Enhancing practice and education: Developing forensic mental health nursing competencies

**Purpose**

Preliminary: To develop an evidence-based forensic mental health (FMH) nursing competency framework that is specific to the Canadian context.

Principal: To support the practice and education of FMH nurses at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) in ways that are evidence-based and context-sensitive.

**Rationale**

FMH nursing is a distinct sub-specialty of mental health nursing; however, best practices specific to the particularities of this group’s practice in Canada have not been articulated.

A foundation of data gathered from scholarly and grey literature and content experts from a variety of practice settings across Canada will provide the basis for developing an competency framework that is specific FMH nursing practice in the Canadian context.

Supporting CAMH’s FMH nurses’ best practice and education and developing clear pathways to leadership requires a clear articulation of the competencies specific to this unique practice area.

**Project Team**

A group of advanced practice FMH clinicians and leaders from the Professional Practice Office and Clinical Operations at CAMH.

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**Current Progress**

- **SCHOLARLY LITERATURE SEARCH**
- **Research Questions**
- **Inclusion & Exclusion Criteria**
- **Article Selection**
- **Data Extraction**
- **Grey Literature Search**
- **Data Collation & Analysis**
- **Data Summarization**
- **Expert Consultation**

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**What are the competencies specific to FMH nursing practice?**

- **What are the unique descriptive aspects of the FMH nursing role?**

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**Outcome**

A validated, descriptive summary of FMH nursing competencies and the role of the FMH nurse.

Benner’s (1984) domains of nursing practice will organize the data and structure the competencies document, in a way congruent with the approach to competency development taken by the Canadian Federation of Mental Health Nurses in their Canadian Standards for Psychiatric-Mental Health Nursing (2014) document.

The competencies document will then be used to guide education initiatives and enhance the practice of FMH nurses at CAMH.

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**Next Steps**

- Complete scoping review to articulate a Canadian-specific FMH nursing competency framework.
- Use the FMH competency framework at CAMH to enhance practice & education.
- To fulfill a leadership role in the development of Canadian-wide FMH nursing practice standards & competencies.