



Rehabilitation COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

WEBINAR

LAUNCH EVENT

26 February 2021

12:45-14:00 CET

BACKGROUND

The events of 2020 made the world more aware than ever of the critical role of the health workforce and the urgency and imperative to address persistent health worker challenges; severe shortages, and issues of quality and relevance all came to the fore in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. These challenges are felt acutely by the rehabilitation workforce, which falls drastically short of meeting population needs in many countries. It is estimated that one in three people experience a health condition that benefits from rehabilitation¹, and needs are only expected to increase with population aging and the increasing prevalence of noncommunicable diseases. With a growing number of countries taking steps to strengthen rehabilitation in their health systems, in line with the Rehabilitation 2030 Initiative² and with the implementation of the *Rehabilitation in health systems guide for action*³, investment in rehabilitation workforce is more vital than ever.

The momentum for this important work is anticipated to build significantly in 2021, which was unanimously declared the *International Year of Health and Care Workers* in the 73rd World Health Assembly, in acknowledgement of their invaluable contribution and recognition of the substantial global action needed to address health worker challenges. These challenges go far beyond health worker shortfalls; issues of quality and relevance pose major barriers to addressing population needs. It is evident that action towards health workforce strengthening must be centred on aligning health worker competencies with population needs.

Competency frameworks are key mechanisms for ensuring such alignment, by articulating the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to perform the range of activities involved in the provision of the care that people need. They can be valuable tools in the context of education and training, regulation, performance appraisal, recruitment, and workforce evaluation and planning and have been used for decades within and beyond the health sector to strengthen workforce. Competency frameworks capture what is valued, expected or required of a workforce, and can be used in a variety of ways at the individual, service and system level. However, competency frameworks are lacking and/or underutilized in many instances where they could be of considerable use, especially in low- and middle-income countries where the rehabilitation workforce is continuing to emerge.

Recognizing the need for a reference framework from which context-specific competency frameworks can be modelled, WHO developed the Rehabilitation Competency Framework (RCF). It has been developed in parallel with and complementary to a broader Global Competency Framework for Universal Health Coverage (WHO, 2021 forthcoming) and looks in more specificity at the competencies of the Rehabilitation workforce. The RCF is highly versatile with broad applicability to all rehabilitation professions, specializations and settings, enabling it to be “adapted and adopted” to serve the specific functions of different stakeholders. It is accompanied by two practical guides that serve to facilitate its uptake: A guide for adapting it to specific contexts, and a guide to developing rehabilitation programmes and curricula based on a contextualized competency framework. The RCF and accompanying guides have been developed over the last two years through a highly iterative process that was guided by an international and multidisciplinary technical working group, with support from international

¹ Cieza, A. et al. Global estimates of the need for rehabilitation based on the Global Burden of Disease study 2019: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2019. *The Lancet*. December 2020, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(20\)32340-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(20)32340-0)

² <https://www.who.int/news-room/events/detail/2017/02/06/default-calendar/rehabilitation-2030-a-call-for-action>

³ <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/rehabilitation-in-health-systems-guide-for-action>

rehabilitation professional associations⁴. The RCF is a demonstration of the successful cooperation of the global rehabilitation community, including rehabilitation educationalists, academics, service developers, practitioners, and service-users. This launch event marks a long-awaited and significant milestone, and in addition to presenting the resources, it will serve to celebrate the efforts of all involved in its creation. The launch event will be followed by two (virtual) technical training sessions that will take a deeper dive into how the RCF can be applied.

Objectives

The RCF launch event will:

1. describe why the RCF was developed and what issues it can contribute to addressing;
2. introduce the RCF and guides, and provide an overview of their key components; and
3. examine how the RCF can be used in different contexts and for different purposes.

⁴ The International Association of Logopedics and Phoniatrics (IALP); the International Council of Nurses (ICN); the International Council of Psychologists (ICP); the International Society for Prosthetics and Orthotics (ISPO); the International Society of Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine (ISPRM); World Physiotherapy; and the World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT).

AGENDA

TIME	TOPIC	SPEAKER
5 mins	Welcome and introduction	Dr Alarcos Cieza Unit Head, Sensory Functions, Disability, and Rehabilitation, WHO
5 minutes	Opening remarks	Dr Bente Mikkelsen Director, Department of Noncommunicable Diseases, WHO
10 mins	Competency frameworks as a tool for workforce strengthening	Prof James Buchan Editor-in-chief, Human Resources for Health Journal, Adjunct Professor, University of Technology, Sydney
15 mins	Introducing the Rehabilitation Competency Framework (RCF)	Ms Jody-Anne Mills Sensory Functions, Disability, and Rehabilitation, WHO
20 mins	Putting the RCF into practice: How competency frameworks can be used in rehabilitation workforce education and regulation	Round Table Mr James Campbell (chair) Director, Health Workforce Department, WHO Dr Harvey Abrams Dr Mary Silcock
15 mins	Q&A	Chair: Dr Steven Shongwe Acting Director, Department of Noncommunicable Diseases, WHO Africa Region
5 mins	Close	Dr Alarcos Cieza Unit Head, Sensory Functions, Disability, and Rehabilitation, WHO

