

YOUTH HEALTH + COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

Working with young people
to address their health needs.

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Technical Working Group

A Technical Working Group was formed to oversee the project and provided invaluable expertise, guidance, advice and peer review. The Technical Working Group consisted of a range of youth health experts, including:

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Expert groups

The following expert groups were consulted and provided invaluable expertise, feedback and advice on development of the document.

Youth Health and Wellbeing Advisory Group – a forum for information exchange and strategic and independent advice to NSW Kids and Families on the development, prioritisation and implementation of evidence-based youth health policies and programs. Members include NSW Kids and Families, government agencies, the non-government sector, academia, business sector, and community and carer organisations with relevant expertise in youth health across a range of specialist areas.

NSW Youth Health Coordination Group – a representation from Local Health Districts (LHDs) and Specialty Health Networks (SHNs) across NSW.

NSW Youth Health Council – a professional forum committed to improving the health and wellbeing of young people across NSW, open to all youth health-related organisations in NSW.

Youth Forums – young people were consulted to validate the competencies through two forums organised by:

- Youth Solutions (Campbelltown)
- Glebe Youth Service

Statewide consultations

The development of this *Competency Framework* was also informed by the state-wide consultations undertaken by Kerri Allwood to complete the NSW Kids and Families report: *Building the Health Workforce Capacity on Youth Health Scoping Study (2014)*. Consultations included youth health researchers, youth health clinicians, researchers, health service providers, and training and resource providers.

Acronyms used in this report

CAMHS	NSW Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, NSW Ministry of Health
Competency Framework	NSW Kids and Families, <i>Youth Health Competency Framework: working with young people to address their health needs</i>
Govt	Government
LHDs	Local Health Districts
NGO	Non-government organisations
WHO	World Health Organization

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FOREWORD

NSW Kids and Families has been providing leadership to the NSW Health system on youth health issues since its establishment in 2012. This leadership has been guided by the *NSW Youth Health Policy 2011-2016: Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds, Vibrant Futures* (NSW Health 2010), which focuses on building the capacity of the health workforce on adolescent health issues and youth friendly practice. *Healthy, Safe and Well: A Strategic Health Plan for Children, Young People and Families 2014 - 24* (NSW Kids and Families 2014) also provides direction on prevention and early intervention, addressing risk behaviours in young people, and improving the coordination of care.

With these key guiding documents, the NSW Kids and Families Youth Health and Wellbeing Team has been partnering with key stakeholders to champion outstanding health, wellbeing and healthcare initiatives for young people and their families, and to reduce the negative health impacts of sexual, domestic and family violence, child abuse and neglect.

As clinicians and health workers, we acquire the skills to communicate with young people and manage their emerging issues in a variety of ways, sometimes through formal education, at other times through training in the workplace or even through many years of working with young people. All of these pathways to expertise are valid.

This *Youth Health Competency Framework* provides a key to identifying the essential skills and knowledge required to effectively communicate with young people and manage the often challenging issues which can emerge, from developmental and psychosocial factors to medico-legal issues and risk-taking behaviours.

In developing the *Youth Health Competency Framework*, NSW Kids and Families reviewed relevant literature, resources and current evidence, and extensively consulted with health professionals, young people, youth health researchers, and training providers across NSW.

The *Competency Framework* is based on a range of evidenced-based resources developed by youth health experts¹. It has also been endorsed by the Youth Health and Wellbeing Advisory Group to NSW Kids and Families.

I recommend this *Youth Health Competency Framework* to you as a resource for supporting workers to optimally engage with young people and better address their health needs, concerns and issues. It can also be applied to your workforce training and recruitment needs.

**Clinical Professor David Bennett AO**

Senior Clinical Advisor, Youth Health and Wellbeing, NSW Kids and Families

¹ This includes a recent Lancet Series on Adolescent Health (The Lancet, vol. 379, April 28, 2012, www.thelancet.com/series/adolescent-health-2012) which summarises the evidence base for action to promote and protect youth health and the WHO report (World Health Organisation 2014) on adolescent health: *Health for the world's adolescents*, which outlines the need for a specific response to adolescent health needs.

