

# ACCEPTANCE OF THE POLICY FOR DEVELOPING THE PROFESSIONAL CAREER PATH OF CLINICAL NURSES IN THE CREDENTIALS OF NURSES AT PUSKESMAS AND RSUD CIREBON REGENCY

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DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.11195405](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.11195405)

## Abstract

**Background.** Nurses play an essential role in health services. According to the policy of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, number 40 of 2017, they have independent authority as professionals and develop professional careers. Many hospitals still have not implemented policies for developing professional career paths for clinical nurses. The implementation of the hospital's credentials and re-credentials is still not optimal. Even though nursing credentials are essential in improving quality, protecting patient safety, and maintaining standards of nursing care, the study aims to determine the acceptance of policy implementation on developing clinical nurses' professional career paths in implementing nursing credentials. The research method uses qualitative methods through a phenomenological approach. Data analysis with selective analysis and focusing techniques (the selective or highlighting approach). Results and Discussion: Credentials at Puskesmas must obtain clinical authority because of their primary duties as health workers. Hospital nurse credentials are required to obtain clinical authority based on the nursing career path. A good perception from nurses about the importance of career paths is a good starting capital to make changes and improve exercising authority. The credentialing process goes through 3 stages: competency assessment, clinical authority determination, and clinical assignment. The competency assessment of hospital nurses is under government policy, but the Puskesmas Nurses are carried out by the Puskesmas quality team and are not by the credentials. There are differences in the determination of the authority details between Puskesmas nurses and hospital nurses because they are based on the regulations used. Implementing the actions of clinical nurses not under clinical assignments will cause complaints from patients and patient safety incidents. Conclusion: The Hospital Nurse credentialing process is under the policy on Professional career path development of clinical nurses, but implementing their authority is still inappropriate. Meanwhile, the Puskesmas Nurse credential process is not under the development of career paths or the Jukni Credential

**Keywords:** Policy, Career, Credential, Nurse, Professional.

## INTRODUCTION

Nurses are professionals who provide direct services to meet patient needs. For this reason, they play an essential role in health services.<sup>1</sup>

As health workers, nurses are an integral part of health services. They have independent authority as professionals and develop in professional careers.

Professional development of clinical nurses is contained in the policy of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, number 40 of 2017, concerning the development of professional career paths of clinical nurses where the goal is to improve the professionalism of nurses who can provide safe, effective and efficient nursing care.<sup>2</sup>

Many hospitals still have not implemented policies for developing professional career paths for clinical nurses. Three, as is the case at Cirebon Hospital. Similarly, non-government hospitals still do not have a professional career path for clinical nurses.<sup>4</sup>

The development of the professional career path of clinical nurses in hospitals and primary care is managed by implementing nursing committee policies through credentialing processes, maintaining quality, ethics, and professional discipline.<sup>5</sup>

The nursing committee verifies and recommends clinical authority and restoration in carrying out the credential function.

The Hospital Nursing Committee carries out the Hospital Nurse credentialing process, while the Puskesmas Nurse credentialing process is carried out by the District/City Health Office Team.<sup>6</sup> The implementation of hospital credentials and credentials is still not optimal.<sup>7</sup>

The implementation of Hospital Nurse credentials is based on the regulation of the Minister of Health No. 49/2013 concerning Hospital Nursing Committees, while the credentials of Puskesmas Nurses are following the Decree of the Directorate General of Health Services number HK.01.07/I/4719/2020 concerning Technical Guidelines for Credentialing of Health Workers in Community Health Service Centers.

Based on the 2012 version of the hospital accreditation standard (PPP Standard 12), hospitals must have an effective process for collecting, verifying, and evaluating nursing staff credentials (education, registration, permits, authority, training, and experience).<sup>8</sup> Meanwhile, in the Puskesmas accreditation standard 8.7, Assessment and evaluation of clinical personnel competence is carried out through an effective personnel credentialing process.<sup>9</sup>

There are still many nursing credential processes that refer to medical credentials. This condition illustrates the nurses' acceptance of the implementation of the clinical nurse's professional career path development policy is still less than optimal. Nursing credentials are very important in improving quality, protecting patient safety, and maintaining nursing care standards.<sup>10</sup>

Implementing the policy for developing the professional career path of clinical nurses is very important. If the policy is not carried out, nurses' actions have the potential to harm patients and also the nurses themselves. Regulatory support by hospital leadership is a dominant factor in influencing perceptions about the career path of nurses.<sup>1</sup>

This study aims to determine the acceptance of policy implementation regarding the development of the professional career paths of Arjawinangun Hospital Nurses and Beber Health Center of Cirebon Regency in implementing nursing credentials.

