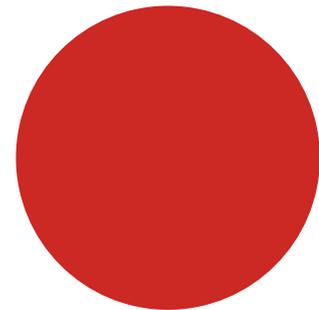


ASSOCIATION OF HAEMATOLOGY NURSES IN SWEDEN – HEMSI
& SWEDISH SOCIETY OF NURSING – SSF



**COMPETENCE DESCRIPTION
AND PROPOSED EDUCATION**

**FOR REGISTERED NURSES
SPECIALIZING IN HAEMATOLOGICAL NURSING**

PRODUCTION DATA

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PREFACE

The Association of Haematology Nurses in Sweden (HEMSIS) was founded in 1988. It is a non-profit association of nurses who are interested in the nursing and treatment of patients with haematological diseases. The goal of HEMSIS is to contribute to the development of haematology nursing for the patient and support for next of kin by:

- initiating, supporting, and coordinating education, development, and research in haematological nursing.
- being a meeting place for stimulating cooperation and exchange of knowledge, both nationally and internationally.

This competence description for nurses in haematological care expresses the recommendations of the Association of Haematology Nurses in Sweden (HEMSIS) concerning the professional knowledge and competence of this group, supplementing the Competence Description for Registered Nurses issued by the National Board of Health and Welfare (2005). The competence description for nurses in haematological care has the same structure as the National Board of Health and Welfare's Competence Description for Registered Nurses.

The aim of the competence description is:

- to help to give patients with haematological diseases high quality care.
- to clarify & support the professional role of the haematology nurse.
- to give guidance in the planning of the work and in the employment of nurses working in haematological care.
- to give a foundation and guidance for work with syllabuses for higher education in haematological nursing for nurses.

The competences described here concerns nurses who have acquired knowledge through clinical experience and/or higher education in haematology nursing. The competence description comprises of the care of adult patients with both benign and malignant haematological disease. Competence in the care of patients with various forms of haemophilia is not covered in this description.

BACKGROUND

Haematology, the study of diseases of the blood, developed in Sweden during the 1990s from having been a sub-speciality of internal medicine to a separate medical speciality. Anaemia as a consequence of various deficiencies is the most common haematological complaint, while the major part of specialist haematological care today is devoted to the treatment of patients with tumours emanating from haemopoietic organs. These haematological diseases include various forms of leukaemia, lymphoma, and myeloma.

The often serious and not infrequently recurrent character of haematological diseases, and the intensive treatment with chemotherapy and other immunosuppressive drugs that is often given, have the result that the patients suffer many different

symptoms and conditions which require supportive care and specific nursing skills.

The patient's contact with the treatment unit is often profound and protracted.

In haematology nursing the nurse meets patients at different stages of treatment, ranging from intensive curative care to palliative and end of life care. The disease and the treatment give rise to complex situations where the nurse must be attentive to physical, mental, social, and existential needs. This competence description clarifies the nurse's sphere of work and the knowledge that provides the foundation for the specific competence when caring for patients with benign or malignant haematological diseases.

THE WORKING PROCESS

The work of drawing up a competence description for nurses in haematological care has taken place in close collaboration with the Swedish Society of Nursing (SSF) which involved several stages.

In October 2004 four group interviews were held with nurses working in haematological care at four Swedish university hospitals. The aim of the interviews was to obtain information about the spheres of knowledge that haematology nurses regarded as crucial to haematological nursing. Parallel to this, a patient questionnaire was sent to members of the 15 local branches of the patient association, the Blood Cancer Association. The questionnaire contained two questions: What is it important for a nurse in haematological care to know? What ability is required of a nurse to care for patients with haematological diseases? The responses to the questionnaire showed that patients found it important that nurses can provide information about, prevent, and relieve symptoms and mental reactions resulting from disease and treatment. A capacity for empathy, an ability to listen, to convey calm and security, and being attentive to next of kin were qualities that were emphasized. Within the working group there was also an internal structured group discussion about the ability nurses in haematological care should have. Literature on the subject, the ICN's Ethical Code for Nurses, and various syllabuses for courses in haematology were also used as background material.

