

Standards of Proficiency

Operating Department Practitioners

foreword

I am delighted to present the Health Professions Council's Standards of Proficiency to you. The standards in this document are a vital tool for the Council as it seeks to protect the public by ensuring that its registrants are safe and effective in their practice.

I have often said that to become the best organised, best managed and strongest health professional regulatory body in the United Kingdom, the Council must work together with its stakeholders. This document is an example of why this approach is so important: several rounds of consultation with experts from across the health professions went into the detailed and lengthy process of development of these standards. The consultation produced extremely valuable feedback that has undoubtedly improved the standards greatly. Of course, the standards remain the responsibility of the Health Professions Council, and if you have any questions, concerns or comments about what you read here, you should contact the Council.

As with other documents that the Council has produced, the standards are written in clear, modern English, so that registrants and prospective registrants can easily find out what is expected of them.

introduction

This document sets out the **standards of proficiency** for safe and effective practice that we expect registrants to meet. We also expect registrants to keep to our **standards of conduct, performance and ethics**, which are published in a separate document.

The standards of proficiency in this document include both generic elements, which all our registrants must meet, and profession-specific elements, which are relevant to registrants belonging to one of the 12 professions we currently regulate. There is no other difference between the generic and profession-specific elements of the standards, and we will treat any breach of the standards seriously.

The generic standards explain the key obligations that we expect of you. Occasionally, we have pointed out specific elements of those key obligations. We have not attempted to create exhaustive lists of all the areas that each generic standard covers; we have simply highlighted specific elements where we think this will help you to understand what we require of you. For instance, we have highlighted the fact that the key obligation of maintaining your fitness to practise also includes a specific obligation about taking care of yourself.

If you are a student, you may only have practised under supervision and not independently. Nonetheless, you must be confident that you will be able to meet these standards when you begin to practise without supervision. Sometimes the standards relate to ongoing practice and normally your clinical placements will have given you the opportunity to demonstrate that you are capable of meeting these.

A note about our expectations of you

The standards of proficiency play a central role in how you can gain admission to, and remain on, the Register and thereby gain the right to use the protected title(s) of your profession. Therefore we expect you to be able to meet these standards.

We do recognise, though, that your practice will develop over time and that the practice of experienced registrants frequently becomes more focused and specialised than that of newly registered colleagues, because it relates to a particular client group, practice environment, employment sector or occupational role. Your particular scope of practice may mean that you are unable to demonstrate that you continue to meet each of the standards that apply for your profession. For instance, if you work with adults alone, then any standards that relate to how you must work with children will not apply to your day-to-day work. So long as you stay within your scope of practice and make reasonable efforts to stay up to date with the whole of these standards, this will not be problematic. However, if you want to move outside your scope of practice, you must be certain that you are capable of working safely and effectively, including undertaking any necessary training and experience. We can and will investigate if we have good reasons for believing that you might not meet the standards.

These standards may change in the future (but not for the next two years)

We keep these standards under continual review, and we will update them to take into account changes in practice in the professions we regulate. So the version that you have now may not be the same as future versions that you may see. We will highlight all the changes we make to the standards, so you will be able to see what has changed. However, we will try not to make any changes to the standards during the transitional period during which grandparenting can take place. The transitional period lasts for two years from the date that the register opens. We will always publicise any changes to the standards that we make by, for instance, publishing notices on our website and informing professional bodies.

summary of standards

Expectations of a health professional

1a: Professional autonomy and accountability

Registrants must:

- 1a.1 be able to practise within the legal and ethical boundaries of their profession
- 1a.2 be able to practise in a non-discriminatory manner
- 1a.3 be able to maintain confidentiality and obtain informed consent
- 1a.4 be able to exercise a professional duty of care
- 1a.5 know the limits of their practice and when to seek advice
- 1a.6 recognise the need for effective self-management of workload and be able to practise accordingly
- 1a.7 understand the obligation to maintain fitness to practise
- 1a.8 understand the need for career-long self-directed learning

1b: Professional relationships

Registrants must:

- 1b.1 know the professional and personal scope of their practice and be able to make referrals
- 1b.2 be able to work, where appropriate, in partnership with other professionals, support staff, patients, clients and users, and their relatives and carers
- 1b.3 be able to contribute effectively to work undertaken as part of a multi-disciplinary team
- 1b.4 be able to demonstrate effective and appropriate skills in communicating information, advice, instruction and professional opinion to colleagues, patients, clients, users, their relatives and carers
- 1b.5 understand the need for effective communication throughout the care of the patient, client or user

The skills required for the application of practice

2a: Identification and assessment of health and social care needs

Registrants must:

- 2a.1 be able to gather appropriate information
- 2a.2 be able to use appropriate assessment techniques
- 2a.3 be able to undertake or arrange clinical investigations as appropriate
- 2a.4 be able to analyse and evaluate the information collected