PART 1 – APPLYING THIS COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

About the Youth Health Competency Framework

A competency framework is a structure to identify the values, attitudes, skills and knowledge required by individuals and teams within an organisation to undertake their work at an optimum level.

The *Youth Health Competency Framework* defines the key competencies applicable to clinicians, health professionals, health workers and frontline staff involved in service delivery to young people within the NSW Health system and related health services, including non-government and private services. Consistent with the *NSW Youth Health Policy*, the term ‘young people’ refers to young people aged 12 to 24.

Four levels of youth health competency have been identified:

- Universal competencies
- Core management competencies
- Advanced intervention competencies
- Specialist competencies

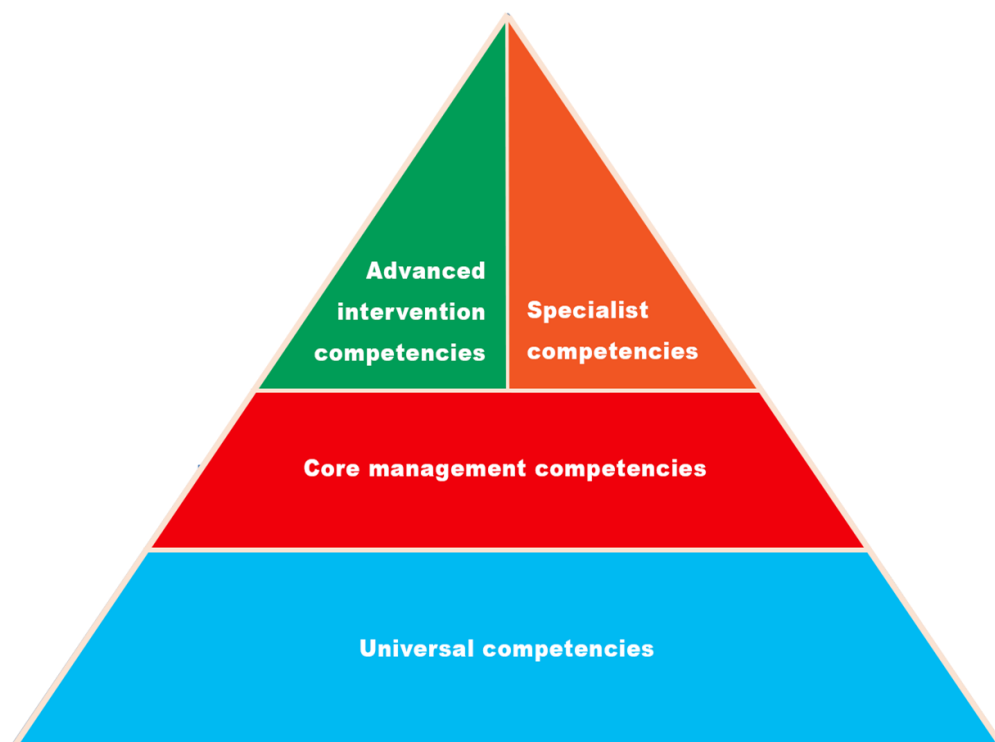
The *Competency Framework* provides a comprehensive description of the first two levels of competency (the universal and core competencies) which have been identified as essential for all health service providers delivering services to young people.

The *Competency Framework* has been endorsed by key youth health experts. The evidence-base and underpinning principles for these guidelines are outlined, together with issues relevant to the implementation of the competency framework.

Competency Levels

The diagram below represents the **four levels** of competency recognised by NSW Kids and Families. However this *Competency Framework* is aimed at **defining only the two levels** of competencies required by all health service providers coming into contact with young people – that is the **universal** (coloured blue) and **core management** (coloured red) competencies.

Definition of ‘competencies’
“The essential **values, attitudes, knowledge and skills** required by those who provide health services for young people to deliver accessible and high quality health care for young people”.



Universal and core competencies

Across NSW, a wide range of health services, non-government organisations, teams, and workers in various roles and disciplines come into contact with young people along the referral and service delivery pathway.

