

Nursing Workforce Standards Checklist

For General Practice Nursing



This Nursing Workforce Standards Checklist is designed to support the nursing workforce in applying the RCN's 2021 Nursing Workforce Standards (the Standards).

The Standards are a blueprint for tackling nursing staff shortages across the UK. They support the nursing workforce to be safe and effective. They set the standards for high quality, evidence-based patient/service user care in all health and care settings in the UK, working with each nation's legislation.

Evidence and experience have shown that having the right number of nursing staff, with the right skills, in the right place, at the right time improves health outcomes, the quality of care delivered, and patient/service user safety.

There are 14 Nursing Workforce Standards with three key themes:

Responsibility and accountability (Standards 1-4)

Clinical leadership and safety (Standards 5-10)

Health, safety and wellbeing (Standards 11-14)

The nursing workforce consists of:

- **registered nurses, RNs** (from newly registered nurse to the most senior nurse such as the chief nurse/director of nursing/executive nurse director)
- **nursing support workers, NSWs** [nursing associates (NAs), trainee nurse associates (TNAs), assistant practitioners, health care assistants (HCAs), clinical support workers (CSWs), carers and health care support workers (HCSWs)]
- **student nurses** (BSc students, MSc students, PGDip students and nursing apprenticeship students).

The **registered nurse (RN) lead** is the individual leading and supporting a team and/or service such as: team leaders, managers, charge nurses, sisters, matrons, senior nurses, and directors/ associate directors of nursing.

The Standards Checklist can be used:

- as a **self-evaluation** tool to identify training, learning and development needs by any member of the nursing workforce
- to **standardise** what is offered to nursing workforce and departments by a manager, matron, or team leader
- to give floor-to-board **assurance** that support interventions are available and accessible to all the nursing workforce by a nurse director
- as a tool for all nurses, nursing support workers and students to use as a **benchmark** for their workplace.

Please answer **Yes, No or N/A** as you explore the Standards Checklist.

- **Yes:** continue this practice, celebrate, and share the successes.
- **No:** please have a conversation with your line manager to seek their support in turning the no answers to yes answers. Your local RCN Representative and RCN staff can support you if you are having challenges.
- **N/A:** no actions. it may be applicable later if you change roles or workplace.
- **Evidence:** please provide examples of how you are or are not meeting the Standards.
- **Legislation** such as the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016 may be applicable in your workplace if covered under section 25B and 25C. Please indicate this in the evidence section.

The RCN Nursing Workforce Standards Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016



rcn.org.uk/nursingworkforcestandards



tinyurl.com/dw6tj8y2

If you need support or want to raise concerns, please contact RCN Direct: Contact the advice centre | Royal College of Nursing (rcn.org.uk) or on 0345 772 6100.

Clinical leadership and safety

Standards 5-10

Target group: From students to executive nurses: trainee nursing associates, apprentices, assistant practitioners, health care assistants (HCAs), clinical support workers (CSWs), nursing students, midwives and registered nurses, nursing associates and registered nurses.

To support in the investment of a healthy, safe and well workforce. This checklist supports workforce retention and also benefits the service users with high-quality, proactive and caring services. A healthy, safe and well workforce is a more productive workforce.

STANDARD 5

Each clinical team or service that provides nursing care will have a registered nurse lead.

The nursing workforce		Yes	No	N/A	Evidence
5a	Is your direct line manager a registered nurse (RN)?				
	If your direct line manager is not an RN, do you have an RN as part of your leadership team?				
	Are you involved in the recruitment process?				
	Do you have a recruitment process that you have been trained to use?				
	Do you have a retention strategy?				
	Have you received appraisal training?				
	Do you receive clinical supervision? Is it planned?				
	Do you escalate if capacity cannot meet service demands?				
	Do you have mitigation plans when staffing levels are not optimal during planned or unplanned absences/vacancies?				
	Can you directly share staffing concerns with your executive nurse/senior management?				
5b	If your direct line manager is not an RN, do you have a clear professional line to clinical nursing leadership?				
	If your direct line manager is not an RN, is there a pathway to getting support with revalidation/career development/progression?				

STANDARD 6

A registered nurse lead must receive sufficient, dedicated time and resources to undertake activities to ensure the delivery of safe and effective care.

Registered Nurse (RN) Lead		Yes	No	N/A	Evidence
6a	In your nurse lead role do you have dedicated protected non-clinical time?				
	Is there a reporting and recording mechanism for when non-clinical time is cancelled due to, for example, clinical demand?				
As an RN lead, do you have allocated time to:		Yes	No	N/A	Evidence
6b	Review clinical appropriateness of staff clinical rotas?				
	Work with new team members including students, to support and assess their practice, skills, and competences?				
	Develop staff and work on succession planning?				
	Meet with practice or service managers to appropriately manage staffing concerns such as sickness, absences and return to work?				
	Undertake clinical and regulatory audits, to meet contractual and regulatory requirements and improve patient outcomes?				
	Undertake health and safety risk assessments and investigate incidences?				
	Undertake service improvement work and share the successes and learnings?				
	Are you involved in reviewing the budget, establishments, monitoring spending and income generation?				
	Speak to patients/service users/families about their care and experiences while using your service?				
	Are you informed of patients'/service users' feedback to influence service improvement?				
The nursing workforce		Yes	No	N/A	Evidence
6b	Is your RN Lead visible in your workplace?				
	Is your RN Lead approachable?				
	Does your organisation undertake exit interviews for leavers?				
6c	Have you had a job description (JD) review in the last three years?				
	Do you feel your current role matches your JD?				
	Are you able to negotiate your contract and pay?				

