# Module III
# EU Guidelines

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# Aims of education module III

- To understand the rationale for **effective assessment** of the level of student's achievements related knowledge, skills and attitudes

- To gain knowledge about the **assessment process, assessment tools and assessment bias** in clinical education of nursing students

- To acknowledge the importance of **self-assessment** and **student's responsibility** in assessment process

- To comprehend the importance of learning from experience and application of **constructive feedback** in assessing clinical education of nursing students

# Content

# Assessment rationale

- ✓ to give feedback to the learner so that they can then develop further

- ✓ to enhance the motivation of the learner through this feedback

- ✓ to encourage the importance of lifelong learning and achievement

- ✓ to support the learner

- ✓ to give the learner satisfaction

- ✓ to promote learner's confidence and independence

# Responsibility of mentor during assessment process

✓ establishing a safe environment for the assessment process

✓ explore and clarify thinking processes

✓ provide constructive and clear feedback

✓ be aware of the ground rules and protocols

✓ adhere to agreed time and rules

✓ produce written records of all aspects of the assessment

# Mentor's responsibility

All mentor's have a responsibility to ensure that students are fit:

- *for purpose* – can function effectively

- *for practice* – can fulfil the needs of registration

- *for award* – have the depth and breadth of learning to be awarded a degree/higher degree

# Defining assessment

A definition of assessment relevant to health and social care professionals is Quinn's (2000) account of assessment:

Assessment is not only concerned with the measurement of student achievement but includes such aspects of an individual as attitudes, aptitudes, personality and intelligence

# Assessment criteria
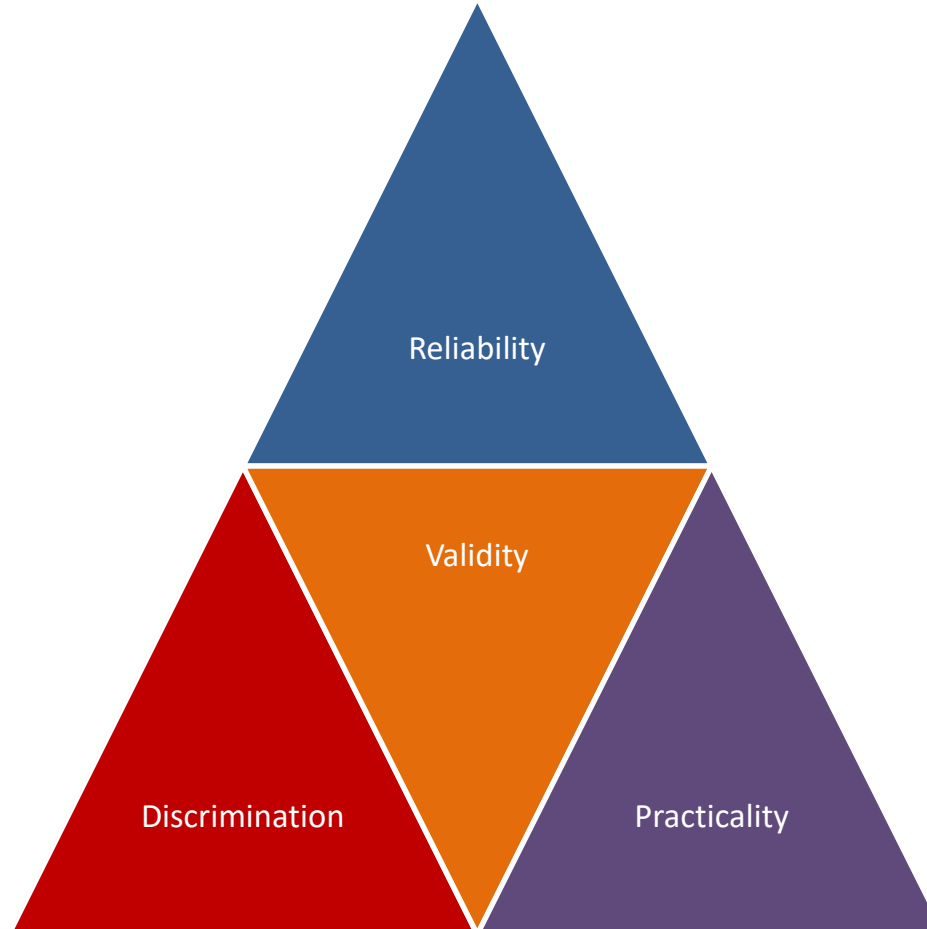
# The main errors in the assessment

**Generosity or leniency**

**The *halo* effect**

**Logical errors**

**Obligation error**

**Stringency error**

**Proximity error**

**Errors of central tendency**

**A *horn* effect**

# Reflective practice

Reflection is about understanding personal experience differently and take action as a results.

