2. A COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

2.1 What is a competency framework?

Competence is the ability to carry out a job or task. A competency is a quality, characteristic or attribute of a person which is related to adequate, effective or superior performance. Competencies can be described as a combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values. Competencies help individuals (and their managers) look at how they do their jobs. Development of competencies should help individuals to continually improve their performance and to work more effectively.

"Competency frameworks are extremely flexible tools which can be used to support a wide range of activities"

A competency framework is a collection of those competencies thought to be central to effective performance. Competency frameworks are extremely flexible tools which can be used to support a wide range of activities. Typically they are used to help with:

- Education, training and professional development
- Performance review
- Recruitment

This section provides a framework of competencies which, if acquired and maintained, should help individuals and teams to effectively manage and support medication adherence with patients. The framework is best used as a starting point for discussion of competencies required by individuals or teams. The competency framework contains eight competencies (listening, communicating, context, knowledge, understanding, exploring, deciding, supporting). Each of the eight competencies has:

- An overarching statement which gives a general indication of what the competency is about
- A number of statements which are a guide to how individuals who have that competency will be behaving in practice

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"The framework is best used as a starting point for discussion of competencies required by individuals or teams"

For ease of reference these eight competencies have been grouped into two areas, as illustrated below.

2.2 Who can use this competency framework?

This framework was principally developed for the professions of medication, pharmacy and nursing, although it will also be of relevance to other health professions that are involved in medication adherence. Specifically, it can be used by:

Education and training providers

- In the initial education of health professionals and in competency-led postgraduate training programmes
- To provide training linked to service provision
- To provide the link between training and practice

Individual students and health professionals

- To assess own performance and identify gaps in knowledge and skills
- To identify education, training and professional development needs
- To demonstrate requirements for service delivery

Employers

- As an aid to appraisals and setting personal development plans
- To provide opportunities for employers to work collaboratively to deliver training for staff
- To support retention and recruitment

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Commissioners

- To set standards and monitor service delivery
- To provide a framework for accreditation of health professionals for service delivery
- To identify and remedy poor performance

2.3 How to use the framework

- The bullet pointed statements in each competency should be read one after another DOWN the list, NOT across competency boxes

- This framework can be used by ALL healthcare professionals involved in managing and supporting medication adherence with patients, regardless of professional background or employing organization

- Where this document refers to patients, it is important that the health professional also considers the role of family members, carers and advocates

- Some of the statements supporting the competencies will be more relevant in some consultations than others

- It should be recognized that the effects or consequences of medication non-adherence will vary according to the patient, the symptoms / illness and the medication

- The framework should be used as a starting point for discussion about the competencies required by healthcare professionals

- Initially, using this framework effectively will take time. How each of the statements supporting the competencies applies to an individual, or a team, must be considered

- When considering these statements, be aware that some are more complex than others. Expect to spend more time on the more complex statements

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A competency framework for managing and supporting medication adherence with patients - Overview

COMMUNICATING WITH PATIENTS ABOUT MEDICINES	
❶ **LISTENING** *Listens actively to patients*	❷ **COMMUNICATING** *Helps patients to interpret information in a way that is meaningful to them*
❸ **CONTEXT** *With the patient, defines and agrees the purpose of the consultation*	❹ **KNOWLEDGE** *Has up-to-date knowledge of area of practice and wider health and social services*
MANAGING AND SUPPORTING MEDICATION ADHERENCE	
❺ **UNDERSTANDING** *Recognises that the patient is an individual*	❻ **EXPLORING** *Discusses illness and treatment options, including no treatment*
❼ **DECIDING** *Decides with the patient the best management strategy*	❽ **SUPPORTING** *Supports the patient with medication-taking*

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2.4 The competency framework for managing and supporting medication adherence with patients