The **universal and core competencies** are considered to be a guide to **optimal standards of practice** applicable across all services, teams, and individuals working with young people within NSW health services.

These universal and core competencies establish a guideline for a **best practice standard of competency** applicable across all health workers.

The focus of this *Competency Framework* is on competencies that can be developed by individuals, and is not intended to provide an organisational or service level framework: this is addressed in the *Youth Health Better Practice Framework* guidelines (NSW CAAH 2011).

Note: *The Competency Framework does not define the advanced or specialist competencies required by clinicians, health professionals and health workers delivering services to young people within specialist areas (e.g. mental health, sexual health, chronic conditions), or those providing case management, counselling services, or clinical interventions and treatments. These advanced or specialist practice standards, guidelines and competencies are addressed by a range of specialist health services and training providers with expertise in these areas.*

Target Group

The *Competency Framework* is designed to provide the **universal and core competencies** relevant to all health professionals, health workers, clinicians, frontline staff, managers and supervisors providing health services to young people in both non-government organisation and NSW Health services.

Guiding Principles

The principles that underpin this *Competency Framework* are aligned with those identified as fundamental to providing accessible and high-quality health services for young people by the World Health Organisation (2014), in the *NSW Youth Health Policy 2011-2016* and the *Charter of Rights for Children and Young People in Healthcare*.

- Young people should be viewed holistically within the context of their family, culture, society and environment.
- Adolescence is a unique life stage, characterised by bio-psychosocial developmental changes that can offer protection as well as risk.
- The diversity of young people needs to be understood, respected and celebrated
- Young people have a right to accessible, age-appropriate, non-judgemental and confidential care that promotes their health and wellbeing and keeps them safe from harm.
- Healthcare professionals should work in partnership with young people, especially those who are most vulnerable and marginalised, to support them to navigate the health system and make informed decisions about their health.
- A life-course approach which includes addressing health concerns as early as possible should be taken to influence future health risk and life opportunities.

What young people are saying...

“If you get to know me then you’ll know my risks” (12-year-old female)

“Explain everything to me so I understand what’s happening” (16-year-old female)

Implementing the Competency Framework

The *Competency Framework* should be seen as an adjunct to the work processes, professional development and recruitment planning that already exist in your health facility or practice. The *Competency Framework* can be used to support planning, identify gaps in training or provide key competencies that can be used during recruitment.

It is recognised that some of these competencies may be more relevant than others, depending on the person's role (eg. government policy makers, health service managers, professionals, health workers, supervisors and training providers). Also the level and depth of training or development required to develop competencies will vary depending on the person's role, experience, and professional background.

This *Competency Framework* does not replace other existing guidelines, recommendations and frameworks, such as the CAMHS Competency Framework (2011).

How to use the Competency Framework

The *Competency Framework* may be used to underpin these activities²:

- Developing training programs and resources
- Planning professional development activities
- Informing clinical and professional supervision and mentoring
- Developing quality standards of practice
- Defining expectations in staff performance review
- Guiding selection criteria in recruitment
- Developing team standards, practices and processes
- Complementing discipline specific professional practice standards

The implementation of this *Competency Framework* requires commitment to improving services to young people by identifying the desired outcomes and targeting the the most relevant competencies needed to achieve these outcomes.

Role of managers

It is recommended that managers create a learning environment and support reflective practice, collaborating with teams and individuals to develop tools and processes to review competence in working with young people, assess current capability, identify performance criteria, and implement a competence development plan to address gaps.

Role of trainers

Trainers providing youth health training and professional development activities should:

- Have expert knowledge of youth health issues
- Assess the learner's needs
- Tailor activities to the learner's current level of competency
- Develop relevant knowledge and skill development activities to address needs.

How trainers integrate a particular competency will depend on the learner's stage of development, experience, role responsibility and service setting.

Role of service team

Each unit or team providing services to young people could use this *Competency Framework* by:

- Integrating a youth health competency review process into the service professional learning and development systems to identify individual and/or team competency gaps

² Adapted from CAMHS Competency Framework 2011

- Developing and implementing tailored competency development plans to address professional training and development needs of individuals and/or teams, and evaluate outcomes (refer to Appendix 1).

