STANDARDS OF PROFICIENCY FOR OPHTHALMIC NURSING PRACTICE
IN TANZANIA

Revised, 2014

Tanzania Nursing and Midwifery Council, 2014
P.O.Box 6632
Dar es Salaam
Tanzania
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**Abbreviations/Acronyms**

BTRP  
Bilamellar Tarsal Rotation Procedure

MDG  
Millennium Development Goals

PHC  
Primary Health Care

TNMC  
Tanzania Nurses and Midwives Council
FOREWORD

This document presents standards of proficiency for ophthalmic nursing practice in Tanzania. The Tanzania Nurses and Midwives Council (TNMC) commissioned a group of experts in nursing education and nursing practice to develop this document. This is the first document of its kind to be produced by TNMC.

The main objective of this document is to provide nurse managers, educators and practitioners with overreaching standards needed for improving ophthalmic nursing training and services in the country. It covers

- Standards
- Areas of competencies
- Core competencies and,
- Appendices with some ophthalmic procedures and instruments

Before this document, TNMC depended entirely on objectives set by training institutions for what students are expected to achieve at the end of the programme in order to qualify for registration as ophthalmic nurse. With the development of these guidelines, training institutions are expected to develop training curriculum that will be within standards prescribed under this guideline.

These standards are in turn expected to give new direction to the training of nursing students and ultimately improve the quality of ophthalmic care.

Dr. Khadija Innocensia Malima
TNMC-Chairperson
Tanzania
PREFACE
PREFACE

It is with much excitement that the TNMC is presenting standards of proficiency for ophthalmic nursing practice. As we are at the beginning of the 21st century, ophthalmic nursing is facing new challenges in the care and treatment of people with ophthalmic problems.

We now have scientific knowledge to understand people with ophthalmic problems and the complexity in managing them. This document provides a solid organizing framework for education, research and practice in ophthalmic nursing.

The standards of proficiency for ophthalmic nursing have been written by seasoned expert educators and practitioners who have been involved in various levels and settings in the provision of ophthalmic nursing services. As recognized leaders in the field, they are able to provide a comprehensive perspective of ophthalmic nursing standards in clear and easily understood terms. The standards are grounded in:

- Ethical and legal framework
- Professional practice
- Collaboration in ophthalmic nursing care
- Documentation and reporting
- Professional development
- Conducting research and utilization of research findings.

TNMC hopes that this document will more firmly establish ophthalmic nursing as an important health service field and will facilitate effective functioning of nurses as they adopting a more expanded role. The ultimate aim is to help improve accessibility of service and bring them as close to the people as
possible and to improve the standard of care for our clients and their quality of life.

Lena Mfalila  
Registrar
INTRODUCTION

Blindness and other ophthalmic disorders are among the health problems causing disability (Visual impairment) to our society.

Apart from having this problem, Tanzania has been experiencing a shortage of health personnel specialized in ophthalmology. To address these problems, ophthalmic Nursing course was established in 1978. The course was for upgrading grade B nurses who are currently known as Enrolled Nurses to Registered Nurses. In 1996 the course was upgraded to Advanced Diploma in Ophthalmic Nursing.

Initially ophthalmic training was not competence based. It was very much based on the years of training and as a result graduates would only perform routine ophthalmic nursing procedures. This was a challenge to the profession. It is therefore necessitated the development of a document of standard of proficiencies for ophthalmic nursing in order to produce nurses with the right skills and competency that can address existing ophthalmic problems in the society. Also this document will facilitate the drive to ensure that practitioners are aware of their scope and boundaries hence practice with legal protection.

SCOPE OF PRACTICE

Ophthalmic Nursing services are supposed to be guided by the competence of the provider and also the attitude that is expected to be compassionate, culturally holistic and socially sensitive to clients. It is based on the scientific process of assessment, diagnosis, planning, implementation and evaluation. Ophthalmic Nursing interventions include promotive, curative, preventive, rehabilitative, and palliative care within the context of PHC.

In providing care Ophthalmic nurses function as members of the health care team guided by their competencies and areas of professional preparation. They should always respect their professional limitations and ensure that patient’s safety is their primary priority boundaries and their practices entail compassion, responsibility and empathy.
STANDARDS OF PROFICIENCY AND CORE – COMPETENCIES
These are minimum standards for competencies in ophthalmic practice that are required to adequately prepare post registration graduate nurses in ophthalmology to respond appropriately to clients' health needs and health care demands.

