What does clinical competence mean for health care professionals?

Roy A. Brown  
*University of Wollongong, royb@uow.edu.au*

Patrick A. Crookes  
*University of Wollongong, pcrookes@uow.edu.au*

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Authors: Brown R¹*, Crookes P

¹ University of Wollongong

Abstract Title: What does clinical competence mean for health care professionals?

Statement of Finding
This project is an extension of work undertaken within a larger longitudinal project that is exploring the development of competence in newly graduating RNs. Clinical practice assessment both in the clinical setting and simulated learning environments continues to be challenging and complex. The role of Clinical Facilitators and Registered Nurses who supervise and assess nursing students in clinical practice need to be clear about what they perceive competence to be and how competence can be assessed.

A number of workshops have been facilitated, both as part of the project and as conference presentations where both academics and clinicians have explored their understanding of competence and competence assessment, using value clarification. Workshops were conducted over 13 sites with close to 120 participants.

Key conclusions
Both clinicians and academics value the opportunity to think creatively and express their values and beliefs about competency and competency assessment. This candid exploration enables a critical evaluation of their role and function in assessing nursing student’s competence to practice.

The work is ongoing and is attracting international interest; not only about how to assess in clinical practice but also about exploring the tools used and their utility.

Three Critical Questions
1. What clinical activities should students be assessed undertaking in the health care setting?
2. Is the role of the registered nurse clear in assessing student nurses in the clinical setting?
3. What is the best way for the registered nurse and facilitation team to work to consistent, reliable and valid competency assessment?

Three intended outcomes
1. Explore competency and competency assessment.
2. Share the development of a schedule to assess the competence of students in clinical with practice.
3. To explore the importance of the role of the registered nurse in supporting and assessing nursing students.
3 References

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