COMING UP: RCF IN ACTION TRAINING WEBINARS

Session 1: Adapting the RCF to develop competency frameworks serving specific functions
11 March

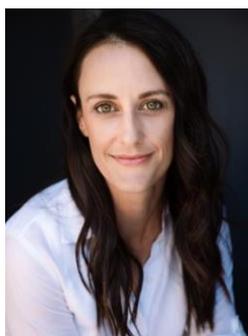
Session 2: Using competency frameworks in the development of rehabilitation programmes and curricula
26 March

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS



Professor James Buchan
Adjunct Professor, University of Technology, Sydney
Editor in Chief, Human Resources for Health

Prof Buchan has specialized in health and care workforce policy and analysis throughout his career. He is an Adjunct Professor at the WHO CC at University of Technology, Sydney, and a Senior Fellow at the Health Foundation, London. He has worked extensively as a consultant in Europe, Asia and the Pacific, for governments and international agencies such as WHO, World Bank and ICN. His background includes periods working as a senior manager in the National Health Service in Scotland, his home country; senior policy analyst at the Royal College of Nursing, (RCN), UK; and as a specialist adviser to Health Workforce Australia, a federal government agency. He has also worked for WHO in Geneva and in Copenhagen. He is Editor in Chief of “Human Resources for Health” the peer reviewed journal.



Ms Jody-Anne Mills
Rehabilitation Programme, Department of Noncommunicable Diseases, WHO

Jody-Anne Mills is a consultant with the WHO Rehabilitation Programme in Geneva, Switzerland. She has a specific interest in issues related to workforce and has been the project lead for the development of the WHO Rehabilitation Competency Framework (RCF) and associated guides, and for WHO’s work on rehabilitation workforce evaluation and planning in countries. Jody-Anne practiced as an occupational therapist in Australia, the United Kingdom, and Togo before completing her master’s degree in International Public Health and commencing her role with WHO. She is currently a PhD candidate at the John Walsh Centre for Rehabilitation Research at the University of Sydney.



Dr James Campbell
Director, Health Workforce Department, WHO

Jim Campbell is the Director, Health Workforce Department at the World Health Organization. He oversees the development and implementation of global public goods, evidence and tools to generate investments in the education, employment and retention of the health and care workforce in pursuit of global health security, universal health coverage and the Sustainable Development Goals. His portfolio includes the short- and long-term impact of COVID-19 on the health and care workforce, oversight of 2021 as WHO’s International Year of Health and Care Workers, implementation of WHO’s Global Strategy on Human Resources for Health: Workforce 2030, the recommendations of the UN High-Level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth and the five-year action plan with ILO, OECD on Working for Health. He coordinates the Global Health Workforce Network engaging member states and relevant partners in WHO’s work, with special focus on the role of women and

youth in the health and care sectors. A graduate of the University of Bristol and the University of Leeds he has published extensively, is a member of the Editorial Board of the Human Resources for Health Journal and collaborates extensively with the education sector labour market and public sector investment in human capital.



Professor Harvey Abrams

Courtesy Professor, Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, University of South Florida

In a career spanning more than 45 years, Dr Abrams has served in a number of academic, clinical, research, administrative, and consulting capacities with the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Defence, academia and industry. His positions have included Chief of the Audiology and Speech Pathology Service and Associate Chief of Staff for Research and Development at the Bay Pines, VA Healthcare System; Director of Research at the Army Audiology and Speech Center at Walter Reed Army Medical Center; and Director of Audiology Research at Starkey Hearing Technologies. He currently serves as the Head of Research Audiology at Lively Hearing Corporation. He received his PhD in Audiology and Hearing Science at the University of Florida and instructs students of audiology at several universities in the USA. He lectures on the topics of outcome measures, health-related quality of life, professional issues, and evidence-based audiologic practice. His research has focused on treatment efficacy and improved quality of life associated with audiologic intervention to include, most recently, computer-based auditory training.



Dr Mary Silcock

Professional Advisor, Occupational Therapy Board of New Zealand

Dr E. Mary Silcock is an occupational therapist and Professional Advisor for the Occupational Therapy Board of New Zealand. She has practised occupational therapy in community-based rehabilitation for over 20 years. Mary has a PhD in Sociology and her research interests are in social structures and systems, and the connections these have with practice and health outcomes.