



VOLUNTARY REGISTRATION COUNCIL

STANDARDS OF PROFICIENCY FOR CRITICAL CARE TECHNOLOGISTS

INTRODUCTION

This document sets out the standards of proficiency for safe and effective practice that VRC expects registrants to meet. VRC also expects registrants to maintain our standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

The standards of proficiency in this document are generic which all of our registrants must meet. Profession specific elements are also included. There is no other difference between the generic and profession specific elements of the standards and VRC will treat any breach of standards seriously.

The generic standards outline the key obligations that we expect of registrants. Occasionally, we have pointed out specific elements of those key obligations. We have not attempted to create exhaustive lists of all the areas each generic standard covers; we have simply highlighted specific elements where we think this will help you to understand what is required of you.

A NOTE ABOUT OUR EXPECTATIONS OF YOU

The standards of proficiency play a central role in how you can gain admission to, and remain on, the Register. Therefore we expect you to be able to meet these standards. We do however recognise that your practice will develop over time and that the practice of experienced registrants frequently becomes more focused and specialised than that of newly registered colleagues, because it relates to a particular client group, practice environment, employment sector or occupational role. Your particular scope of practice may mean that you are unable to demonstrate that you meet all of the standards that apply to your profession. For instance, if you only work with adults, then any standards that relate to how you must work with children will not apply to your day to day work. So long as you stay within your scope of practice and make reasonable efforts to stay up to date with the whole of these standards, this will not be problematic. However, if you want to move outside of your scope of practice you must be certain that you are capable of working safely and effectively, including taking any training that may be necessary. We can and will investigate if we have good reason to believe that you might not be meeting the standards.

THESE STANDARDS MAY CHANGE

We keep these standards under constant review, and we will update them to take into account changes in practice in the professions we regulate. We will ensure that changes are published via our website.

SUMMARY OF THE STANDARDS

EXPECTATIONS OF A HEALTH PROFESSIONAL

1a: Professional autonomy and accountability

Registrant Critical Care Technologist must:

- 1a.1 be able to practise within the legal and ethical boundaries of their profession
- understand what is required of them by the Health Professions Council
 - understand the need to respect, and so far as possible uphold, the rights, dignity and autonomy of every patient, client and user including their role in the diagnostic and therapeutic process
- 1a.2 be able to practise in a non-discriminatory manner
- 1a.3 be able to maintain confidentiality and obtain informed consent
- 1a.4 be able to exercise a professional duty of care
- 1a.5 know the limits of their practice and when to seek advice
- be able to assess a situation, determine the nature and severity of the problem and call upon the required knowledge and experience to deal with the problem
 - be able to initiate resolution of problems and be able to exercise personal initiative
- 1a.6 recognise the need for effective self-management of workload and be able to practise accordingly
- 1a.7 understand the obligation to maintain fitness to practise
- understand the importance of caring for themselves, including maintaining their health
- 1a.8 understand the need for career-long self-directed learning

1b: Professional relationships

Registrant Critical Care Technologists must:

- 1b.1 know the professional and personal scope of their practice and be able to make referrals
- be able to recognise the limits of personal practice and know when to seek advice
- 1b.2 be able to work, where appropriate, in partnership with other professionals, support staff, patients, clients and users, and their relatives and carers
- understand the need to build and sustain professional relationships as both an independent practitioner and collaboratively as a member of a team
 - understand the need to engage patients, clients, users and carers in planning and evaluating care
 - be able to respond appropriately to enquiries regarding the service provided
- 1b.3 be able to contribute effectively to work undertaken as part of a multi-disciplinary team
- 1b.4 be able to demonstrate effective and appropriate skills in communicating information, advice, instruction and professional opinion to colleagues, patients, clients, users, their relatives and carers
- be able to communicate in English to the standard equivalent to level 7 of the International English Language Testing System, with no element below 6.5

