

META COMPETENCES

Meta competences refer to the use of judgement when carrying out an activity or intervention. These are relevant to all aspects of practice and professionals often need to make decisions about whether, when, or how to carry out an activity. Adapting and updating practice in a way that is tailored to the patient and consistent with appropriate principles and evidence is an important marker of competence.

Not all of the meta competences will be relevant to all professionals and will be dependent on the type of activity or intervention being conducted. Therefore, practitioners should draw upon the meta competences relevant to the activity or intervention they are delivering, which should be within the boundaries of their professional role.

Attitudes, values, and style of interaction

An ability to adapt practice to the needs and presentation of patient so as to:

maximise their active involvement in the process of care delivery (assessment, planning, and intervention)

address any tensions between the patient's priorities and that of the organisation

Confidentiality and capacity

An ability to interpret legal definitions of competence, capacity, and guidance, regarding confidentiality in relation to the specific circumstances and needs of each patient

An ability to judge when it is in the best interest of the patient to disclose information, considering their wishes and views about sharing information, but holding in mind considerations of competence, capacity, and risk

where there are concerns about the patient's capacity to act in a way that maintains their own safety, an ability to judge how to proceed in line with their best interests

an ability to judge what and how much information (both written and verbal) should be shared and with whom (in the light of the patient's specific situation and risk of harm)

Working with patients from a range of social and cultural backgrounds

An ability for practitioners to be aware of their own values and to reflect on the ways that these values affect (positively and negatively) their interactions with patients with whom they are working

Where the patient discusses practices at variance with the norms or values of the practitioner, an ability to judge when this should be respected and when it is a concern that should be responded to

Where there is evidence that social and cultural difference is likely to have an impact on the accessibility or acceptability of care, an ability to make appropriate adjustments to the intervention and the manner in which it is delivered, to maximise its potential benefit

Engagement and assessment

An ability to judge when to continue focusing on working with difficulties and when to step back, based on the level of engagement with the patient

An ability to balance the benefits of a thorough assessment against the need to initiate a timely intervention, and to judge:

when the assessment has identified sufficient understanding for an intervention to proceed and where more information is required before an intervention can be carried out safely

An ability to adopt a flexible and responsive approach to assessment that balances the need to obtain information against the patient's readiness and willingness to share this (for example, because they have had only limited opportunities to form a relationship with the practitioner)

Assessing risk

An ability to draw on knowledge of the difficulty of predicting risk and so be able to:

integrate information from theory and research with patient information

integrate information from outcome measures with discussion-based assessment

integrate information from a range of sources (for example, notes and reports from the family and carers)

Implementing interventions in a flexible but coherent manner

An ability to implement an intervention in a manner that is flexible and responsive to the patient's needs and wishes but which also ensures that the central components of the intervention are included

Adapting care in response to patient feedback

An ability to identify and respond to implicit or explicit indicators that the patient is at risk of disengaging from care for example by:

responding to and openly discussing explicit feedback that expresses concerns about important aspects of their care

responding to implicit feedback which indicate concerns about important aspects of their care (as indicated for example by comments non-verbal behaviour or significant shifts in responsiveness)

identifying when it seems difficult for patients to give feedback which is 'authentic' (i.e., responding in accordance with what they think the practitioner wishes to hear rather than expressing their own view and discussing this with them)

Recognising limits

An ability for the practitioner to judge when they have reached the limits of their responsibility and competence and when to seek advice or supervision or refer on to others

Using supervision and support

An ability to be aware of the inevitable feelings elicited by challenging or risky behaviours (such as hostility or suspiciousness) and to judge when support or supervision is necessary in order to:

continue working effectively

ensure that decisions about the best way forward are taken on the basis of careful reflection (for example, whether to persist, adapt or stop the intervention)

An ability for the practitioner to be aware on their own unconscious biases and the impact this may have on the care they provide

An ability for the practitioner to judge when care delivery is creating excessive emotional demands and to put in place appropriate levels of self-care

Team working with other practitioners and professionals

When sharing information with others, an ability to judge what information needs to be shared and with whom titrating the level of confidentiality against the need for colleagues to have sufficient information if they are to act in the interests of the patient

When undertaking work with other agencies, an ability to make a judgment about the potential impact of factors such as differences in statutory responsibilities and the operation of service constraints and to take these into account when planning a shared intervention

An ability to judge when there is sufficient evidence that professional colleagues are not performing their roles appropriately or are performing them incompetently and to act in line with professional organisational and legal obligations