In order to achieve desired competencies, the following are standards, area of competencies and core competencies.

GENERAL STANDARDS
1. Provide quality ophthalmic nursing care to clients and reduce debilities
2. Provide health education and health promotion activities on ophthalmic services
3. Provides quality Ophthalmic nursing care to clients
4. Manages effectively ophthalmic nursing care services including ocular emergencies and refractive errors.
5. Demonstrates ability to conduct and utilize research findings to improve ophthalmic care
6. Demonstrates ability to prescribe and administer appropriate ophthalmic medicines
7. Practice in accordance with legal and ethical nursing practice

AREAS OF COMPETENCES
- Nursing process
- Professional legal and ethics
- Community dynamics
- Management skills
- Health education and counseling skills
- Communication skills
- Theatre management skills
- Ophthalmic surgical procedure skills
- Research process
- Prescription technique
- Aseptic technique
- Teaching (Clinical and Institution)
STANDARD 1: Provide quality ophthalmic nursing care to clients and reduce debilities

Core competencies

- Perform assessment and ophthalmic examination
- Develops and uses monitoring tools
- Develops medical and nursing diagnosis
- Develops a nursing care plan
- Counsels the client with ophthalmic problems
- With special permission and supervision; performs minor ophthalmic surgeries such as BTRP, enucleating, evisceration, electrolysis and chalazion
- Prescribes ophthalmic medicines to clients
- Manages ophthalmic emergencies
- Demonstrates empathetic, understanding and sensitive caring attitude
- Documents and keeps proper ophthalmic records
- Provides appropriate feedback and utilizes it to improve care
- Refers clients accordingly
- Evaluates ophthalmic nursing care
- Demonstrates good usage and care of ophthalmic equipment and instruments maintenance
- Demonstrates good eye operating theatre management
- Perform community Outreach planning for eye care services
- Perform prosthetic eye care and corneal banking

STANDARD 2: Provides services based on legal and ethical nursing practice

Core competencies

- Observes code of ethics and related legal aspects
- Implements quality assurance initiatives regularly.
- Respects values, customs, and beliefs of individuals and groups.
- Provides relevant information about own medical condition and its management

STANDARD 3: Provides health education and health promotion on ophthalmic services for the community

Core competencies

- Makes community diagnosis.
- Raises awareness to individuals, families and communities on ophthalmic disorders.
- Works in partnership with other stakeholders
- Promotes community involvement and participation
• Screens, prescribes, treats and refers clients with eye complications appropriately
• Conducts specific minor ophthalmic surgeries after undergoing appropriate training
• Conducts teaching sessions at various settings of the community

STANDARD 4: Manage effectively ophthalmic health services in the unit.

Core competencies

• Maintains one’s own accountability and responsibility when delegating aspect of care to others
• Keeps up to date inventories and records
• Co-ordinates the delivery of ophthalmic nursing services
• Manages refractive errors and performs clinical refraction
• Ensure aseptic technique in the unit or working area
• Teaches subordinates in the unit eg. Ocular basic science and diagnosis
• Refers complicated cases accordingly
• Manages infectious and non infectious eye conditions
• Perform research planning
• Perform community eye care and surgical eye care
STANDARD 5: Demonstrates ability to conduct and utilize research findings to improve ophthalmic services

Core competencies

- Identifies issues/problems in ophthalmic practice as the basis for review and research
- Critically evaluates existing evidence for relevance to practice
- Participates in the implementation of changes to clinical practice based on the outcomes of the evidence, eg. development of clinical guidelines
- Participates in the evaluation of changes to clinical practice
- Disseminates the outcomes of research findings
ANNEX 1

INSTRUMENTS TO ENABLE OPHTHALMIC NURSE TO WORK COMFORTABLY.