The texts resulting from questionnaires and group discussions were analysed with the aim of retaining the character of the statements and were then sorted under the headings used in the National Board of Health and Welfare's Competence Description for Registered Nurses. The work was presented at a workshop held in connection with the HEMSIS training days in 2005, and 50 nurses gave their opinions on the material. These opinions were considered and adjustments were made. The draft competence description was then sent to reference persons/organizations for comment. Finally, further adjustments were made and the HEMSIS board then decided on 9 October 2006 to adopt the competence description.

THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE HAVE CONSTITUTED THE WORKING GROUP

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Margareta Troeng, RN, Haematology, ward 4, Lund University Hospital

Gerthrud Östlinder, R&D expert, Swedish Society of Nursing, has been co-opted advisor.

We thank the following persons/organizations for contributing constructive comments on the competence description for haematology nurses: the Blood Cancer Association, the nurses who participated in group interviews, Elisabeth Dannberg, specialist nurse, Lena Persson, RN, PhD, lecturer in nursing, Lena Wettergren, RN, PhD, Joacim Larsen, RN, PhD, care development coordinator, nurse managers within HEMSIS, and the board of the Swedish Association for Haematology.

COMPETENCE DESCRIPTION

THEORY AND PRACTICE OF NURSING

NURSING SCIENCE AND MEDICAL SCIENCE IN HAEMATOLOGY

Have the ability to:	Have in-depth knowledge of:
adapt nursing measures to the patient's phase of treatment	curative care, palliative care, the rehabilitation phase, end-of-life care, health, well-being, and quality of life with a haematological disease
assess mental, social, cultural, and spiritual nursing needs arising from a changed life situation due to haematological disease, involve next of kin and, when necessary, initiate professional psychosocial support	treatment phases, crisis theory, coping strategies, different cultures, social support systems, psychosocial supportive measures, and ethical aspects to do with the philosophy of life
apply pharmacological knowledge to ensure safe handling and administration of drugs used for haematological treatment	anti-tumour agents, haemopoietic growth factors, and anti-infection agents
apply knowledge of specific symptoms and conditions arising in connection with haematological disease/treatment in order to take nursing measures to prevent, treat, or alleviate them	loss of appetite, change in weight, eating difficulties, nausea, mucosal lesions, diarrhoea, constipation, excess fluid, dehydration, oedema, pain, infection, shivering, fever, breathing difficulties, bleeding, fatigue, hair loss, confusional states, changed external appearance, and sexual problems
assess risks of nutritional and eating problems	nutritional assessment, malnutrition, nutritional therapy, measures to support eating, and changes in smell and taste
observe and assess the nature and degree of the patient's need for acute medical care	haematological diseases and therapies, sepsis, bleeding, circulatory effect, cerebral effect, coagulation disorders, anaphylaxis, medullary compression, and graft-versus-host disease (GvHD)
plan the work so that the patient and next of kin have a chance for calm and rest, and assist in maintaining the daily rhythm as far as possible	sleep and health

INFORMATION AND TEACHING

Have the ability to:	Have in-depth knowledge of:
prepare patients with life-threatening diseases and inform them about the treatment and its side effects	treatment and its side effects in haematological disease
inform and teach therapeutic techniques for self-care and about self-care to prevent or alleviate trouble caused by a haematological disease and its treatment	methods for patient information and patient education
show empathy and attentiveness in order to offer support, conversation, and intimacy, to give security, comfort, and hope to patients and next of kin	normal crisis reactions, coping strategies, expressions of suffering in different cultures, spirituality, existential pain, and conversation technique