2b: Formulation and delivery of plans and strategies for meeting health and social care needs

Registrants must:

- 2b.1 be able to use research, reasoning and problem solving skills (and, in the case of clinical scientists, conduct fundamental research)
- 2b.2 be able to draw on appropriate knowledge and skills in order to make professional judgements
- 2b.3 be able to formulate specific and appropriate management plans including the setting of timescales
- 2b.4 be able to conduct appropriate diagnostic or monitoring procedures, treatment, therapy or other actions safely and skilfully
- 2b.5 be able to maintain records appropriately

2c: Critical evaluation of the impact of, or response to, the registrant's actions

Registrants must:

- 2c.1 be able to monitor and review the ongoing effectiveness of planned activity and modify it accordingly
- 2c.2 be able to audit, reflect on and review practice

Knowledge, understanding and skills

3a:

Registrants must:

- 3a.1 know the key concepts of the biological, physical, social, psychological and clinical sciences which are relevant to their profession-specific practice
- 3a.2 know how professional principles are expressed and translated into action through a number of different approaches to practice, and how to select or modify approaches to meet the needs of an individual
- 3a.3 understand the need to establish and maintain a safe practice environment

operating department practitioners

Expectations of a health professional

1a: Professional autonomy and accountability

Registrant operating department practitioners must:

1a.1 be able to practise within the legal and ethical boundaries of their profession

- understand what is required of them by the Health Professions Council
- understand the need to respect, and so far as possible uphold, the rights, dignity and autonomy of every patient, client and user including their role in the diagnostic and therapeutic process

1a.2 be able to practise in a non-discriminatory manner

1a.3 be able to maintain confidentiality and obtain informed consent

1a.4 be able to exercise a professional duty of care

1a.5 know the limits of their practice and when to seek advice

- be able to assess a situation, determine the nature and severity of the problem and call upon the required knowledge and experience to deal with the problem
- be able to initiate resolution of problems and be able to exercise personal initiative

1a.6 recognise the need for effective self-management of workload and be able to practise accordingly

1a.7 understand the obligation to maintain fitness to practise

- understand the importance of caring for themselves, including maintaining their health

1a.8 understand the need for career-long self-directed learning

1b: Professional relationships

Registrant operating department practitioners must:

1.b.1 know the professional and personal scope of their practice and be able to make referrals

1.b.2 be able to work, where appropriate, in partnership with other professionals, support staff, patients, clients and users, and their relatives and carers

- understand the need to build and sustain professional relationships as both an independent practitioner and collaboratively as a member of a team
- understand the need to engage patients, clients, users and carers in planning and evaluating care

1.b.3 be able to contribute effectively to work undertaken as part of a multi-disciplinary team

1.b.4 be able to demonstrate effective and appropriate skills in communicating information, advice, instruction and professional opinion to colleagues, patients, clients, users, their relatives and carers

- be able to communicate in English to the standard equivalent to level 7 of the International English Language Testing System, with no element below 6.5
- understand how communication skills affect the assessment of patients, clients and users, and how the means of communication should be modified to address and take account of factors such as age, physical and learning disability
- be able to select, move between and use appropriate forms of verbal and non-verbal communication with patients, clients, users and others
- be aware of the characteristics and consequences of non-verbal communication and how this can be affected by culture, age, ethnicity, gender, religious beliefs and socio-economic status
- understand the need to provide patients, clients and users (or people acting on their behalf) with the information necessary to enable them to make informed decisions
- understand the need to use an appropriate interpreter to assist patients whose first language is not English, wherever possible
- recognise that relationships with patients, clients and users should be based on mutual respect and trust, and be able to maintain high standards of care even in situations of personal incompatibility
- *be able to identify anxiety and stress in patients, carers and others, and recognise the potential impact upon communication*

1.b.5 understand the need for effective communication throughout the care of the patient, client or user

- recognise the need to use interpersonal skills to encourage the active participation of patients, clients and users
- *be able to use effective communication skills in the reception and identification of patients, and transfer of patients to the care of others*

The skills required for the application of practice

2a: Identification and assessment of health and social care needs

Registrant operating department practitioners must:

2a.1 be able to gather appropriate information

- *be able effectively to gather information relevant to the care of patients with critical or non-critical conditions and in a range of emotional states*

2a.2 be able to use appropriate assessment techniques

- be able to undertake and record a thorough, sensitive and detailed assessment, using appropriate techniques and equipment

2a.3 be able to undertake or arrange clinical investigations as appropriate

2a.4 be able to analyse and evaluate the information collected

2b: Formulation and delivery of plans and strategies for meeting health and social care needs

Registrant operating department practitioners must:

2b.1 be able to use research, reasoning and problem solving skills to determine appropriate action