1. Visual Acuity charts
2. Torch
3. Shiozt tonometer
4. Slit lamp with applanator
5. Trial case
6. Trial frame
7. Ophthalmoscope
8. Magnifying loop
9. Indirect Ophthalmoscope
10. + 20 Diopter lens
11. Auto refractor
12. Ascan machine
13. K reading
14. Gonioscopy
15. Cataract set
16. Trabeculectomy set
17. Minor Surgery set
18. Enucleation
19. Evisceration
20. Extra ocular surgery
21. Operating beds
22. Trolleys
23. Operating microscopes and loupes
24. Laser machine
25. Autoclaves
26. Drums with gallipots, kidney dishes gowns, drapers, small incision towel, and gauze.
27. Boots, gloves, suction machine, oxygen cylinders, suction machines, sutures, Taylor pressure reducer, Assorted Syringes, Assorted needles.
28. Teaching aids
ANNEX: 2 PROCEDURES THAT CAN BE DONE BY A NURSE

TESTING VISUAL ACUITY

Tools that are needed
E.chart or Snellens chart
- Torch
- Trial Frame
- Pin hole
- Near reading chart
- Count fingers

TESTING VISUAL FIELD

Tools that are needed
- Bottle with a red top
- Visual field machine
- Confrontation test

SLIT LAMP EXAMINATION

Tools that are needed
- Slit lamp machine
- Applinator

FUNDOSCOPY

- Direct (Ophthalmoscope)
- Indirect
- Fundoscopy camera
- Topcon fundus camera

REFRACTION

- Trial set
- Autorefractor
- A Scan machine
- Lensometer

TOOLS NEEDED FOR TONOMETRY

- Schiotz Tonometer
- Eye care tonometer
DIABETES TEST

- OCT Machine
- Glucometer

FOREIGN BODY REMOVAL

- Depend on the type of FB

PROSTHETIC EYE INSERTION

Tools that are needed for Evisceration

- Wire open specula forceps (adult)
- Bard parker blade handle
- No 15 blade
- Evisceration scoop
- Needle holder heavy straight with lock
- Scissors Westcott
- Toothed forceps 10cm
- Mosquito forceps curved

Tools for Chalazion/Meibomian cyst enucleation

- Chalazion clamp
- Chalazion scoop
- Scissors heavy curved
- No 15 blade
- Bard parker blade handle

Tools needed for Tarsorrhaphy

- Cilia forceps
- Mosquito forceps curved
- Mosquito forceps straight
- Toothed forceps 10cm
- Toothed forceps 11cm
- Entropion clamp right
- Entropion clamp left
- Lid plate
- Bard parker blade handles for no 15 blade
- No 15 surgical blade
- Needle holder heavy straight with lock
- Scissor Westcott
- Scissor straight sharp pointed
- Cutting eye needle
- Kidney bowl 0.51 250x36mm.
ANNEX: 3. ESSENTIAL OPHTHALMIC MEDICINES

1. Anaesthesia
   Topical anaethetics
   - Amethocaine
   - Tetracaine hydrochloride
   - Proparacaine hydrochloride
   - Diacane

   Local anaethetics
   - Lignocaine hydrochloride injection

2. Mydriatics (Sympathomimetics);
   - Phyleneprine

   Cycloplegics (Para Fluconazolesympathomimetics);
   - Cyclopentolate
   - Mydriatic (adrenaline and atropine) cocktail
   - Atropine
   - Tropicamide etc

3. Topical Antibiotics solution and Ointments
   - Gentamycin
   - Chloramphenicol
   - Povidone iodine
   - Tetracyclines
   - Bacitracin ointment
   - Erythromycin ointment

4. Steroids
   - Prednisolone
   - Dexamethasone
   - Hydrocortisone

5. Diagnostic dye solution;
   - Fluorescein
   - Rosebengol

6. Miotics
   - Pilocarpine
   - Iopidine
   - Timolol

7. Topical ant fungal
   - Amphotericin B
   - Natamycin
   - Fluconazole

8. Antiviral agent
   - Acyclovir
   - Idoxuridine
   - Trfluridine etc

9. Tear replacement;
   - Methylcellulose
   - Polyvinil alcohol
10. Ant-glaucoma agent:
   - Gelatin
   - Acetazolamide (Diamox)
   - Methazolamide (Neptazane) etc
   - Pilocarpine hydrochloride & Nitrates
   - Topica ICarbachol
   - Phospholine Iodide
   - Timolol Maleate etc

11. Other ant allergic conjunctivitis:
   - Sodium chromoglycate
   - Lodoxamide tromethamine

Other drugs
- Antihistamines
- Artificial tears
- Vitamins.
- Intravenous fluids
- Systemic antibiotics
- Systemic Analgesics
REFERENCES

- Australian Ophthalamic Nurses Association Draft Professional Standards June 2010
- Tanzania Curriculum for Advanced Diploma in ophthalmic Nursing KCMC. June 2001