COMMUNICATING WITH PATIENTS ABOUT MEDICINES	
1. LISTENING ***Listens actively to the patient***	**2. COMMUNICATING** ***Helps patients to interpret information in a way that is meaningful to them***
1. Helps patients feel at ease and feel that you have time for them 2. Gives the patient the opportunity to express their views 3. Listens to the patient's views and discusses any concerns 4. Encourages the patient to ask questions about their condition 5. Allows time for questions 6. Treats the patient as an equal partner 7. Respects diversity 8. Expresses willingness to be flexible	1. Identifies barriers to communication and responds appropriately 2. Shares knowledge and information in a way that the patient understands 3. Explores and confirms the patient's understanding 4. Checks own understanding of the patient's viewpoint 5. Uses aids to help understanding (e.g. decision aids and question prompts) 6. Recognises the importance of non verbal communication and responds appropriately 7. Uses questions to elicit information 8. Maintains appropriate eye contact 9. Displays a non judgemental attitude
3. CONTEXT ***With the patient, defines and agrees the purpose of the consultation***	**4. KNOWLEDGE** ***Has up-to-date knowledge of area of practice and wider health and social services***
1. Reviews patient information prior to the consultation 2. Introduces and explains own role 3. Establishes how involved the patient wants to be in decisions about their treatment 4. Clarifies the timing, boundaries and expectations of the consultation 5. Ensures that the consultation takes place in an appropriate setting and minimises interruptions 6. Keeps focused on the agreed aims of the consultation	1. Knows own limitations 2. Maintains up-to-date professional knowledge and skills appropriate to own role 3. Knows when and how to seek further advice 4. Refers on to other health professionals and social services as required or as requested 5. Works in partnership with colleagues 6. Shares up-to-date information with patients about specialist support and community resources 7. Is aware of practical resources to help patients
▪ Managing and supporting medication adherence with patients may also involve others, e.g. family members, carers and advocates ▪ Health professionals clearly need a wide and variable range of competencies in their consultations with patients. This framework concentrates on the competencies that any health professional might need when engaging with patients in managing and supporting medication adherence and should be used in conjunction with other professional and organisational frameworks	

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MANAGING AND SUPPORTING MEDICATION ADHERENCE	
5. UNDERSTANDING ***Recognises that the patient is an individual***	**6. EXPLORING** ***Discusses illness and treatment options, including no treatment***
1. Seeks to understand the patient's current circumstances and previous experiences (including, for example, age, gender, disability, mental health, lifestyle, health literacy and socioeconomic status) that may impact on treatment 2. Is aware of whether the patient's cultural, religious or societal beliefs impact on treatment 3. Explores what the patient thinks about medication in general 4. Respects the patient's expertise and knowledge of their condition	1. Explores what the patient has been doing to deal with symptoms / illness and what the patient understands about their treatment 2. Discusses with the patient their expectations and concerns about their illness and treatment 3. Provides full, accurate and understandable information about the patient's symptoms / illness and the benefits, effects, risks (e.g. side effects) and uncertainty of all treatment options 4. Discusses prognosis and likely health outcomes 5. Establishes whether the health professional and the patient have similar or different views about the patient's symptoms / illness 6. Discusses any misunderstandings about illness or treatments 7. Encourages the patient to express positive and negative views about treatment and no treatment options
7. DECIDING ***Decides with the patient the best management strategy***	**8. SUPPORTING** ***Supports the patient with medication-taking***
1. Discusses the patient's preferred option for treatment, negotiates treatment goals and decisions, but accepts the patient's final decision 2. Gives the patient time to consider the information before making a decision, if appropriate 3. Maintains appropriate professional records about decisions that are made and their outcomes 4. Explores the patient's ability to undertake the agreed plan 5. Checks that the patient knows what medication they are taking and why 6. Discusses when treatment will be reviewed (and what this entails), changed or stopped 7. Ensures that the patient knows what to do if their symptoms change, do not improve, or if a problem arises (e.g. a side effect)	1. Recognises non-adherence (identifies patients at risk of non-adherence, assesses patients' adherence, for example by asking if they have missed any doses of their medication, and recognises the effects of non-adherence) 2. Identifies reasons for / causes of non-adherence, and barriers to future adherence 3. Manages adherence by providing effective practical support where the patient needs / wants help with adherence 4. Supports patients by providing ongoing information and feedback (including encouraging patients to come back with any questions), and monitors adherence
▪ Managing and supporting medication adherence with patients may also involve others, e.g. family members, carers and advocates ▪ Health professionals clearly need a wide and variable range of competencies in their consultations with patients. This framework concentrates on the competencies that any health professional might need when engaging with patients in managing and supporting medication adherence and should be used in conjunction with other professional and organisational frameworks	

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