



Clinical Homecare Career and Competence Framework

October 2025



Acknowledgements

This Framework was commissioned by the National Clinical Homecare Association (NCHA), and its development guided by an expert reference group, chaired by Elaine Neil, NCHA project lead.

Framework development was managed by Andrew Lovegrove and Rosemarie Simpson, Senior Consultants at Skills for Health.

We are extremely grateful to members of the expert reference group for providing their guidance, expertise and support.

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Equality and health inequalities statement

Promoting equality and addressing health inequalities are at the heart of our values. Throughout the development of the policies and processes cited in this document, we have:

- Given due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity, and to foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic (as cited under the Equality Act 2010) and those who do not share it.
- Given regard to the need to reduce inequalities between patients in access to and outcomes from healthcare services and to ensure services are provided in an integrated way where this might reduce health inequalities.

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Foreword

As the landscape of healthcare continues to evolve, the importance of delivering high-quality, person-centred care in the home has never been more apparent. Clinical professionals working in homecare settings play a critical role in supporting individuals to live safely, independently, and with dignity in their own communities.

This Career and Competence Framework for Clinical Roles within Homecare has been developed to provide a clear, consistent structure for the wide range of clinical professionals delivering care in the home. It aims to support the standardisation of roles across the homecare sector, ensuring clarity, consistency, and quality in both service delivery and workforce development.

Developed in collaboration with Skills for Health, a non-profit organisation committed to improving the health and care workforce across the UK, this framework reflects a shared vision for a more integrated, skilled, and sustainable homecare workforce. Their expertise has been invaluable in shaping a framework that is both evidence-based and responsive to the real-world needs of practitioners and providers alike.

Grounded in the core values of healthcare—compassion, accountability, respect, and excellence—this framework outlines the knowledge, skills, and behaviours required at each level of clinical practice. It supports career progression, enhances professional identity, and promotes safe, effective care for individuals receiving support at home.

We hope this framework will serve as a practical tool for clinicians, employers, educators, and policymakers alike. By working together to standardise and strengthen clinical roles in homecare, we can ensure a future where care at home is not only accessible, but consistently excellent.

National Clinical Homecare Association

Statements of support

As the Chief Patient Officer for Lloyds Clinical, I am proud to endorse the Careers and Competence Framework for Clinical Roles within Homecare. This framework is a significant step forward in ensuring that our clinical professionals are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to provide exceptional care. By standardising roles and promoting consistency across the homecare sector, we can enhance the quality of care delivered to individuals in their own homes. This initiative not only supports professional development but also reinforces our commitment to delivering compassionate, accountable, and excellent care.

Jo Upton,
Lloyds Clinical

As a committed homecare provider, we are proud to support the Clinical Homecare Career & Competency Framework developed by the National Clinical Homecare Association (NCHA). This important initiative reflects the growing complexity and professionalism within clinical homecare services, and we welcome the opportunity to align our workforce development practices with this national standard.

We believe that a clear and structured framework for clinical roles in homecare is essential, to ensure high-quality, safe, and person-centred care. By providing a roadmap for career progression, skill development, and professional recognition, this framework helps to attract, retain, and empower the highly skilled professionals who are at the heart of our homecare delivery service.

Donna Smith,
HealthNet Homecare

The Senior Clinical team at Sciensus supports the development and implementation of this Career and Competence Framework for Clinical Roles within Homecare. The suite of documents provides clear standards that align with current healthcare and regulatory models, which will ensure that our clinicians have the appropriate competencies, responsibilities and performance expectations that enable them to provide patients with quality care through clinical excellence.

Sir Jonathan Asbridge,
Chief Clinical Officer, Sciensus Pharma

Introduction and background

The need and demand for homecare service across the UK is growing year on year and having a robust and scalable homecare workforce is key to future growth. Clinical Homecare staff and services have the potential to relieve pressures on the delivery of UK healthcare services, offering an alternative model of delivery of specialist care to patients at home which can benefit patients as well as the NHS.¹

Whilst it is the long-term intention for the framework to be applicable to all roles within clinical homecare, the roles which have been developed initially are focused on nursing. Ultimately, this career and competence framework for patient facing and non-patient facing clinical and administrative roles within clinical homecare will aid further development of robust multi-organisation patient pathways and minimise clinical risks.

