

Self-Assessment Tool: Therapeutic Nurse Client Relationship

The *Therapeutic Nurse-Client Relationship, Revised 2006* practice standard is one of the standards selected for the QA Program.

At the core of nursing is the therapeutic nurse-client relationship. The nurses' knowledge, skills and judgment allow for the establishment of a caring relationship that contributes to the health and well-being of the client. The foundation of the therapeutic nurse-client relationship involves trust, professional intimacy, respect and appropriate use of power which results from the care provider's role.

This tool will help you to identify your areas of strength and the areas you need to improve related to the *Therapeutic Nurse-Client Relationship* practice standard, and give you information on how to apply the standard to your individual practice. The tool lists the four standard statements specific to the practice standard. This is not a comprehensive summary of the *Therapeutic Nurse-Client Relationship* practice standard, which can be viewed [here](#).

The tool can be downloaded or copied for future use.

How to use this tool

Step 1 Review the behavioural indicators listed in the tool.

If you are unsure of the behavioural indicators, read the bulleted notes to get an example of the indicator being used in practice.

Step 2 Identify your areas of strength and the areas you need to improve.

After reviewing each behavioural indicator, use the box beside the statement to show whether the indicator is an area of strength or an area you need to improve.

If you need more space to write your examples, print additional copies of the tool or use extra paper.

- **Area of strength:** If you choose this box, provide an example of how or why this is an area of strength for you.
- **Area of improvement:** If you choose this box provide an example of why it is an area requiring improvement and how you can improve that area in your practice.

Step 3 Use the information on the tool to develop learning goals that you can use in your Learning Plan form.

Once you have identified your areas of strength and the areas you need to improve you can create your learning goals and start developing your Learning Plan.

Create your goal statement by starting with a phrase, for example:

“I want to share my knowledge/experience about...” (for areas of strength;

or

“I want to work on/learn how to...” (for areas of improvement).

Then, add the applicable behavioural indicator that was noted as an area of improvement or strength. This information forms the basis for documenting activities in the “Activities to achieve my goal” section of the Learning Plan form. [Click here for the College’s Learning Plan form.](#)

Remember to incorporate the following four elements into your self-assessment and the development of your Learning Plan:

- Advances in technology;
- Changes in the practice environment;
- Entry-to-practice competencies; and
- Interprofessional care.

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<p>Behavioural indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullet points are examples of how the indicator can be applied in practice. 	<p>Identify whether the behavioural indicator is an area of strength, with an example, or an area you need to improve, with an example of how that area can be improved.</p>
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	Area of strength	Area of improvement
<p>Therapeutic communication: Nurses use a wide range of effective communication strategies and interpersonal skills to appropriately establish, maintain, re-establish and terminate the nurse-client relationship.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining competence in therapeutic communication by informing the client that information will be shared with the health care team. • Introducing yourself to the client by name and category and talking to the client about the roles you both will have in the relationship. • Listening to the concerns of the family and significant others. 		
<p>Client-centered care: Nurses work with the client to ensure that all professional behaviours and actions meet the therapeutic needs of the client.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively including the client as a partner in the care as they are an expert on their life. • Engaging the client in evaluating the nursing care and services that the client has received. • Demonstrating sensitivity and respect for the client's choices, which are a result of their beliefs and wishes. 		

<p>Maintaining boundaries: Nurses are responsible for effectively establishing and maintaining the limits or boundaries in the therapeutic nurse-client relationship.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Setting and maintaining the appropriate boundaries within the relationship, and helping clients to understand when their requests are beyond the limits of the relationship.• Recognizing that there may be an increased need for vigilance in maintaining professionalism and boundaries in certain practice settings.• Not interfering in the client's personal relationships.		
<p>Protecting the client from abuse: Nurses protect the client from harm by ensuring that abuse is prevented, or stopped and reported.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Intervening and reporting when appropriate behaviours, verbal or non-verbal, demonstrate disrespect for the client.• Not entering a friendship, or a romantic, sexual or other personal relationship or other personal with a client when a therapeutic relationship exists.• Not neglecting a client by failing to meet or withholding his/her basic assessed needs.		

During the Self-Assessment process, incorporate the following four elements into your reflection.

	Area of strength	Area of improvement
<p>Entry-to-practice competencies: Expectations that all nurses must maintain throughout their career. The RN, RPN and NP competency statements are available at www.cno.org/qa</p>		
<p>Advances in technology: The introduction of new, innovative or different skills, processes or knowledge into a nurse's practice setting. For example, learning how to use a new electronic documentation system.</p>		
<p>Changes in the practice environment: Changes that require additional knowledge, skill and judgement for a nurse to deliver safe, effective and ethical nursing care. For example, changes in the client population, nursing care delivery system or legislation.</p>		
<p>Interprofessional care: The provision of comprehensive health services to patients by multiple health caregivers who work collaboratively to deliver quality care within and across settings.</p>		