

SCOPE OF PRACTICE

FOR ADVANCED PRACTICE NURSE –
NURSE PRACTITIONER



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FOREWORD

The Nursing profession has evolved to address the health, societal and person-centered care challenges. The International Council of Nurses (ICN) has been calling for investment in nursing in particular Advanced Practice Nursing (APN) to address global health challenges.

APNs are an effective and efficient resources to address the challenges of accessible, safe, and affordable health care. While this appears to be a relatively recent concept, distinct patterns can be seen in the transition of specialty practice into Advanced Practice Nursing over the last 100 years (Hamric & Tracy, 2019).

Through the development of the Scope of practice for APNs, some of the barriers that have hindered the nursing profession can be broken. This scope of practice will provide a regulation framework for this cadre to enable a clearer understanding for continued evolution of APN in Kenya.

Kenyans have the right to quality, safe and affordable healthcare therefore Advanced Practice Nursing provides one of the solutions.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

APN: Advanced Practice Nurse

COP: Communities of Practice

ICN: International Council of Nurses

ICT: Information Communication Technology

SDG: Sustainable Development Goals

SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

Advanced Practice Nursing refers to enhanced and expanded healthcare services and interventions provided by nurses who, in an advanced capacity, influence clinical healthcare outcomes and provide direct healthcare services to individuals, families and communities (Hamric & Tracy, 2019).

The International Council of Nurses (ICN) defines an Advanced Practice Nurse (APN) as “*a registered nurse who has acquired the expert knowledge base, complex decision-making skills and clinical competencies for expanded practice, the characteristics of which are shaped by the context and/or country in which s/he is credentialed to practice (ICN, 2020). A minimum master's degree is recommended for entry level*” (WHO, 2021)

To meet changing global population needs and consumer expectations, healthcare systems worldwide are under transformation and face restructuring as systems adapt and shift their emphasis in response to the disparate requests for healthcare services. Opportunities emerge for nurses, especially the APN, to meet these demands and unmet needs (Schober et al, 2020).

Clinical practice is a defining feature of APN roles that incorporates provision of health services at advanced level, management of complex healthcare problems, high degree of autonomy, ability to integrate research into practice, advanced assessment, diagnostic reasoning skills, decision-making, clinical judgment, and case management. As a result, there will be enhanced utilization and retention of advanced practice nurses where they are most needed (WHO, 2020,2021).

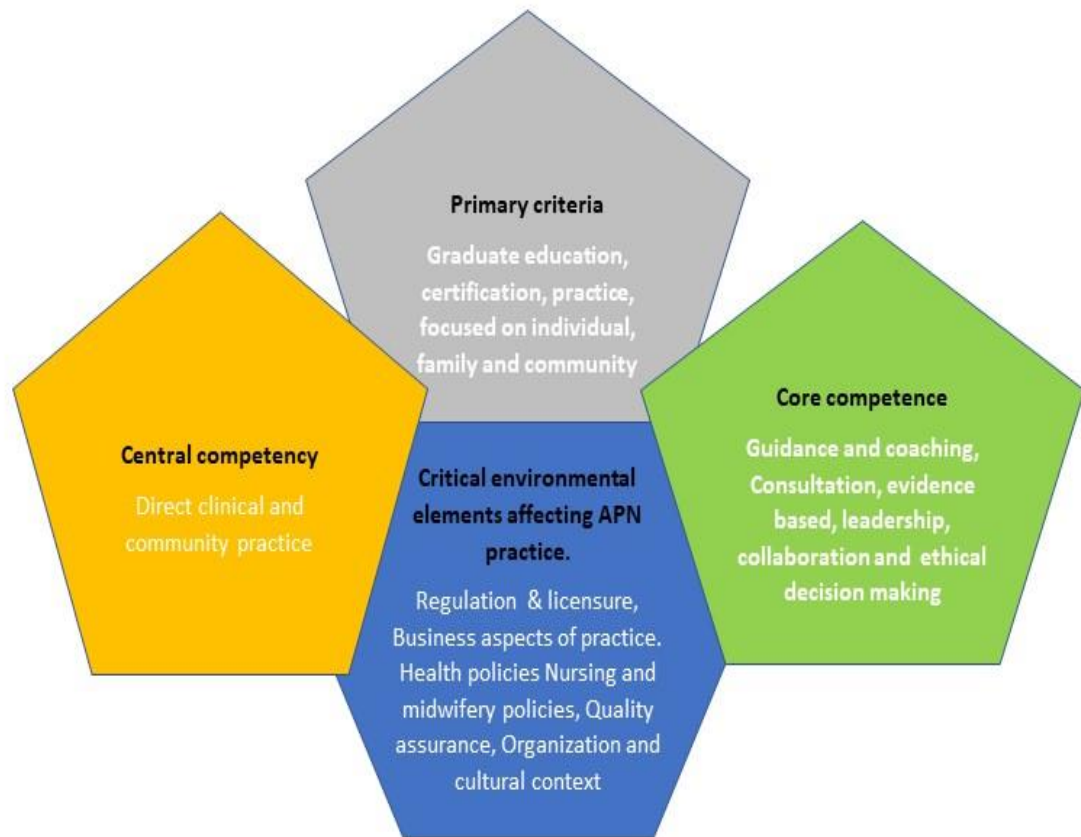
APN roles contribute to improving access to quality care and thus achieving better care for individual, family, and communities at a lower health care cost. There is good evidence that APN led services contribute to improved outcomes comparable to physician led service in the emergency and critical care settings. Similarly, patients report high levels of satisfaction with care provided by APNs (Donald, 2013).