STANDARD 7

The time needed for all elements of practice development must be taken into consideration when defining the nursing workforce and calculating the nursing requirement and skill mix within the team.

The nursing workforce		Yes	No	N/A	Evidence
7a	Are you aware of what continuous professional development (CPD) is available in your workplace?				
	Are you supported with funding to undertake CPD?				
	Are you supported with time-off to undertake CPD?				
	Do you have a practice development plan or strategy in your practice?				
	Do you have allocated time to complete mandatory training?				
	Do you have access to work-related training? For example, management of long-term conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, cardiovascular disease) wound care, NHS health checks, immunisations, and cervical screening.				
	Do you have opportunities to reflect after a serious incident? For example, cardiac arrest, violence, aggression, and major incident.				
	Do you have access to clinical restorative supervision and/or facilitated reflection time and space?				
	Do you have a personal and professional development plan?				
	Do you have access to a career advice team?				
7b	If you are the Nursing lead, does your non-clinical time include practice development time? If so, how many hours is allocated for practice development?				
	Do you identify training needs in your appraisals/performance development review (PDR)?				
	Are these needs reviewed and actioned within the agreed timeframe?				
	In your opinion, are education and training opportunities offered and accessed fairly?				
The nursing workforce		Yes	No	N/A	Evidence
	During your induction/recent training, were you given information on how to raise concerns?				
	Do you raise concerns on staffing issues? For example, unsafe staffing levels and poor skill-mix.				

	Do you raise concerns about safety issues in your workplace for example, lack of PPE and suitable equipment?				
	Do you know how to raise a grievance?				
	Are concerns raised documented and responded to?				
	Is there anyone other than your line manager that you can raise concerns with?				
	Have you been penalised/chastised for raising concerns?				

STANDARD 8

When calculating the nursing workforce whole-time equivalent (WTE), an uplift will be applied that allows for management of planned and unplanned leave and absences.

RN Lead		Yes	No	N/A	Evidence
8a	Do you know the percentage uplift/ headroom/ timeout, or your service in your organisation? Please state.				
	Do you think this sufficiently allows for planned and unplanned leave?				
	Do you struggle to fill a staffing gap from last minute sickness/absence?				
	Are you involved in the decision-making of setting your uplift/headroom/timeout?				
	Is the uplift/headroom/timeout set based on specific services or standardised for the whole organisation?				
8b	Do you use an evidence-based workforce tool to set staffing establishments? Please state.				
RN Lead		Yes	No	N/A	Evidence
8c	Do you think your professional judgement is considered when staffing decisions are made?				
	Do you have access to staffing information across your workplace/organisation?				
	Are staff redeployed to other areas?				
	Are you able to decline to redeploy your staff to other areas when you feel unsafe due to skill-mix or staffing numbers?				
	Are you able to reduce your service provision if you do not have the right staffing levels? For example, cancel appointments, rebook patient with an alternative clinician.				
	Have you reported harm due to low staffing? Did you receive appropriate feedback and action? Please expand.				

STANDARD 9

If the substantive nursing workforce falls below 80% for a department/team, this should be an exception and should be escalated and reported to the board/senior management.

The nursing workforce		Yes	No	N/A	Evidence
9a	Do you have bank, locum, or agency workers in your practice regularly?				
	Can you book bank/locum/agency workers?				
	Can you request for bank/locum/agency workers to have specific skills and capabilities?				
	Do you have any rules or guidance on booking agency workers?				
As a locum/bank/agency worker		Yes	No	N/A	Evidence
9b	Are you able to access essential IT systems to deliver safe and effective care?				
	Do you have a personalised risk assessment?				
	Are these risk assessments supported when you go to different workplaces?				
	Is the need to agree to redeployment a part of your contract as a locum/bank/agency staff?				
As a locum/bank/agency worker		Yes	No	N/A	Evidence
9c	Are you oriented to every new area with information on how to report incidences and raise concerns?				
	Do you feel welcomed and valued as part of your new temporary team?				
	Are you treated with respect, dignity and your rights protected?				
	Can you report incidences?				
	Can you raise and escalate concerns?				
	Do you get feedback on concerns raised?				

STANDARD 10

Registered nurses and nursing support workers must be appropriately prepared and work within their scope of practice for the people who use services, their families, and the population they are working with.