Standardisation of terminology and expectations of staff in different stages of their career and in different roles will simplify commissioning and contracting of homecare services and streamline “right capability, right time” deployment of staff. As an industry wide framework, this standardised career and competence framework will support development and retention of existing staff and will ensure transferability of capabilities within and between homecare organisations.

The framework will be reviewed to ensure it remains aligned with national policy and guidelines, and standards of best practice.

1 Best kept secret: The Value of Clinical Homecare to The NHS, Patients and Society
National Clinical Homecare Association, July 2024

The expected benefits arising from this career and competence framework are:

For patients

- Consistent approach to care for patients and families irrespective of homecare provider
- Enables consistent clinical homecare services in remote locations or for small, dispersed patient populations
- Enables more patients to benefit from clinical homecare services by supporting workforce development and recruitment
- Patient and referrers will benefit from standardisation of capabilities as staff transferring between providers will be inducted more quickly into their new roles

For clinical referring centres & commissioners

- Provides consistent information around clinical homecare role functions for commissioners
- Support the development and growth of the clinical homecare workforce
- Reduced complexity and clinical risk from common understanding and standardisation of capabilities
- Provides a beneficial resource for commissioners, supporting them to design and commission services more efficiently, based on clearer, consistent information around clinical homecare staffing requirements
- Enables choice by simplifying transition between homecare providers

For staff

- Provides clarity and improvements in career choices
- Promotes the transferability of competencies between and within homecare providers
- Supports self-assessment of competencies & capabilities against those required for a range of roles within clinical homecare services
- Supports identification of the education and training interventions required to progress and develop into new roles
- Identifies areas for personal and professional development
- Clear pathways for moving between and progressing within clinical homecare services
- Provides consistent information around clinical homecare roles, capabilities and opportunities for career progression for potential recruits and existing staff

For homecare providers

- Supports recruitment, retention and workforce flexibility within clinical homecare
- Supports development of staff capabilities and processes for personal and professional development
- Supports growth of homecare services through supporting staff development
- Provides a tool for service managers to use with staff in (for example) personal development reviews (PDRs)
- Promotes interoperability
- Enables the transferability of staff between and within homecare providers as staff transferring between homecare providers will be inducted more quickly into their new roles

For training providers

- Ensures that curriculum design is closely aligned to patient and homecare services needs
- Supports robust deployment of training courses and assessments

Who is this Framework for?

Current and future staff

The framework promotes Clinical Homecare services as a career option for a wide range of individuals as well as giving a clear sense of the ways in which to progress.

The framework sets out clear expectations for staff about the requirements for effective and safe practice. It provides clarity about characteristics and requirements to practice at each level and offers a structure of competences for varying roles that enables practice at each level.

It can be used to conduct formal or informal appraisal, alongside a training needs analysis, comparing current skills and knowledge with required skills and knowledge.

This framework will assist staff in the development of a portfolio of evidence of competence.

Service commissioners

The framework supports commissioners of Clinical Homecare services to design services based on clearly articulated information around Clinical Homecare staffing requirements and role functions, leading to more efficient commissioning of services.

The competences support the development and planning of the workforce to meet local population need and support a common understanding and expectation of staff working in Clinical Homecare services.

Employers

The framework supports recruitment, retention and workforce flexibility enables employers and managers to demonstrate that the staff they employ/manage meet core competences or have developmental plans in place along with the necessary supervision to ensure patient safety and meet the needs of individuals.

This underpins and supports the need for continuing professional development of staff to ensure their practice is safe, effective, remains up-to-date and supports the process of quality assurance to ensure the safety and effectiveness of Clinical Homecare roles.

It can be used as part of appraisal processes and used to review and recognise how competences are shared across teams within an organisation.

Education and training providers

Educational institutions can use the framework to inform the design of their curricula and the delivery of education, training, and development programmes, including identifying learning outcomes. This will ensure that their learning and development provision contributes to the full range of knowledge to support the competences required to make individuals safe and effective members of the workforce.