Globally, the APN role was introduced in response to escalating healthcare costs, labor shortage and need for primary care services in rural populations (Sheer, 2008). The role of APN has been in existence since 1950s and has been embraced in many countries. In Africa, Angola, Sierra Leone, Botswana, South Africa, and Togo are some of the countries that have embraced APN. However, in Kenya, nurses have been undertaking advanced roles without a regulatory framework and recognition. As such, the regulation of APN will play a major role in response to Kenya's commitment towards achieving, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Universal Health Coverage (UHC), vision 2030 and Primary Health Care (PHC) objectives (WHO, 2021)

PURPOSE OF THE SCOPE

This scope of practice describes the boundaries of the professional responsibilities with regards to specific functions competencies, and processes for which an advanced practice nurse has received the education, training, licensure, and certification to practice.

Framework of APN Practice



Adopted & modified from Hamric's integrative model of APN (Glarcher & Lex, 2020)

SECTION II: SPECIFIC SCOPE OF PRACTICE

Scope of practice for Master of Science in Advanced Practice Nurse

Applicability

This scope shall be applicable to Advanced Practice nurse with training and clinical competencies at a Masters level. The competencies are built on those obtained from Bachelors of Science in Nursing degree

In addition to the scope of the BScN, the Master of science in Advanced Practice Nursing shall be able to perform the following functions as stipulated under the four themes:

Direct Clinical and Community Practice

- 1) Autonomously apply competencies in advanced health assessment for judgment, clinical decision making and diagnostic reasoning
- 2) order and interpret appropriate diagnostic investigations, through effective collaborations, to inform management of patients
- 3) Autonomously manage caseloads as per existing guidelines including evaluation outcome in collaboration with multidisciplinary team
- 4) Develop appropriate diagnosis and prescribe therapeutic interventions
- 5) Admit and manage patients, collaboratively work with multidisciplinary team, or refer patients as appropriate for continuity of care
- 6) Initiate and execute discharge planning process and follow up
- 7) Apply the ethical principles and available legal frameworks to demonstrate professionalism in clinical practice
- 8) Initiate health promotion, disease prevention actions for various population
- 9) Participate in the morbidity and mortality case reviews
- 10) Collaborate with multidisciplinary health team in direct clinical and community practice regarding health care outcomes
- 11) Provide consultancy services in nursing

Education

- 1) Foster professional development through identification of relevant educational needs in diverse settings
- 2) Conduct clinical teaching, supervision and mentorship of nurses and other health care team members
- 3) Lead and contribute to monitoring and evaluation strategies which inform clinical education and learning
- 4) Participate in development, implement, and review curricula for relevant nursing and other health-related programs

Research and evidence-based practice

- 1) Conduct and collaborate in research
- 2) Disseminate research findings to enhance a body of knowledge in nursing.
- 3) Utilize available research findings to inform evidence based clinical practice and innovation in nursing
- 4) Participate and make contribution in relevant Communities of Practice (COP) research activities
- 5) Utilize Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for health research

Clinical leadership and collaborative practice

- 1) Provide leadership in health care through initiating and implementation of programs, policies, and guidelines for continuous quality improvement of health outcomes
- 2) Provide professional and clinical guidance to multidisciplinary team regarding therapeutic interventions, practice, and service improvement
- 3) Advocate for individuals, families and communities on issues that affect health and quality of life
- 4) Provide leadership in formulation and implementation of nursing policies and guidelines
- 5) Contribute to health system leadership and resource management through development, implementation, and monitoring of organizational performance standards

- 6) Provide clinical leadership to health care multidisciplinary team members to improve health outcomes for patients and families

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Advanced Practice Nursing

Advanced Practice Nursing, is a higher level of Nursing practice from that of the generalist nurse based on advance level of critical thinking decision making and increased accountability in practice

Advanced Practice Nurse (APN)

An Advanced Practice Nurse (APN) is a specialist nurse who has acquired, through additional graduate education (minimum of a master's degree), the expert knowledge base, complex decision-making skills and clinical competencies for Advanced Nursing Practice, the characteristics of which are shaped by the context in which they are credentialed to practice.

Master of Science – Advanced Practice Nursing

In this programme the nurse is prepared at masters' level as a specialist in Advanced Practice Nursing. In addition to being prepared as a Clinical Practitioner, the APN also assumes the role of a nurse educator, manager/leader, Counselor and Researcher

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