How and why the Competency Framework was developed

The need for a NSW Youth Health Competency Framework was based on the outcomes of:

- A review of relevant literature, resources and current evidence base on youth health workforce development
- Consultation with youth health researchers, experts, health service providers, and training and resource providers

The *NSW Kids and Families: Youth Health Resource Kit* (NSW Kids and Families 2014) was the prime resource used to develop the universal and core competencies required by all health professionals who work with young people across diverse government and non-government health services.

What young people are saying...

“Don’t make assumptions about my family or risks because I’m black”
(16-year-old female)

“Don’t just refer me on, help me understand what my options are”
(17-year-old male)

Evidence Base for Youth Health Competencies

The *Youth Health Resource Kit* and *Competency Framework* are informed by the following evidence base.

- The period of adolescence is a developmental phase which offers unique opportunities to promote health and wellbeing (World Health Organisation 2014). Adolescents negotiate developmental tasks including the development of independence which inform health service provision.
- The determinants of youth health are multifaceted and a holistic approach is needed to youth health care. Multidisciplinary care and multisectoral responses are typically required (Sawyer *et al.* 2012; Kang & Sancu 2013).
- Youth mortality and morbidity arise predominantly from health risk behaviours. Health service providers therefore need to engage with young people and enquire into health risk behaviours, or potentially lose opportunities to promote health or provide early intervention (Kang & Sancu 2013; Resnick *et al.* 2012).
- Young people are often inexperienced in dealing with their health and health care systems. Health care service providers need to make their services accessible to young people, otherwise young people will miss out on appropriate health care (Kang & Sancu 2013).
- Young people should be involved in their health care and in health service planning (Sawyer *et al.* 2012).
- Many of the causes of mortality and morbidity in later life have their roots in health risk behaviours that start or are consolidated in the adolescent life stage (Resnick *et al.* 2012, p. 1565).
- New technologies offer opportunities for improving health and health care for young people (Sawyer *et al.* 2012).
- The HEEDSSS screening tool provides a guide to a comprehensive psychosocial assessment of the young person (Klein, Goldenring & Adelman 2014)

PART 2 – THE YOUTH HEALTH COMPETENCIES

The Youth Health Competency Framework at a Glance

Level	Youth Health Competencies (values, attitudes, knowledge, skills)	Target	Framework inclusions
UNIVERSAL & CORE			
Universal competencies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand young people’s development and health needs 2. Effective communication and engagement 3. Confidentiality, privacy and safety 4. Cultural diversity and culturally competent practice 5. Working with Aboriginal young people 6. Create accessible, youth friendly services 	Required by all clinicians, health professionals and health workers, including frontline staff, who come into contact with young people as part of their role in health service delivery.	Defined in the framework
Core management competencies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Conduct a psychosocial (HEEADSSS) assessment 8. Identify and respond to risk and protective factors 9. Medico-legal and child protection issues 10. Navigate service referral pathways and collaborative care 	Required by all clinicians, health professionals and health workers who are responsible for assessing risk, and delivering health services to young people.	
ADVANCED & SPECIALIST			
Advanced intervention competencies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collaborative management 2. Intervention skills (e.g. Motivational Interviewing) 3. Health promotion and education for behaviour change 4. Trauma informed practice 5. Family interventions 6. Group Work 	Required by clinicians and health professionals responsible for delivering health services involving case management, behaviour change interventions and counselling.	Not defined in the framework
Specialist competencies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Specialist assessment for specific health issues 2. Specialist interventions for specific health issues 	Required by clinicians and health professionals trained to deliver specialised health services (e.g. chronic conditions, eating disorders, disability, sexual health, mental health, AOD etc).	

1. UNIVERSAL COMPETENCIES

The following competencies are applicable to all clinicians, health professionals, health workers and frontline staff involved in service delivery to young people within NSW health and related service providers, including NGO health services.

