

Nursing Competence Self-Assessment Tools

Competence is the combined knowledge, skills, attitudes and judgment required to provide professional nursing services. The competence self-assessment tool (form) is a systematic and organized method to identify your own learning needs. You can then use the data and the exercise to plan a continuing education / professional development program so that you can remain competent in your profession.

We have expanded our nursing self-assessment tools to include a more comprehensive list of nursing competencies. We have kept our original set of self-assessment forms for those nurses that wish to continue to use them or for comparative purposes. Click on the appropriate Title below (or on the sub-menu item on the right) to select the set of nursing competence self-assessment tools you wish to use.

Basic Self-Assessment Tools

- Advanced Self-Assessment Tools

Here are suggestions for getting the most from these self-assessment forms on nursing competence.

1. Read and get to know the rating scales used with each set of self-assessment tools. We use a simpler 4-point scale in our Basic tools and a more complex 5-point scale in our Advanced nursing self-assessment tools. See Basic Rating Scale and Advanced Rating Scale.
2. Start with the competency areas most familiar to you in your clinical nursing practice.
3. Complete the self-assessments forms over one or more sittings if you find it is taking too much time or you need to reflect or rest.
4. Make notes or print out the completed self-assessment form if you want to analyze your learning / professional development needs, or if you want to track your competence improvements over time.
5. Consult with a trusted peer or your supervisor if you want a second opinion on your ratings of your nursing competencies.
6. Remember that this is your self-assessment and identification of your learning needs; so be honest and specific. We do not record or track these self-ratings so your self-assessments are totally anonymous and confidential.

Another useful nursing assessment tool is the Self-Assessment Readiness Tool (SART). This self assessment tool is designed to help Internationally Educated Nurses (IENs) understand the Canadian licensed practical nursing profession. It provides information about what licensed practical nurses (LPNs) in Canada are expected to know and do. The tool will outline the competencies, skills, and abilities that licensed practical nurses must have to apply for licensure (or registration) in a Canadian province or territory.

Although self-assessment of competence is widely practiced, there is considerable research evidence to indicate that

the assessment of our own knowledge, skills and competencies is often not very accurate or reliable. Therefore, use your self-assessment ratings with caution! Combine them with the results from our nursing quizzes and feedback from trusted colleagues and supervisors. Use multiple sources of data to plan and implement your professional development program and activities.