non-pharmacological interventions including complementary therapy and supplements.				
Knowledge and understanding of other therapies and services that may be suitable.				
<b>Skills and behaviours</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Level achieved</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Assessor/self-assessed</b>
Undertakes risk assessment and capacity of patient and carers.				
Educates staff about risk assessment and capacity of patient and carers.				

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Effectively counsels patients and carers, and offers supporting information in relevant format.				
Able to support patient and f(r)-17.815.8 (l)-1fm15.4 2it 2.318.583 0   S Q Son i35(l)-1fm15.4 2it 2.318.583 0   S Q Son fo7-16.6 (n)-16.2 (s2i)-13.4 2it 2.530Tp6 260.078sel fo l f1 265.748 173.1591 cm 0 0 m 294.803 0   S Q5(e)s .8 (-19.h-0.6 15.8.9 (e)-60.7.815.8 (l)-15.8 (ro1 [(s)6.l)-155 TD 94.80in)-193 (s)-32 (, a6Q5(e) u.8 (e)-03 (a)-19.6(t)17 (,f 34.1 (ti)()18 ( foO)2 (o sT)22Q5(eC m-0.6 15.8 02184(ed)-1]TJ 0in)-199l)2.654c3 (s)-32 (, a)-19.6				



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Competency 4: Communication				
Performance criteria	Evidence	Level achieved	Date	Assessor/self-assessed
<b>Knowledge and understanding</b>				
Has the knowledge to access specific tools to aid rheumatological assessment.				
Understands factors affecting self-management and evidence-based approaches to patient education.				



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Competency 5: Service delivery				
Performance criteria	Evidence	Level achieved	Date	Assessor/self-assessed
<b>Knowledge and understanding</b>				
Is aware of pathways used in rheumatology and follows them for patient care.				
Is aware of patient feedback mechanisms.				
Understands the importance of planned, smooth transfer of care between primary, community and secondary care settings.				
Has knowledge of skills and expertise of others and appropriate referral pathways.				
Utilises patient feedback, compliments and complaints to advance service development and improvement.				
<b>Skills and behaviours</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Level achieved</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Assessor/self-assessed</b>
Ability to manage clinical caseload safely, effectively and efficiently demonstrating excellent time keeping skills.				
Able to carry out clinical annual review using local protocol.				
Ensures systems are in place to support patients and carers where necessary.				

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Supports team members to ensure core service delivery. Collects and reports service user feedback.				

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Competency 6: Governance and accountability				
Performance criteria	Evidence	Level achieved	Date	Assessor/self-assessed
<b>Knowledge and understanding</b>				
Understands the principles of duty of care and the importance of reporting near misses and errors.				
Understands research approaches and their relevance to practice.				
Undertaken quality improvement module.				
<b>Skills and behaviours</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Level achieved</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Assessor/self-assessed</b>
Recognises specific gaps and issues and problem solves or escalates issues related to the principle of duty of care.				

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Competency 7: Leadership and development				
Performance criteria	Evidence	Level achieved	Date	Assessor/self-assessed
<b>Knowledge and understanding</b>				
Knows the vision, values, principles and policies of the organisation and how to access them.				
Accesses a foundation level leadership training.				
Understands the nature of projects and deadlines and how these can impact the service.				
<b>Skills and behaviours</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Level achieved</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Assessor/self-assessed</b>
Promotes organisational goals. Understands service and organisation's policies and practices.				
Able to undertake literature search to access current				

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Area identified for development	Review date	Outcome

I confirm that the level of competence described above evidences my current skills and capability within the competence framework.

Signed

Date

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Signed

\_\_\_\_\_

Designation

\_\_\_\_\_

Date