## **METHOD AND DESIGN**

Research methods used qualitative methods of phenomenological approach to study the experience and perception of nurses. Through this approach, researchers can evaluate the acceptability of implementing clinical nurses' professional career path development policies in hospitals and health centers in the nursing credential process.

## Data Collection and Analysis

This study used informants from managing nurses and implementing nurses, both in Puskesmas and hospitals, with as many as 8 participants who fit the criteria. Data was collected through unstructured in-depth interviews (*unstructured formal interviews*).<sup>11</sup>

Data analysis is carried out using specific techniques, such as a selective analysis approach and *focusing*.<sup>12</sup> This analysis reveals and isolates various thematic aspects of the phenomena highlighted in the study.<sup>11</sup>

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Meaning of Credentials

Puskesmas nurses understand that credentials assess competence in performing actions following standards. The evaluation is carried out to measure the extent of the nurse's workability so that they can improve their knowledge and develop themselves.

*"...credentials about testing... ways of permitting, for example, nurses in tests.. still by the SOP no, some deviate not..."*

Hospital nurses understand that the credentialing process is carried out after a competency assessment based on the nurse's career path.

*"...the credential is a nursing level based on education and length of work, for example, PKI, PKII..." While the assessment is one way ... for example, to go up to PK II must be assessed first.." (RS.03)*

Hospital nurses view credentials as management efforts to improve service quality. The determination of authority based on the letter of assignment is still not in accordance with its implementation in the room. The implementation of credentials still has no effect on the assessment of nurses' performance in providing nursing care.

*"...There are details of the task, while in the implementation it does not match the details of the task... necessary "(RS.03)*

*"...Kredensia is already running; so far, it still has no effect... We have been sued and assessed, and now there is no relationship between nurse authority and performance, or remuneration ... (RS.05)*

### 2. Experience Credentials

The competency assessment experience of Puskesmas nurses starts with the Puskesmas credential team providing information about implementing exams, grids, materials, and examiners. The credential team is appointed, and the head of Puskesmas appoints SK-kan.

*"..there is an invitation to the nurse's meeting... was told there would be a written exam... explained by Quality team.." (PM.02)*

The clinical authority of Puskesmas nurses is determined by the letter of assignment by the head of Puskesmas. Clinical assignments are made according to the needs of first-time placements.

*"...we are given the freedom to carry out nursing care by the SOPs in the emergency room and ranap and are given delegation by doctors to take actions that doctors in emergencies should do"(PM.01)*

The experience of assessing the competence of Hospital Nurses starts from providing information by the assessor to the assessment.

*“...determined schedule and assessor... then contact the assessor. Once found, the assessor will tell you the flow and the material. There is a form to fill out... (RS.02)*

Determination of clinical authority of hospital nurses through the application for clinical jurisdiction of the head of the room by completing the required documents (Diploma, Registration Certificate {STR}, certificate).

Clinical assignment provider from the Hospital Director. However, the letter of assignment of clinical authority sometimes does not follow the treatment actions carried out in the room.

*“... Sometimes it does not match the details of the clinic assignment... we are divided patients, if the details of clinical authority in the PK I clinic assignment letter to review awareness are not given, but I do... so exceed from PK I*

## DISCUSSION

### Meaning of Credentials in Professional Practice of Nursing

Credentialing is the process of evaluating nursing personnel to determine the eligibility of granting Clinical Authority.<sup>5</sup> Meanwhile, the credential of health workers at Puskesmas is defined as an evaluation process of health workers to determine the feasibility of being given clinical authority. The limitations of the two definitions in this policy become the same in the process, namely to assess the feasibility of granting clinical authority (clinical privilege). However, the nursing credential process in Puskesmas and hospitals has become different in its implementation. Credentials at Puskesmas to obtain clinical jurisdiction by their primary duties to work as health workers with a vast scope, according to needs. This is based on the Health Law of 2023, which manages health reserve personnel to handle extraordinary events, outbreaks, and emergencies.<sup>13</sup> However, the reality is not only about management by the law. At the same time, the qualification of hospital nurses to obtain clinical authority by the nursing career path in implementing nursing care as professional nurses. Nursing credentials are defined as the degrees, certifications, and specialties that nurses earn throughout their careers, which indicate their level of expertise and govern the type of care they can provide.