The framework will inform those who design and deliver training and development opportunities to focus on the key competences that learners need to achieve and maintain. This in turn, will guide the content to be included and the use of appropriate learning and teaching strategies.

Use of this national framework also supports organisational and system wide effectiveness and efficiencies by encouraging the delivery of education and training that is focused on developing core competences and optimises opportunities for inter-professional learning; focussed on outcomes-based curricula which equips individuals with the attributes required to meet the needs of those to whom Clinical Homecare services are delivered.

In so doing, it should help to increase consistency in knowledge and skills development, prevent unnecessary duplication in education and training delivery and strengthen skill mix and teamworking.

Supervisors

The framework will assist supervisors at all levels and others by providing a clear structure to assess against.

People and the wider public

The framework can be used by people to improve their knowledge of Clinical Homecare services and understanding of what they can expect from staff providing this service, helping to support a consistent approach to care for patients and families.

It can also be useful for those who want an awareness of the structure of Clinical Homecare if they are in roles such as patient or lay representatives, or holding positions with organisational boards, or other roles involved in coproduction of services, education, or system development.

Structure of the Framework

This framework comprises the following **two** components:

- a career framework component
- a competence framework component

Component 1: The Career Framework – an overview

The career framework identifies **five** career levels of practice for those involved in the delivery of clinical homecare services.

These levels are based on The Career Framework for Health² and in order to promote consistency, also align to wider national work defining standards of professional practice at these levels, i.e. apprenticeship standards for supportive level practice, for example healthcare support worker; associate/assistant practitioner, and apprenticeships standards for enhanced clinical and advanced clinical practitioners, and guidelines on what constitutes enhanced and advanced practice from NHS England.³

The career framework can help support the sustainability and growth of the workforce in the Clinical Homecare services area, facilitate the movement of staff to work across services, as well as providing a structure for career development and progression.

The framework provides a useful insight into what characteristics are required to work at each career framework level and gives examples of the knowledge and skills required, as well as 'how' an individual would need to behave and act to be working at each level.

The five levels of practice are:

- Supportive Level Practice
- Associate/Assistant Practitioner Level Practice
- Autonomous Level Practice
- Enhanced Level Practice
- Advanced Level Practice

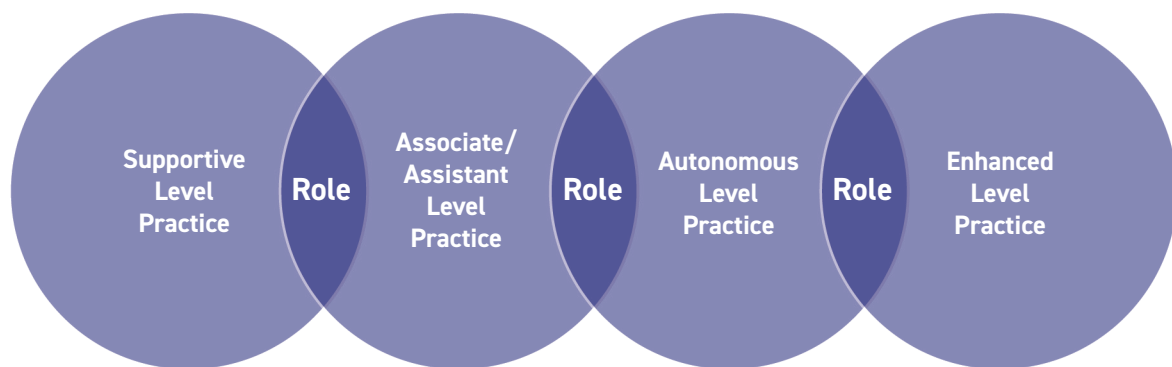
2 The Career Framework for Health is a mechanism for describing jobs in terms of the level at which the job is required to function, i.e. level of responsibility, decision making, critical analysis skills, combined with the activities undertaken in the job, which can be mapped to National Occupational Standards. Skills for Health, 2010

3 Multi-professional Framework for Advanced Clinical Practice, NHS England, 2017

In objectively articulating the career levels, the career framework does not mandate the amount of remuneration, terms and conditions that may be associated with roles/jobs.