The nursing workforce		Yes	No	N/A	Evidence
10a	Are you allocated mandatory training time?				
	Are you allocated specialty training time?				
10b	Did you have an induction when you started your role?				
	Did you have a period of supernumerary when you started your role?				
	How long was your supernumerary period?				
	Do you have access to professional developmental programmes? For example, preceptorship, link roles, shadowing, clinical supervision, and coaching.				
	Have you completed any leadership training?				
	Have you completed any management development training?				
Lone Worker		Yes	No	N/A	Evidence
10c	Do you always have access to supervision and support in compliance with the necessary health and safety requirements?				
	Do you have access to safety tools such as mobile phones, buddy-system, GPS Safety devices, SOS/panic alarms?				
	Have you had formal training and are able to undertake a dynamic risk assessment?				
	Do you have access to life saving equipment to manage emergencies such as anaphylaxis and cardiac arrest?				
	Do you feel safe, supported, and connected with your team and line manager?				
The nursing workforce		Yes	No	N/A	Evidence
10d	Do you feel safe to raise concerns with your leadership and/or management team?				
	Are you given feedback on the concerns you have raised?				
	Are you encouraged to come up with solutions when problems arise?				
	Is speaking up encouraged in your organisation?				

The Nursing Workforce Standards Champions (Standards Champions)

Standards Champions are individuals who have made positive workplace changes by using the RCN Nursing Workforce Standards.

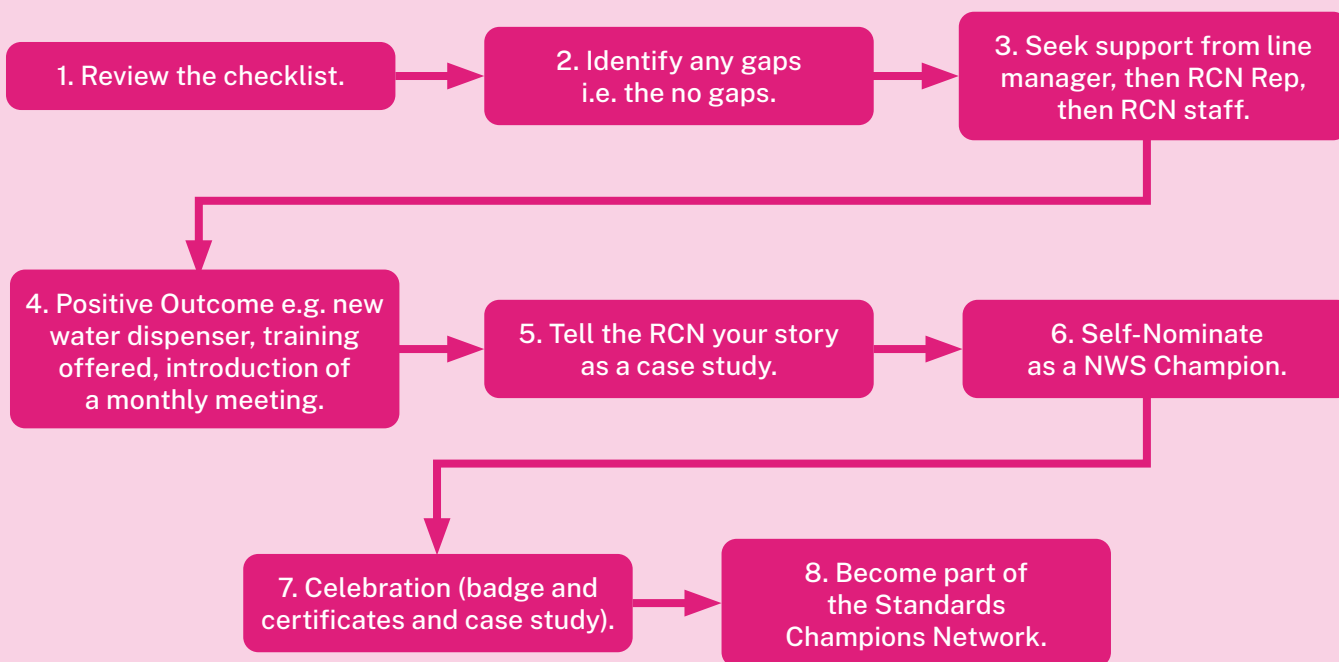
Role of a Standards Champion:

To support workplace improvements

- To share success and promote best practice.
- To raise concerns when the Standards are not met.
- To work with an RCN representative, local RCN branches and RCN staff in promoting and using the Standards.
- To be part of the network of Standards Champions who support others, promote best practice, and work with organisations to implement the Standards in practice.
- Attend quarterly meetings for updates, support, and networking.

The chart below shows the steps to becoming a Standards Champion.

Become a Nursing Workforce Standards Champion



Expression of Interest Form

Become a Nursing Workforce Standards Champion

Title	
Name	
Last Name	
Job Title	
Employer	
Mobile/Telephone	
Email	
Can you commit to at least four meetings a year to network, share learning and celebrate with other Nursing Workforce Standards Champions?	
Are you an RCN Member?	
How did you hear about the Nursing Workforce Champions? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• RCN Branch• Internet• Employer• RCN email• RCN Congress• Other, please state	

Please return this completed form to NursingWorkforceStandards@rcn.org.uk