Puskesmas nurses perceive credentials to gain competence. Competency itself is a complex multidimensional phenomenon and is defined as the ability of registered nurses to practice safely and effectively, fulfilling their professional responsibilities within the scope of their practice (NMBI 2015).<sup>14</sup>

Hospital Nurses understand that the credentialing process is carried out after competency assessment and based on the nurse's career path. But also understanding credentials as a management effort in quality improvement. Credentials are essential for the quality assurance of a hospital.<sup>15161718</sup>

The Nursing Credential and Re-Credential Book, according to SNARS (2018) states that the purpose of credentialing is not only to improve the quality and maintain the standard of nursing care services but also to provide protection for patient safety, the community, and the environment; protection of nurses and increased satisfaction of patients, families, and nurses.<sup>19</sup>

Credentials are important in patient safety, but many nurses, especially Puskesmas nurses, still do not apply for credentials in accordance with the development of clinical nurse career paths, according to the research of Made Daniel et al.: 2022.<sup>20</sup>

A nurse's good perception of the importance of career paths is a good starting point for making changes and improvements in carrying out clinical authority in accordance with the career path.<sup>21</sup>

### **Credentialed Experience in Nursing Professional Practice**

There are three key stages in the nursing credentialing process: orientation and availability of assessment, credential documentation, and assessment. According to the policy of the Minister of Health Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia number 40 of 2017, the credentialing process goes through three stages: competency assessment, determination of clinical authority, and granting clinical assignments.

Hospital Nurse competency assessment is the responsibility of the nursing field. Meanwhile, the competency assessment of Puskesmas Nurses is the responsibility of the institution's leadership by involving coordinators and/or supervisors of Perkesmas at the Regency / City level.

The competency assessment of hospital nurses is done using existing government policies. Still, the Puskesmas Nurses are carried out by the Puskesmas quality team, not by the credential guidelines or regulations of the minister of health regarding the Professional career progression of clinical nurses.

The determination of the authority of Hospital Nurses is carried out by the Hospital nursing committee by way of review, verification, and evaluation with various methods carried out by the ad-hoc committee (peer review) determined. Meanwhile, the authority of the Puskesmas Nurse clinic is determined by the District / City Office Nursing Committee.

The determination of the authority of the Puskesmas Nurse clinic has not been by the regulation of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia number 40 of 2017. In the Puskesmas health worker credential juknis, the determination of clinical authority by the health office is based on the recommendation of the credential team. There is a difference in the determination of the kinetic authority of Puskesmas nurses with Hospital Nurses because it is based on the regulations used.

The Head / Director of the Hospital provides the clinical assignments of hospital nurses to nurses who have been credentialed in the form of a Director's decree. While Puskesmas Nurses by the Head of the Health Office, in the form of issuing clinical assignment decrees.

However, this is also not by the regulation of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia number 40 of 2017 and with the designation of the credentials of Puskesmas health workers. The impact of the implementation of clinical nurse competencies that are not by clinical assignments will cause complaints from patients and patient safety incidents.<sup>22</sup>

The Nurse's clinical authority must be implemented optimally to ensure patient safety and potential risks to patients.<sup>21</sup> Nursing care is provided based on the nurse's ability in accordance with the assignment letter of authority from the Director.

## CONCLUSION AND ADVICE

### Conclusion

- a. Assessment of the competence of Puskesmas Nurses through the collection of evidence with the work assessment method by the credential team on the competence of nurses according to tupoksi. Assessment of hospital nurse competence by collecting evidence through work assessment methods by certified assessors on nurses' core competency by the scope of work and career path.
- b. Determination of clinical authority of Puskesmas nurses according to the scope of work in the implementation of nursing care in general and delegation. Determination of clinical authority of hospital nurses based on career path and scope of work through the credentialing process on the nursing committee conducted by the ad-hoc committee
- c. Provide a clinical assignment letter for Puskesmas nurses by the Head of Puskesmas on the recommendation of the Credentials Team. The director awards clinical assignments to hospital nurses with details of clinical authority on the recommendation of the Nursing Committee.
- d. The Hospital Nurse credential process is governed by the policy of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia concerning the development of the career path of clinical nurses. Still, the nurse's actions in providing care are not by the authority obtained.
- e. The Puskesmas Nurse credential process is not by the career path development policy or the Puskesmas health worker credential certificate

### Advice

- a. The district/city health office announces regulations and rules (rules and technical rules) for specific nursing credentials by the policy on Professional career path development of clinical nurses
- b. The district/city health office establishes a nursing committee in the implementation of the Nursing credential
- c. Local professional organizations conduct political advocacy for the implementation of policies to develop clinical nurses' professional career paths.
- d. Professional organizations assist the nursing committees of district/city health offices and/or hospitals in preparing clinical authority details by assigning organizational completeness bodies by the clinical authority detail area.
- e. The Hospital Director announces the regulations and rules of the governance of the nursing committee and the development of the professional career path of clinical nurses
- f. The Hospital Director announces the role (rules) of nurse performance appraisal following the Nurse's clinical assignment letter with clear rewards and punishment

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