The clinical homecare career framework focuses on articulating **levels of practice** rather than defining roles/jobs, it is possible that certain roles/jobs **could** overlap more than one of the identified levels within the framework.

The diagram below helps to illustrate this point as there may be occasions where there is not complete alignment to an individual's role and the levels of practice as defined within the framework.



To help provide further understanding, the following examples are given as an illustration:

Example 1: Overlapping supportive and associate/assistant level practice

A member of staff undertakes a range of duties which could be mapped to the descriptor as articulated at the supportive level; however, has further developed/specialist competences around a particular set of clinical tasks which have been articulated as appropriate for the assistant/associate level.

Example 2: Overlapping autonomous and enhanced level competences

A nurse may be employed in a role/job where their scope of practice means they are within the registered practice level; however, they may take a 'lead' in a particular specialism, and/or an enhanced leadership of an area of practice which requires some facet of their role to operate at enhanced level practice.

A member of staff may also, as part of their personal development plan, take on additional responsibilities which might require them to be working at an enhanced level for part of their role.

Component 1: The Career Framework

Career Framework Level	Level Descriptor	Examples of Indicative Roles
Supportive Level Practice	<p>People at this level require knowledge of facts, principles, processes, and general concepts in a field of work.</p> <p>They may carry out a wide range of duties and will have some responsibility, with guidance and supervision available when needed.</p> <p>They provide high quality, compassionate healthcare, following standards, policies or protocols and always acting within the limits of their capability.</p> <p>They use knowledge and understanding to take decisions within their area(s) of responsibility.</p> <p>They are responsible for their work and for reviewing the effectiveness of actions.</p>	<p>Health Care Assistant</p> <p>Health Care Support Worker</p> <p>Support Worker</p> <p>Phlebotomist</p> <p>Customer Services Representative</p> <p>Patient Services Co-ordinator</p> <p>Despatch/Delivery Co-ordinator</p> <p>Homecare Pharmacy Assistant</p>
Associate Level / Assistant Practitioner Level Practice	<p>People at this level require factual and theoretical knowledge in broad contexts within a field of work.</p> <p>They work independently, and with others, under the leadership and direction of a Registered Nurse or within defined parameters, to deliver care in line with an agreed plan/protocol.</p>	<p>Senior Patient Services Co-ordinator</p> <p>Specialist Health Care Support Worker</p>

Career Framework Level	Level Descriptor	Examples of Indicative Roles
	<p>They will have a breadth of knowledge, and a flexible, portable skill set to support/deliver Clinical Homecare services, taking account of the perspectives and pathways of individuals, their families and/or carers, providing holistic and personalised care and/or services to individuals, supporting the assessment, planning, delivery and evaluation of care and/or services.</p> <p>Work is guided by standard operating procedures, protocols, or systems of work, but the worker makes judgements, plans activities, contributes to service development, and demonstrates self-development.</p>	<p>Homecare Pharmacy Team Member</p> <p>Homecare Clinical Technician</p> <p>Service Administrator</p> <p>Nursing Associate</p> <p>Assistant Clinical Practitioner</p> <p>Pharmacovigilance Officer</p>
Autonomous Level Practice	<p>People at this level will have a comprehensive, specialised, factual, and theoretical knowledge within a field of work and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge.</p> <p>They use knowledge to solve problems creatively, make judgements which require analysis and interpretation, and actively contribute to service and self-development.</p> <p>They play a vital role in providing, leading, coordinating and evaluating care that is compassionate, evidence based, and personalised.</p>	<p>Specialist Homecare Nurse Practitioner</p> <p>Registered Nurse - Adult</p> <p>Registered Nurse – Children</p> <p>Clinical Trainer</p> <p>Physiotherapist</p> <p>Senior Pharmacovigilance Officer</p> <p>Homecare Pharmacist</p>