EXAMINATIONS AND THERAPIES

Have the ability to:	Have in-depth knowledge of:
be observant to results of blood tests and examinations and to act appropriately when blood counts are abnormal	bone marrow suppression and reference values
participate in examinations and treatments specific to haematological care	bone marrow aspiration and trephine and lumbar puncture, along with current routines for sampling procedures
carry out examinations and treatments specific to haematological care	capillary smear and venesection, along with current routines for sampling procedures
transfuse blood components safely	blood component treatment and transfusion complications
handle and manage central venous catheters, probes, and gastrostomies so that the risk of complications is minimised	different types of catheters and related complications
at units where stem-cell transplants are performed, to prepare the patient and monitor the supply of autologous or allogeneic stem cells	procedures for stem-cell transplants, acute reactions and specific technical apparatus

PROMOTING HEALTH AND PREVENTING ILL HEALTH

Have the ability to:	Have in-depth knowledge of:
motivate and encourage patients and next of kin to engage in movement and activity when inactivity can entail a risk of ill health	effects of movement and/or activity when fatigued, protective isolation and long-term confinement to bed
in the nursing of infection-prone patients, prevent contagion and initiate self-care in order to minimize the risk of opportunistic infections	hygiene routines, bodily barrier, colonization, infection pathways, focus of infection, hygiene as regards patient, staff, and food, and routines for protective isolation
to adapt information, based on the patient's prognosis, about health risks in order to maintain/improve the patient's subjective perception of well-being	factors that can affect well-being such as energy- and protein-rich diet, smoking and alcohol
make it easier for patients to maintain their social network	social support systems and changes in social role due to long-term hospitalization or protective isolation

SAFETY AND QUALITY

Have the ability to:	Have in-depth knowledge of:
critically assess and question whether prescriptions are reasonable	principles for dosage of different anti-tumour agents in relation to body size
follow nursing directives in guidelines for haematological care	current care guidelines

CARE ENVIRONMENT

Have the ability to:	Have in-depth knowledge of:
reflect on factors in the work environment in haematological care which can be harmful to health, consulting people with expert knowledge and collaborating with those in charge of occupational safety in order to eliminate risks	cytotoxic, allergenic, and mutagenic drugs, risk assessment
create, together with the care team, a care environment that is suitable for the patient's condition and needs, while simultaneously being harmonious and inviting	ambient temperature for fever changes in smell and taste due to chemotherapy, stimulation of sensory impressions, and aids for restful posture

RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, AND EDUCATION

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Have the ability to:

Contribute to the work of developing quality indicators in haematology nursing.

Critically reflect on and analyse haematology nursing by identifying strengths and weaknesses in the day-to-day practice.

PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Have the ability to:

Take responsibility to ensure competence in undertaking any patient care action.

Develop a professional stance in relations with patients and next of kin, by discussing and reflecting on care situations with staff and support persons.

EDUCATION

Have the ability to:

Convey specific knowledge to staff in other fields and to the general public.

LEADERSHIP

MANAGEMENT

Have the ability to:

Organize the work of nursing so that good continuity is achieved through care processes and care pathways for people with haematological diseases.

Prioritize the work of nursing on the basis of haematological patients' needs and the urgency of the tasks.

Notice, support, and if possible relieve colleagues who are engaged in demanding/strenuous patient situations/relations.

COOPERATION IN THE PATIENT CARE PATHWAY

Have the ability to:

Initiate contact with and coordinate, inform and collaborate with different professional groups and care teams so that help and support are given to patients in haematological care and their next of kin, in order to achieve continuity, efficiency, and quality.

PROPOSAL FOR ADVANCED EDUCATION FOR REGISTERED NURSES FOR SPECIALISATION IN HAEMATOLOGICAL NURSING

The document describes proposals for education for specialisation in the subject of haematology nursing. The courses recommended in haematology nursing should be part of the framework for the training of specialist nurses (courses worth 60 credits) or within the framework of masters' education (course of 60 credits, of which at least 30 credits concern in-depth study in the major subject and the completion of a thesis worth at least 15 credits in the major subject), or in the future, should constitute the base in regulated specialist training geared to haematology.