Reflective practice incorporates a wide range of skills:

- ✓ self-awareness
- ✓ critical thinking
- ✓ self-evaluation
- ✓ analysis of multiple perspectives and integration of insights to inform future learning and practice

# The benefits of reflective practice

- Support for learning from experience
- Help in development of critical thinking
- Fostering clinical reasoning
- Facilitating integration of theory and practice
- Stimulating new ideas
- Help to be aware of own limitations for competent and safe practice
- Generation of knowledge in and through practice experience
- Stimulating continuous learning and developing throughout the career
- Help to improve professional practice

# Continuous feedback

The development in feedback practices and providing students with opportunities for reflection are important in supporting the continuous learning process of students (Immonen et al. 2019)

**Continuous feedback is a process where a student receives ongoing feedback and is guided in a systematic manner by openly discussing with the mentor about personal strenghts and weaknesses**

# The benefits of constructive feedback

| BENEFIT TO PROFESSION | BENEFIT TO STUDENT | BENEFIT TO MENTOR |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Assurance that qualified nurses are knowledgeable and "fit for and to practice" | Enhancing student motivation to learn and to develop | Assisting the mentor to work within the professional standards |
| Protecting public from qualified nurses who to not achieved competence and helps to avoid possible catastrophic results in future | Helps to identify learning gaps and formulate action plans for failing students at <u>mid-point periods</u>. | Stipulation of successful mentorship experiences for mentor |
| Helping to produce competent and conscientious future nurses | Realistic development of student's confidence and self-esteem | Enhancing personal and professional development of mentor |
| Competent practitioners are delivered into the profession | Provide formal documented evidence from an early stage when failing a student; Fully informed students on their failings | Mentors upholds their legal and professional responsibility to support and educate nursing students |

# Assessment linkage to the EFN competency framework

**Competency 1:** "To independently diagnose the nursing care required using current theoretical and clinical knowledge and to plan, organise and implement nursing care when treating patients"

To help student to acquire this competence, a case study may be suggested to solve

**Competency 4:** *"To independently initiative life-preserving measures and to carry out measures in crises and disaster situations"*
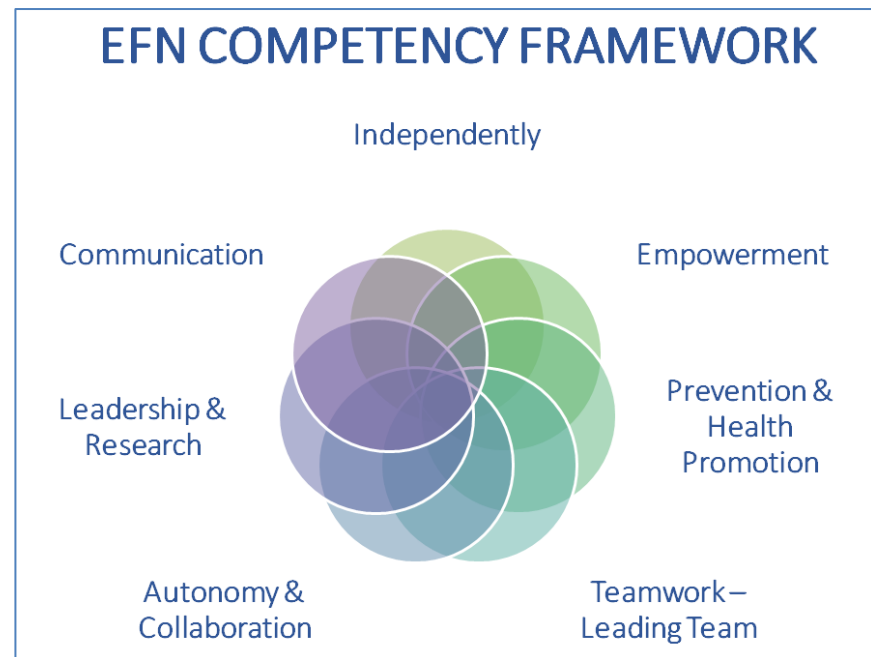
To help student to acquire this competence, a case studies may be suggested to solve

**Competency 6:** "To independently assure quality of and to evaluate nursing care"

To help student to acquire this competence, a case study may be suggested to solve

**Competency 8:** "To analyse the care quality to improve the own professional practice as a general care nurse"

- A significant proportion of nursing education is carried out in clinical learning environments

- Clinical nurse mentors have an important role in supporting nursing students' professional competence development

- Mentors who attain core competencies in mentoring are able to better support nursing students in obtaining the eight competency areas defined in European Union Directive 55 Article 31