Career Framework Level	Level Descriptor	Examples of Indicative Roles
	<p>They are accountable for their own actions and those to whom they delegate, and must be able to work autonomously, or as an equal partner with a range of other professionals.</p> <p>They provide nursing care for people who could have complex and concurrent mental, physical, cognitive, and behavioural care needs and for people at the end of their life.</p> <p>They make an important contribution to the promotion of health, health protection and the prevention of ill health by empowering people to exercise choice, take control of their own health decisions and behaviours and by supporting people to manage their own care where possible.</p> <p>They may have responsibility for supervision of staff and/or may teach and advise patients and their families on how to manage their condition.</p>	
Enhanced Level Practice	<p>People at this level require a critical understanding of detailed theoretical and practical knowledge, which can be generalist with a special interest and/or have management and leadership responsibilities.</p> <p>May have specialist knowledge, skills and competences.</p> <p>They consult with patients, their families, and the multi-professional team to undertake assessments of patient need and devise and evaluate complex care plans.</p>	<p>Nurse Educator</p> <p>Clinical Homecare Service</p> <p>Manager/Leader</p> <p>Clinical Homecare Logistics</p> <p>Manager/Leader</p> <p>Safeguarding Officer</p>

Career Framework Level	Level Descriptor	Examples of Indicative Roles
	<p>They evaluate and analyse problems using their knowledge, seeking out and applying relevant evidence, enhanced techniques, interventions, and equipment to make clinical decisions.</p> <p>They deliver enhanced care in the context of continual change, challenging environments, different models of care delivery, innovation and rapidly evolving technologies using analysis and their underpinning knowledge to manage complex interventions.</p> <p>They participate in audits and research projects and implement changes as required, including the development, and updating of practice protocols /guidelines and procedures locally.</p> <p>They will work within national and local protocols where these exist.</p> <p>They recognise boundaries of their practice and know when and to whom patients should be referred.</p> <p>They may delegate work to other members of the clinical homecare team and take accountability for the delegated activity.</p> <p>They demonstrate initiative and are creative in finding solutions to problems.</p> <p>They have some responsibility for team performance and service development, and they consistently undertake self-development.</p>	<p>Clinical Governance Manager/ Leader</p> <p>Enhanced Clinical Practitioner</p> <p>Subject matter expert</p>

Career Framework Level	Level Descriptor	Examples of Indicative Roles
Advanced Level Practice	<p>People working at this level combine advanced skills with research, education, and clinical leadership within their scope of practice.</p> <p>They have a critical awareness of knowledge issues in the field and at the interface between different fields.</p> <p>They are innovative and have a responsibility for developing and changing practice and/or services in a complex and unpredictable environment.</p> <p>They demonstrate expertise in their scope of practice.</p> <p>They manage clinical care at the highest level independently, from beginning to end, for example from when an individual presents through to the end of the episode, which may include admission, referral or discharge or care at home.</p> <p>They work as part of the wider health and social care team and across traditional professional boundaries.</p>	<p>Superintendent/Chief Pharmacist</p> <p>Chief Nurse/Clinical Homecare Service Director</p> <p>CQC Registered Manager</p> <p>NHS Regional Homecare Specialist</p> <p>Data Protection Officer</p> <p>Caldicott Guardian</p> <p>Safeguarding Lead</p> <p>Subject Matter Expert Lead</p> <p>Decision maker</p> <p>Advanced Clinical Practitioner</p> <p>Director / Board Member</p>

Component 2: The (Common & Core) Competence Framework

Overview

The competence framework articulates common, and core competences required. The competences used are National Occupational Standards (NOS) that describe the skills, knowledge and understanding required to undertake a particular task or job to a nationally recognised level of competence. They focus on what the individual needs to be able to do as well as what they must know and understand in order to work effectively.

Common Competences

The competences below are **common**, in that they relate to **any** role at the levels specified within The Career Framework and are the competences that **all** staff are expected to demonstrate in the context of their role.

