



**CORE COMPETENCIES OF THE A&E (ACCIDENT AND  
EMERGENCY) NURSE IN LIFE-THREATENING  
SITUATIONS IN THE EMERGENCY CARE  
ENVIRONMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA**

by

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SUMMARY

CORE COMPETENCIES OF THE A&E (ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY) NURSE IN LIFE-THREATENING SITUATIONS IN THE EMERGENCY CARE ENVIRONMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

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DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation, which I hereby submit for the degree Magister Curationis: Advanced Medical and Surgical Nursing Science (Trauma and Emergency Nursing) at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at another university

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Signature

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## SUMMARY

# CORE COMPETENCIES OF THE A&E (ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY) NURSE IN LIFE-THREATENING SITUATIONS IN THE EMERGENCY CARE ENVIRONMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

The scope of practice of the accident and emergency (A&E) nurse in the emergency care environment has over the last few years become one of the most frequently debated issues. Apart from numerous oral discussions, little has, however, been written on the subject so far. The role and also the range of practice of the A&E nurse have expanded considerably and continuous advancement is taking place within the profession. Although curricula exist for the purpose of training A&E nurses, there is no concurrence regarding the core competencies required by A&E nurses to manage life-threatening situations. It has therefore become essential for us, as A&E nurses, to clarify our scope of practice.

The following question can be asked in view of the above argument: What are the core competencies required by the A&E nurse in order to manage life-threatening situations in the emergency care environment?

The aim of this study is to investigate the core competencies required by the A&E nurse in order to manage life-threatening situations. To reach this aim, the following objectives were stated:

- Investigate the development of A&E nursing in South Africa and internationally
- Describe the "emergency care environment" within which the A&E nurse practises



- Determine the core competencies required by the A&E nurse in order to manage life-threatening situations in the emergency care environment
- Make recommendations as to what core competencies are required by the A&E nurse in order to manage life-threatening situations in the emergency care environment – in other words, what core competencies should be included in the curriculum for training these nurses

To achieve the goal of this study an explorative, a descriptive and a contextual research design were used, including both qualitative and quantitative methodology. The research was done in three phases:

- Phase 1 – Conceptual (explorative, descriptive and contextual design using qualitative methodology)
- Phase 2 – Empirical (explorative, descriptive and contextual design using quantitative methodology)
- Phase 3 – Imperative (descriptive and contextual design)

Based on the knowledge and insight gained by this research, recommendations were made as to what core competencies are required by the A&E nurse in order to manage life-threatening situations in the emergency care environment.

## KEY TERMS

A&E (accident and emergency) nurse, core competencies, life-threatening situations and scope of practice.



DECLARATION

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*To **all A&E nurses** who welcome a challenge, thrive on crisis and chaos, have an appetite for the unexpected and an aversion to routine, who are versatile, flexible and adaptable, expert assessors and analysts, and who love to detect, organise and fix problems. With talents like these it is no wonder that our role in the emergency care environment is expanding at such a rate.*



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FGI Focus group interview

HRD&T Higher Education Research and Development Council of South Africa

SA South Africa

SANCO South African Marketing Council

UK United Kingdom

USA United States of America



CHAPTER 1

RESEARCH ORIENTATION

**List of abbreviations**

---

A&E nurse	Accident and emergency nurse
BAA	Basic ambulance assistant
BAAC	Basic ambulance assistant course
DENOSA	Democratic Nursing Organisation of South Africa
ENA	Emergency Nurses Association
FGI	Focus group interview
HPCSA	Health Professionals Council of South Africa
SA	South Africa
SANC	South African Nursing Council
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America