- understand how communication skills affect the assessment of patients, clients and users, and how the means of communication should be modified to address and take account of factors such as age, physical and learning disability
 - be able to select, move between and use appropriate forms of verbal and non-verbal communication with patients, clients, users and others
 - be aware of the characteristics and consequences of non-verbal communication and how this can be affected by culture, age, ethnicity, gender, religious beliefs and socio-economic status
 - understand the need to provide patients, clients and users (or people acting on their behalf) with the information necessary to enable them to make informed decisions
 - understand the need to use an appropriate interpreter to assist patients whose first language is not English, wherever possible
 - recognise that relationships with patients, clients and users should be based on mutual respect and trust, and be able to maintain high standards of care even in situations of personal incompatibility
 - be able to communicate with a range of other professionals as appropriate
- 1b.5 understand the need for effective communication throughout the care of the patient, client or user
- recognise the need to use interpersonal skills to encourage the active participation of patients, clients and users
 - be able to communicate the outcome of problem solving and research and development activities
 - be able to communicate technical material, and contribute to the communication of scientific material

THE SKILLS REQUIRED FOR THE APPLICATION OF PRACTICE

2a: Identification and assessment of health and social care needs Registrant Critical Care Technologists must:

- 2a.1 be able to gather appropriate information
- 2a.2 be able to use appropriate assessment techniques
- be able to undertake and record a thorough, sensitive and detailed assessment, using appropriate techniques and equipment
- 2a.3 be able to undertake or arrange clinical investigations as appropriate
- 2a.4 be able to analyse and evaluate the information collected

2b: Formulation and delivery of plans and strategies for meeting health and social care needs - Registrant Critical Care Technologists must:

- 2b.1 be able to use research, reasoning and problem solving skills (and, in the case of clinical scientists, conduct fundamental research)
- recognise the value of research to the systematic evaluation of practice
 - be able to conduct evidence-based practice, evaluate practice systematically, and participate in audit procedures
 - be aware of methods commonly used in health and social care research
 - be able to demonstrate a logical and systematic approach to problem solving
 - be able to evaluate research and other evidence to inform their own practice
 - be able to interpret data
 - be able to obtain knowledge from relevant sources
 - be able to read, collate and appraise information

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- be able to support the aims and objectives associated with a project
 - be able to perform the required research and development work
 - be able to communicate technical material, and contribute to the communication of scientific material
 - be able to accurately collate and present results – both spoken and written
- 2b.2 be able to draw on appropriate knowledge and skills in order to make professional judgements
- be able to change their practice as needed to take account of new developments
 - be able to demonstrate a level of skill in the use of information technology appropriate to their profession
- 2b.3 be able to formulate specific and appropriate management plans including the setting of timescales
- understand the requirement to adapt practice to meet the needs of different client groups distinguished by, for example, physical, psychological, environmental, cultural or socio-economic factors
- 2b.4 be able to conduct appropriate diagnostic or monitoring procedures, treatment, therapy or other actions safely and skilfully
- understand the need to maintain the safety of both patients, clients and users, and those involved in their care
 - be able to perform a range of techniques employed in the modality
 - understand the need to conform to standard operating procedures and conditions
 - understand the need to work with accuracy and precision
 - be able to solve problems that may arise during the routine application of techniques (troubleshooting)
 - be able to implement an investigation strategy
- 2b.5 be able to maintain records appropriately
- be able to keep accurate, legible records and recognise the need to handle these records and all other clinical information in accordance with applicable legislation, protocols and guidelines
 - understand the need to use only accepted terminology (which includes abbreviations) in making clinical records

2c: Critical evaluation of the impact of, or response to, the registrant's actions
Registrant Critical Care Technologists must:

- 2c.1 be able to monitor and review the ongoing effectiveness of planned activity and modify it accordingly
- be able to gather information, including qualitative and quantitative data, that help to evaluate the responses of patients, clients and users to their care
 - be able to evaluate management plans against treatment milestones using recognised health outcome measures and revise the plans as necessary in conjunction with the patient, client or user
 - recognise the need to monitor and evaluate the quality of practice and the value of contributing to the generation of data for quality assurance and improvement programmes
 - be able to make reasoned decisions to initiate, continue, modify or cease treatment or the use of techniques or procedures, and record the decisions and reasoning appropriately
 - understand that outcomes may not always conform to expectations but may still meet the needs of patients, clients or users
 - be able to make judgements on the effectiveness of procedures
 - be able to use quality control and quality assurance techniques, including restorative action when performance deteriorates

- 2c.2 be able to audit, reflect on and review practice
- understand the principles of quality control and quality assurance
 - be aware of the role of audit and review in quality management, including quality control, quality assurance and the use of appropriate outcome measures
 - be able to maintain an effective audit trail and work towards continual improvement
 - participate in quality assurance programmes, where appropriate
 - understand the value of reflection on clinical practice and the need to record the outcome of such reflection
 - recognise the value of case conferences and other methods of review
 - understand the principles of clinical governance including clinical audit, accreditation requirements relevant to the modality and the importance of confidentiality, informed consent and data security
 - understand the importance of participating in accreditation systems related to the modality
 - recognise the need to be aware of emerging technologies and new developments

KNOWLEDGE, UNDERSTANDING AND SKILLS

3a: Registrant Critical Care Technologists must:

- 3a.1 know the key concepts of the biological, physical, social, psychological and clinical sciences, which are relevant to their profession-specific practice
- understand the structure and function of the human body, relevant to their practice, together with a knowledge of health, disease, disorder and dysfunction
 - be aware of the principles and applications of scientific enquiry, including the evaluation of treatment efficacy and the research process
 - recognise the role of other professions in health and social care
 - understand the theoretical basis of, and the variety of approaches to, assessment and intervention
 - understand the relevant aspects of the science that underpins the specialty (modality)
 - be aware of the main sequential stages of normal development, including cognitive, emotional and social measures of maturation through the human life span
 - understand the aspects of psychology and sociology that are fundamental to the technologist's role in developing and maintaining effective working relationships
 - understand normal and altered anatomy and physiology through the human life span
 - recognise disease and trauma processes, and how they apply this knowledge to the treatment of the critically ill patient
 - understand relevant physiological parameters and how to interpret changes from the norm
 - understand how to store, issue, prepare and administer prescribed drugs to patients, and monitor the effects of drugs on patients
 - know the types, properties, function, effect and contra-indications of the drugs, gases, liquids and solutions commonly used within critical care
 - understand the principles underpinning the safe and effective utilisation of equipment that is used for diagnostic, monitoring or therapeutic purposes in critical care
 - understand the principles and practices of the management of clinical emergencies
- 3a.2 know how professional principles are expressed and translated into action through a number of different diagnostic, monitoring, treatment and management approaches and how to select or modify approaches to meet the needs of an individual
- be able to apply the knowledge base to the specialty (modality) and to the range of procedures/investigations available
 - understand the clinical applications of his/her specialty and the consequences that may result from investigations
 - be aware of the evidence base that underpins the use of the procedures employed by the service

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- understand the principles associated with a range of techniques employed in the specialty (modality)
- know the standards of practice expected from these techniques

3a.3 understand the need to establish and maintain a safe practice environment

- be aware of applicable health and safety legislation, and any relevant safety policies and procedures in force at the workplace, such as incident reporting, and be able to act in accordance with these
- be able to work safely, including being able to select appropriate hazard control and risk management, reduction or elimination techniques in a safe manner in accordance with health and safety legislation
- be able to select appropriate personal protective equipment and use it correctly
- be able to establish safe environments for clinical practice, which minimise risks to patients, clients and users, those treating them, and others, including the use of hazard control and particularly infection control
- understand sources of hazard in the workplace, including specimens, raw materials, clinical waste and equipment
- be aware of immunisation requirements and the role of occupational health
- know the correct principles and applications of disinfectants, methods for sterilisation and decontamination and dealing with waste and spillages correctly
- understand and be able to apply appropriate moving and handling techniques