Core Competences for each Career Framework Level

Competence	Supportive Level	Associate/Assistant Practitioner Level	Autonomous Level	Enhanced Level	Advanced Level
Communicate effectively in a healthcare environment	X	X	X	X	X
Develop your own knowledge and practice	X	X			
Synthesise new knowledge into the development of your own practice			X	X	X

Competence	Supportive Level	Associate/Assistant Practitioner Level	Autonomous Level	Enhanced Level	Advanced Level
Develop and maintain your professional networks			X	X	X
Monitor your own work practices	X	X	X	X	X
Develop your practice through reflection and learning			X	X	X
Take responsibility for the continuing professional development of yourself and others			X	X	X
Perform hand hygiene to prevent the spread of infection	X	X	X	X	X
Make sure your own actions reduce risks to health and safety	X	X	X	X	X
Make sure your actions contribute to a positive and safe working culture	X	X	X	X	X

Competence	Supportive Level	Associate/Assistant Practitioner Level	Autonomous Level	Enhanced Level	Advanced Level
Support the safeguarding of individuals	X	X	X	X	X
Identify and evaluate opportunities for innovation and improvement			X	X	X
Act within the limits of your competence and authority	X	X	X	X	X
Manage and organise your own time and activities	X	X	X	X	X
Monitor, evaluate and improve inter-agency services for addressing health and wellbeing needs					X
Uphold the rights of individuals	X	X	X	X	X
Promote the rights and diversity of individuals			X	X	X

Competence	Supportive Level	Associate/Assistant Practitioner Level	Autonomous Level	Enhanced Level	Advanced Level
Comply with legal requirements for maintaining confidentiality in healthcare	X	X	X	X	X
Store and retrieve information using a filing system	X	X	X	X	X
Contribute to the effectiveness of teams	X	X	X	X	X
Develop and sustain productive working relationships with colleagues			X	X	X
Use digital communications	X	X	X	X	X
Implement and evaluate change					X

In addition to the core competences identified at each Career Framework Level above, a number of role specific competences have been identified for each of the roles initially developed for the Clinical Homecare Career Framework.

Appendix 1: Bibliography

- [Career Framework for Health](#)
Skills for Health, 2010
- [Multi-professional framework for advanced clinical practice in England](#)
NHS England, 2017
- [The Principles of Enhanced Level Practice](#)
Alson Leary, June 2022
- [Core Capabilities Framework for Advanced Clinical Practice \(Nurses\) Working in General Practice/Primary Care in England](#)
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- [Primary Care & General Practice Nursing Career & Competence Framework](#)
Health Education England, NHS England/NHS Improvement & Skills for Health, November 2021
- [Care closer to home The role of clinical homecare in the revolution of patient care](#)
Future Health, March 2022
- [Virtual Ward and Urgent Community Response Capabilities Framework](#)
NHS England, Skills for Health, September 2022
- [Homecare medicines services: an opportunity lost](#)
House of Lords Public Services Committee, November 2023
- [Career Pathway, Core Cancer Capabilities and Education Framework](#)
Health Education England, January 2023
- [Professional Standards for Homecare Services](#)
Royal Pharmaceutical Society, 2024
- [Best kept secret: The Value of Clinical Homecare to The NHS, Patients and Society](#)
National Clinical Homecare Association, July 2024

NICE Guidelines

- [Nutrition support for adults: oral nutrition support, enteral tube feeding and parenteral nutrition](#)
- [BNF/NICE guidance on intravenous infusions](#)
- [Pressure ulcers: prevention and management](#)

Appendix 2: How the Framework was developed

Development of the Clinical Homecare Career and Competence Framework was guided by an expert reference group comprised of key stakeholders representing clinicians, pharmacists, providers of homecare clinical services, managers and educators.

A wider stakeholder group was also established whereby individuals wishing to keep abreast of the development of the framework were invited to register their interest via a project information web page on the Skills for Health website. The creation of this group enabled a more diverse range of organisations and individuals to participate in the development of the Framework through providing comments or feedback as part of the on-line consultation process.

Preliminary desk research was undertaken to identify key references, resources,(see Appendix 1 Bibliography) and significant themes and issues.

Initial iterations of the Framework were developed based on the findings of the desk research and work with the expert reference group. In January 2025, a wider on-line consultation survey was conducted with a total of 99 respondents.

Based on the analysis of the consultation feedback, further amendments and refinements to the Framework were undertaken and presented at the final meeting of the expert reference group in March 2025.

The logo consists of a white rounded square with the text "Skills for Health" inside. "Skills for" is in a dark blue sans-serif font, and "Health" is in a bold, dark blue sans-serif font.

Skills for
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