According to the Higher Education Act (2006:173), education at advanced level should essentially build on the knowledge acquired by the students in education at undergraduate level or comparable knowledge. Education at advanced level is supposed to entail greater depth of knowledge and higher skills and abilities than that obtained from education at undergraduate level, and to further develop the students' ability to independently integrate and use knowledge beyond the undergraduate level, to develop the students' ability to handle complex phenomena, questions, and situations, and to develop the students' chances

to work in professional activities requiring great independence or in research and development.

The competence description contains clear specifications of the ability and knowledge that should be attained by nurses in haematological care. The targets as regards knowledge and competence for specialisation in the different suggested courses should be in line with the content of the competence description. There are specific goals for one-year and two-year master's education, see the Higher Education Ordinance (SFS 2006:1053) for further information. The way in which the goals are achieved on courses in specialist education in haematological nursing is of great significance for the student's progression in the subject. Each university providing education in haematological nursing is therefore responsible for setting course goals in accordance with the competence description, and using appropriate teaching methods and adequate forms of examination within the suggested courses so that the goals of the courses can be achieved in accordance with the advanced level.

EDUCATION AT ADVANCED LEVEL

0–30 CREDITS IN HAEMATOLOGY NURSING

PRIOR KNOWLEDGE

Nursing qualification and Swedish registration.

Nursing education 180 credits according to the 2007 study order, nursing education 120 credits according to the 1993 study order or nursing education according to older study paths and scientific method 20 credits and the current practice of the specific university for validation of previous studies and experience.

HAEMATOLOGICAL DISEASES AND TREATMENTS, 15 CREDITS

Contents

Normal haemopoiesis

Non-malignant haematological diseases

Malignant haematological diseases

Diagnosis and treatment

Cytostatics management, risk identification, and risk assessment

Blood component treatment

NURSING HAEMATOLOGICAL DISEASES, 15 CREDITS

Contents

Nutrition

Elimination

Pain

Fatigue

Changed external appearance

Infections

Treating infections

Hygiene routines

Protective isolation

Central venous catheters

EDUCATION AT ADVANCED LEVEL

31–60 CREDITS IN HAEMATOLOGICAL NURSING

PRIOR KNOWLEDGE

Nursing qualification, 180 credits according to the 2007 study order, nursing education 120 credits according to the 1993 study order or nursing education according to older study paths and scientific method 20 credits, and the current practice of the specific university for validation of previous studies and experience. Over and above this, the student should have gained 30 credits in haematological nursing at advanced level.

ACUTE HAEMATOLOGY AND STEM-CELL TRANSPLANTATION, 4 CREDITS

Contents

Acute states
Physiology and pathophysiology
Diagnosis and treatment
Immunology
Stem-cell transplantation
Fluid balance
Specific technical apparatus

PSYCHOSOCIAL NURSING AND THE PATIENT'S LEARNING, 8 CREDITS

Contents

Ethics
Crisis theory
Coping strategies
Cultural nursing
Philosophy of life
Psychosocial supportive measures
Next of kin in care
Palliative care
Sexuality
Patient information and patient education
Communication skills

LEADERSHIP AND QUALITY WORK, 3 CREDITS

Leadership and organizational development
Working for quality and improvement
Informatics

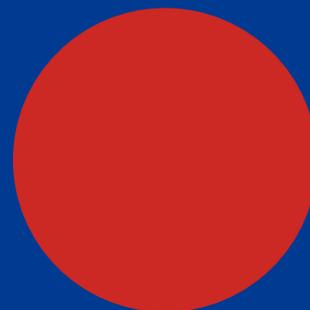
THESIS (DEGREE PROJECT), 15 CREDITS

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COMPETENCE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSED EDUCATION

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