- recognise the value of research to the systematic evaluation of practice
- be able to conduct evidence-based practice, evaluate practice systematically, and participate in audit procedures
- be aware of methods commonly used in health and social care research
- be able to demonstrate a logical and systematic approach to problem solving
- be able to evaluate research and other evidence to inform their own practice
- *be able to adapt and apply problem solving skills to clinical emergencies*

2b.2 be able to draw on appropriate knowledge and skills in order to make professional judgements

- be able to change their practice as needed to take account of new developments
- be able to demonstrate a level of skill in the use of information technology appropriate to their profession

2b.3 be able to formulate specific and appropriate management plans including the setting of timescales

- understand the requirement to adapt practice to meet the needs of different client groups distinguished by, for example, physical, psychological, environmental, cultural or socio-economic factors

2b.4 be able to conduct appropriate diagnostic or monitoring procedures, treatment, therapy or other actions safely and skilfully

- understand the need to maintain the safety of both patients, clients and users, and those involved in their care
- *be able to undertake appropriate anaesthetic, surgical and post-anaesthesia care interventions*
- *be able to modify and adapt practice to emergency situations*

2b.5 be able to maintain records appropriately

- be able to keep accurate, legible records and recognise the need to handle these records and all other clinical information in accordance with applicable legislation, protocols and guidelines
- understand the need to use only accepted terminology (which includes abbreviations) in making clinical records

2c: Critical evaluation of the impact of, or response to, the registrant's actions

Registrant operating department practitioners must:

2c.1 be able to monitor and review the ongoing effectiveness of planned activity and modify it accordingly

- be able to gather information, including qualitative and quantitative data, that helps to evaluate the responses of patients, clients and users to their care
- be able to evaluate management plans against treatment milestones using recognised health outcome measures and revise the plans as necessary in conjunction with the patient, client or user

- recognise the need to monitor and evaluate the quality of practice and the value of contributing to the generation of data for quality assurance and improvement programmes
- be able to make reasoned decisions to initiate, continue, modify or cease treatment or the use of techniques or procedures, and record the decisions and reasoning appropriately
- understand that outcomes may not always conform to expectations but may still meet the needs of patients, clients or users

2c.2 be able to audit, reflect on and review practice

- understand the principles of quality control and quality assurance
- be aware of the role of audit and review in quality management, including quality control, quality assurance and the use of appropriate outcome measures
- be able to maintain an effective audit trail and work towards continual improvement
- participate in quality assurance programmes, where appropriate
- understand the value of reflection on clinical practice and the need to record the outcome of such reflection
- recognise the value of case conferences and other methods of review

Knowledge, understanding and skills

3a:

Registrants operating department practitioners must:

3a.1 know the key concepts of the biological, physical, social, psychological and clinical sciences which are relevant to their profession-specific practice

- understand the structure and function of the human body, relevant to their practice, together with a knowledge of health, disease, disorder and dysfunction
- be aware of the principles and applications of scientific enquiry, including the evaluation of treatment efficacy and the research process
- recognise the role of other professions in health and social care
- understand the theoretical basis of, and the variety of approaches to, assessment and intervention
- *be aware of the main sequential stages of normal development, including cognitive, emotional and social measures of maturation through the human life-span*
- *understand that aspects of psychology and sociology are fundamental to the practitioner's role in developing and maintaining effective working relationships*
- *understand normal anatomy and physiology throughout the human life- span*
- *understand relevant physiological parameters and how to interpret changes from the norm*
- *recognise disease and trauma processes, and how to apply this knowledge to the planning of the patient's peri-operative care*
- *understand how to store, issue, prepare and administer prescribed drugs to patients, and monitor the effects of drugs on patients*
- *understand the principles of operating department practice and their application to peri-operative patient care in the anaesthetic, surgical and post- anaesthesia phases*
- *know the types, properties, function, effect and contra-indications of the drugs, liquids and solutions commonly used within operating department practice*
- *understand the principles underpinning the safe and effective utilisation of equipment that is used for diagnostic, monitoring or therapeutic purposes in anaesthesia, surgery, post-anaesthesia care and resuscitation*

- *understand the principles for receiving, identifying, transferring and positioning patients for clinical procedures*

3a.2 know how professional principles are expressed and translated into action through a number of different approaches to practice, and how to select or modify approaches to meet the needs of an individual

3a.3 understand the need to establish and maintain a safe practice environment

- be aware of applicable health and safety legislation, and any relevant safety policies and procedures in force at the workplace, such as incident reporting, and be able to act in accordance with these
- be able to work safely, including being able to select appropriate hazard control and risk management, reduction or elimination techniques in a safe manner in accordance with health and safety legislation
- be able to select appropriate personal protective equipment and use it correctly
- be able to establish safe environments for clinical practice, which minimises risks to patients, clients and users, those treating them, and others, including the use of hazard control and particularly infection control
- *understand the nature and purpose of sterile fields, and the practitioner's individual role and responsibility for maintaining them*
- *understand and be able to apply appropriate moving and handling techniques*