1. Understand young people's development and health needs

All health service providers should demonstrate competence in these key areas.

- 1.1 Understand the developmental stages that young people move through, and the related physical, psychosocial, cognitive, social and behavioural changes experienced.
- 1.2 Understand the unique set of health and psychosocial concerns and needs a young person experiences as they move through the bio-psychosocial developmental stages.
- 1.3 Recognise the strengths, resilience, and the emotional, creative and interpersonal competencies emerging during adolescence.
- 1.4 Recognise the normal risk-taking behaviours that young people engage in as part of the developmental stages which assist to build identity and independence.
- 1.5 Understand how changes related to adolescent development influence risk-taking behaviours, impulse control, emotional regulation and decision-making.
- 1.6 Recognise how the developing brain is affected by experiences of trauma, abuse and neglect, and the long term impact of these issues on the young person.
- 1.7 Identify the main health issues, and the positive and negative health trends impacting on the health and wellbeing of young people (*e.g. mental health, alcohol and other drugs use, injuries and deaths, other health risk and protective factors*).
- 1.8 Identify the young people at higher risk of psychosocial and health conditions (*e.g. isolated, marginalised, neglected, traumatised, and socio-economically disadvantaged young people*).
- 1.9 Understand the need for non-judgemental, sensitive and responsive attitudes and interpersonal approaches to young people accessing health services, appropriate to their developmental stage.

2. Effective communication and engagement

All health service providers should demonstrate competence in these key areas.

- 2.1 Demonstrate awareness of the impact of the health provider's attitude, life experiences, approach and communication style, on the young person's engagement in the health service.
- 2.2 Apply a range of communication and engagement processes and mediums, appropriate to the young person's developmental stage, literacy levels, culture and capabilities.
- 2.3 Utilise a range of resources and services specifically targeting young people, or for young people from particular backgrounds, cultures and identities (e.g. CALD, Aboriginal, LGBTI).
- 2.4 Demonstrate developmentally appropriate communication and engagement skills, approaches and interventions to effectively work with, and support, young people in health service settings.
- 2.5 Demonstrate a range of rapport-building, active listening, interviewing and questioning approaches to gain the young person's trust, confidence and openness in discussing their health concerns.
- 2.6 Demonstrate skills in providing simple, clear information, explanations, guidance and advice about health matters to assist decision-making in response to a young person's health needs.
- 2.7 Demonstrate skills in participatory communication and working collaboratively with the young person in decision-making, and developing and delivering health treatment plans.
- 2.8 Understand the need for balancing communicating with, and involving the family / carers in decision-making, and respecting the young person's developing identity and independence.
- 2.9 Demonstrate skills in engaging, building and maintaining involvement in the health service of the young person and their family / carers, as appropriate to the young person's needs, developmental stage and culture.

3. Confidentiality, privacy and safety

All health service providers should demonstrate competence in these key areas.

- 3.1 Understand the concerns of young people seeking health care on issues relating to confidentiality, privacy and safety, including specific issues relevant to rural areas or small communities.
- 3.2 Understand the terminology and legal requirements applicable to the NSW health care system in relation to client rights, confidentiality, privacy, informed consent, child protection, and mandatory reporting issues, arising when working with young people.
- 3.3 Provide services in compliance with service policies and procedures and all state and commonwealth legislation in relation to child protection, mandatory reporting, confidentiality, privacy, informed consent, and maintenance and access to medical records.
- 3.4 Demonstrate skills in appropriately and sensitively interacting with the young person in the waiting room and public areas to maintain their privacy and confidentiality.
- 3.5 Demonstrate skills in discussing with the young person and their family / carers, informed consent, their rights, confidentiality and limitations, access to medical records, and the obligations of the health service.
- 3.6 Promote and maintain a service environment that protects the rights and safety of young people and their families / carers while receiving health services.
- 3.7 Understand the risks of critical incidents (threats of harm to self or others) and contributing factors, when working with vulnerable young people and their families.
- 3.8 Demonstrate appropriate interactions, maintaining professional boundaries and practice standards to ensure all clients, staff, service users and partners are protected from risks.
- 3.9 Demonstrate skills in assessing, managing, de-escalating, documenting and reporting critical incidents in compliance with service policies and procedures.

4. Cultural diversity and culturally competent practice

All health service providers should demonstrate competence in these key areas.

- 4.1 Understand the diversity of cultures, backgrounds, lifestyles, families and communities, and related expectations and experiences, which can impact on the wellbeing of young people (e.g. religion, gender, LGBTI, disability, migrant and refugee background).
- 4.2 Recognise the protective factors and challenges faced by young people coexisting within dual or multiple cultures or communities, and how this can impact on their development, identity and wellbeing.
- 4.3 Recognise the extent, limitation and impact of our understanding of cultural diversity on the young person, and how this is shaped by our own culture, values, assumptions, attitudes and beliefs.
- 4.4 Use developmentally appropriate approaches to explore and understand how the young person identifies culturally, and how their experiences within their culture, family, community, peers and background impacts on their psychosocial wellbeing.
- 4.5 Adopt a respectful and non-judgmental approach and demonstrate culturally sensitive communication and engagement skills when working with young people and their families from diverse backgrounds.
- 4.6 Provide accessible health care to young people by being responsive to diversity and consulting with appropriate services to aid implementation of culturally sensitive best practice, as recommended by relevant national, state and local guidelines, policies and frameworks.
- 4.7 Understand the specific needs, risks, and the impact on health and wellbeing for young people from a CALD background who have experienced trauma.
- 4.8 Respectfully ask and record information identifying the young person and their parent's cultural background, language spoken, and their specific needs to feel comfortable accessing the service (e.g. *concerns about using an interpreter, confidentiality in the community, gender of the doctor*).
- 4.9 Demonstrate cultural sensitivity, rapport and trust-building to manage balancing the young person's rights, and respecting cultural norms regarding their families / carers authority in decision-making.
- 4.10 Assess service access barriers arising due to the young person's cultural or diverse needs, and advocate and manage referrals to appropriate resources, advisors, interpreter services, and health services providers specialising in addressing the needs of the young person and their carers, as appropriate.

5. Working with Aboriginal young people

All health service providers should demonstrate competence in these key areas.

- 5.1 Understand the historical factors and exposure to psychosocial risks (*such as forced removal of children, discrimination, disadvantage and intergenerational trauma*) which profoundly impacts on engagement with health services and the poor health and wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal young people.
- 5.2 Understand the cultural underpinnings of the Aboriginal definition of health as physical, social, emotional and cultural wellbeing of the whole community in which the young person lives.
- 5.3 Recognise the diversity among Aboriginal people (*in language, culture, beliefs and practices*), consult with Aboriginal cultural advisors, and work within local cultural protocols to provide accessible services that are culturally respectful, informed and safe.
- 5.4 Identify the priority health needs of young Aboriginal people, and address barriers to accessing health services and resources, referring to Aboriginal-specific health services as appropriate to the young person's needs.
- 5.5 Demonstrate culturally sensitive and respectful communication, language and preferred terminology, and implement culturally specific practices as recommended in relevant national, state and local guidelines, policies and frameworks on working with Aboriginal young people.
- 5.6 Recognise assumptions made about Aboriginality, and demonstrate skills in respectfully collecting and recording information to identify Aboriginal status, aligned with current policy directives.
- 5.7 Demonstrate skill in taking time to build trust and rapport with young Aboriginal people who have lower levels of resilience and are engaging in higher risk-taking behaviours.
- 5.8 Demonstrate skills in working with Aboriginal young people and involving family / carers as appropriate, respecting the young person's needs and addressing their concerns about confidentiality within the community.
- 5.9 Identify and implement strategies that assist young Aboriginal people to reinforce protective factors, build resilience, make positive healthy choices, and strengthen their capacity to self-manage their health and wellbeing.
- 5.10 Implement multi-level strategies which build on cultural strengths to increase resilience and address the individual, environmental, community, social and interpersonal factors that impact on the young Aboriginal person's health and wellbeing.

6. Create accessible, youth friendly services

All health service providers should demonstrate competence in these key areas.

- 6.1 Understand the NSW health service system, Medicare, pharmaceutical and health costs, and referral pathways to local health service providers who specialise in working with young people.
- 6.2 Understand the psychosocial, physical, environmental and organisational systemic factors that can create challenges or barriers for a young person accessing health services, and support them to address these issues.
- 6.3 Initiate and implement practices in service delivery to address access barriers for young people (e.g. appointment system, service hours, costs, technology, service reception and environment, transport).
- 6.4 Utilise a range of media and technology to engage young people and increase access, provide information, advice, support and health promotion education.
- 6.5 Develop and implement service policies and procedures to address risks in the use of technology as a tool for service delivery for young people.
- 6.6 Demonstrate skills in conducting a service audit, for example by using the *Youth Health Better Practice Framework Checklist*, and actively promote the delivery of youth friendly services.
- 6.7 Develop a continuous quality improvement plan and implement and monitor strategies to address audit findings and service gaps to improve accessible, youth friendly services.
- 6.8 Include youth participation in service planning, evaluation feedback and quality improvement initiatives.
- 6.9 Utilise the health system referral networks and pathways to youth specific services, and access current evidenced-based resources to support delivery of best practice in youth friendly health services.

2. CORE MANAGEMENT COMPETENCIES

The following competencies are applicable to all clinicians, health professionals and health workers conducting assessments and delivering services to young people within NSW health and related service providers, including NGO health services.

7. Conduct a psychosocial (HEEADSSS*) assessment

All health service providers should demonstrate competence in these key areas.

- 7.1 Understand and utilise the HEEADSSS assessment as a systematic and comprehensive approach to assessing the young person's psychosocial status, health concerns, risks and protective factors.
- 7.2 Understand the HEEADSSS framework and major domains as a tool for developing a holistic picture of the young person's health and wellbeing, a profile of their psychosocial status, and the levels of risks and protective factors affecting their health and wellbeing.
- 7.3 Understand how to use the HEEADSSS assessment findings, applications and limitations, including appropriate strategies and interventions to reduce risk and strengthen protective factors.
- 7.4 Understand how to adapt the HEEADSSS assessment for young people with intellectual disability.
- 7.5 Demonstrate developmentally appropriate HEEADSSS assessment interview skills including engagement, appropriate questioning to elicit information, asking about sensitive issues, and responding to disclosure of specific issues (e.g. sexual or physical abuse).
- 7.6 Demonstrate developmentally appropriate HEEADSSS assessment intervention skills to follow-up the HEEADSSS assessment findings with the young person, including: providing feedback, involving them in decisions, and negotiating a management plan.
- 7.7 Demonstrate skills in working collaboratively with the young person to discuss areas of risks and strengths, and to set realistic treatment goals that fit with their health concerns, developmental stage and lifestyle.
- 7.8 Where appropriate, work collaboratively with the young person to decide the level of involvement of parents / carers, and provide guidance to parents / carers on how they can support the management plan, and respond to risk factors.

***Ref: The HEEADSSS psychosocial assessment interview for adolescents focuses on (Goldenring and Rosen 2004; Klein, Goldenring and Adelman 2014; YHRK section 3.2): Home environment, Education & employment, Eating & exercise, Activities & peer relationships, Drug use / cigarettes / alcohol, Sexuality, Suicide / depression, and Safety**

8. Identify and respond to risk and protective factors

All health service providers should demonstrate competence in these key areas.

- 8.1. Recognise how the young person's risk-taking behaviours, and psychosocial and environmental risk factors, correlate with long term adult health risk and outcomes.
- 8.2. Understand the protective factors which can mitigate the harm of risks, such as family, peers, school, community and cultural factors.
- 8.3. Understand the role of the service provider in routinely conducting psychosocial assessments, prevention and health promotion to reduce risk-taking behaviours and strengthening protective factors in young people.
- 8.4. Apply a range of screening and assessment strategies and tools to identify those risk-taking behaviours which may be considered a normal part of adolescent development, versus problematic risk-taking behaviours requiring intervention.
- 8.5. Identify risk-taking behaviours, risk of harm to self and others, and/or alcohol and other drug use, which may be an indicator of coexisting mental health problems requiring intervention.
- 8.6. Identify young people at high risk due to trauma, neglect or abuse, and apply a trauma informed approach.
- 8.7. Demonstrate rapport and trust-building skills, and an interactive approach to facilitate evidenced-based health promotion and behaviour change interventions (e.g. stages of change model), and apply a strengths-based approach to promote resilience.
- 8.8. Demonstrate skills in early assessment, intervention, prevention and health promotion education appropriate to the young person's health issue, risk status, developmental stage and capability to strengthen positive health choices, build resilience, and minimise the young person's health-risk behaviour.
- 8.9. Demonstrate skills in actively promoting behaviour change through raising awareness, anticipatory counselling, guided decision-making, and education to minimise risk and promote protective behaviours.
- 8.10. As appropriate to the young person, demonstrate skills in working with family, school and other key people, adopting a culturally sensitive approach to address risk factors and strengthen protective factors.

9. Medico-legal and child protection issues

All health service providers should demonstrate competence in these key areas.

- 9.1. Understand the medico-legal and child protection issues, and legal responsibilities which can arise when working with a young person, specific to the requirements of the service provider's profession and work role.
- 9.2. Identify consent issues arising in relation to specific medical treatment or health issues (*e.g. contraception, pregnancy terminations, sexual health, mental health*) and demonstrate skill in discussing these issues with the young person and their family / carers, as appropriate.
- 9.3. Demonstrate skills in assessing and documenting the young person's capacity to consent to, or refuse treatment.
- 9.4. Demonstrate skill in appropriately providing information and advice to ensure that the young person is fully informed of the risks and benefits of any treatments before obtaining consent to commence a treatment.
- 9.5. Demonstrate age appropriate questioning and intervention skills to explore, identify and respond to disclosures, issues or concerns related to sexual, physical or other abuse or neglect of a young person.
- 9.6. Demonstrate skills in assessment, intervention, involving third parties, reporting and documenting in relation to child protection and mandatory reporting issues, in accordance with service, professional and legal requirements.
- 9.7. Demonstrate skills in identifying, assessing, intervening and documenting threats of harm to self or others by the young person or their families /carers.
- 9.8. Understand that child protection requires an interagency response and actively work to address the safety of the young person at risk.

10. Navigate service referral pathways and collaborative care

All health service providers should demonstrate competence in these key areas.

- 10.1. Understand collaborative care and a comprehensive multi-disciplinary approach to working with complex, co-morbid and psychosocial youth health and wellbeing issues.
- 10.2. Demonstrate consultation skills to assist the young person to become aware of the range of health services available to address their health needs, and to access those health services and providers with relevant specialist expertise.
- 10.3. Demonstrate skills in advocating for, and actively supporting, the young person to navigate the referral processes, and to overcome the specific barriers they experience (*e.g. practical, psychological*) to accessing the health services they require.
- 10.4. Identify key roles and build partnerships across NGO and government service providers to improve referral pathways to services, access for young people, and collaborative care.
- 10.5. Identify and use appropriate referral and collaborative care documentation, forms, reporting and processes, in compliance with service policies and procedures.
- 10.6. Demonstrate skills in applying a collaborative, multi-disciplinary approach to health care, care coordination, and assessing appropriate referrals to health services for young people.
- 10.7. Demonstrate skills in linking, referring, and building relationships across sectors and services, to overcome any blocks or barriers in the referral pathways or collaborative care for young people.
- 10.8. Work in partnership with the young person and their family where appropriate, when referring to another agency.

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APPENDIX 1 - YOUTH HEALTH COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Name:Position:.....Date of plan:.....

Name of reviewer:.....Role:.....Date of completion:.....

Youth Health Competency	Current competency	Development outcomes / objectives	Plan to develop competency	Assistance / resources required	Timeframe	Date achieved	Reviewer feedback / signature