EFN COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

Independently

Communication

Empowerment

Leadership & Research

Prevention & Health Promotion

Autonomy & Collaboration

Teamwork – Leading Team

# Guideline



Guideline on clinical nurse mentors' mentoring competence development

# The aim

To strengthen clinical nurse mentors' mentoring competence development, which can improve health system resilience in EU countries

## The guideline is based on:

- critically evaluated research evidence and has been developed during the years 2018-2021 through the Erasmus+ project „Quality Mentorship for Developing Competent Nursing Students (QualMent)"

- the leadership of an international team of experts with extensive knowledge and expertise in mentoring

**Objectives:**

1) to promote and support effective mentoring practices

2) to enhance mentors' competence development

3) to improve nursing education on an international level through high-quality mentoring and clinical learning environments for nursing students

**Target groups:**

Clinical nurse mentors, nurse educators and educational organisations, nurse managers at all levels, other health professionals, undergraduate and postgraduate nursing students, national nursing associations, nursing regulatory bodies, politicians and policymakers

# Content: **mentoring competence**

## 1 MENTORING COMPETENCE

Designed to support you in your role as a clinical nurse mentor, this guideline outlines your responsibilities and opportunities in supporting nursing students' learning. The importance of the role of clinical nurse mentors and of the realisation of quality mentorship cannot be overemphasized. High-quality clinical learning environments are crucial in the preparing the nursing workforce of the future. It is in these environments that students apply their knowledge, learn key skills and achieve the required competence needed to practice nursing.

The **evidence-based clinical mentors' competence model** (Mikkonen et al., 2019) outlines the key components of mentoring competence. Clinical nurse mentors act as role models to students and have the opportunity to instil professional values and integrity in clinical settings. They support students in practicing safe, person-centred care that is in line with EU Directive 2013/55/EU Article 31 (page 4).

Mentoring competence consists of 1) mentors' individual competences, 2) cultural competence in mentoring and 3) competence in supporting students' learning process (pages 5-10). Recommendations for mentoring in clinical learning environments can be found on page 11 of this document.



The evidence-based clinical nurse mentors' competence model
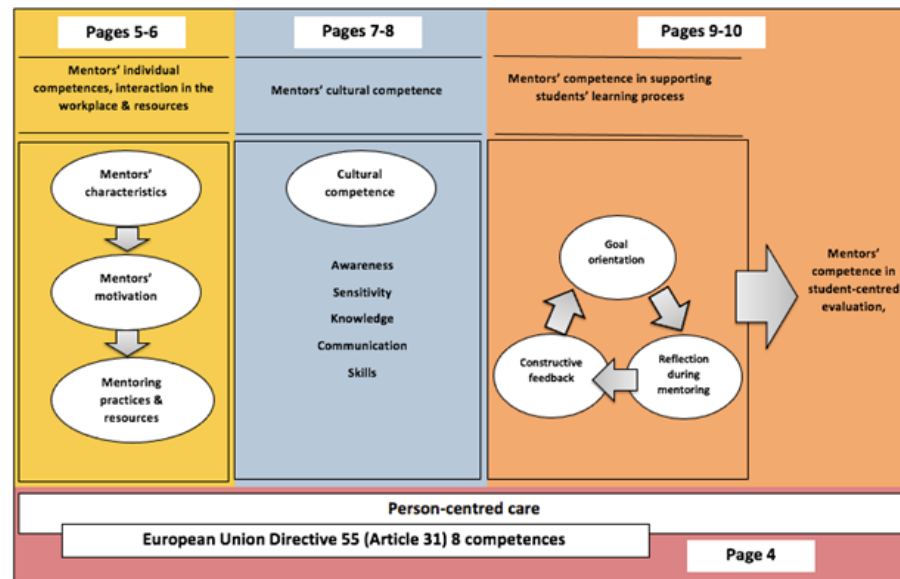
# Content: **foundation of mentoring**

## 2 FOUNDATION OF MENTORING

Mentors have expertise in both the clinical area they operate in and in their pedagogical approach in supporting the learning of nursing students. Mentors are not only clinical experts, but also pedagogical experts who act as role models for students and help them develop into professionals competent in providing high-quality, safe and person-centred care.

### 2.1 High-quality and evidence-based mentoring

Mentors are responsible for mentoring students in an evidence-based manner. The elements of evidence-based mentoring are defined below.



The realisation of quality mentorship requires the development of practices that better meet nursing students' needs and advance their professional identity as nurses. A study conducted in four Central/Eastern EU Member States revealed that nursing students were very satisfied with their clinical placement experiences and the majority of students felt their mentor was an important professional role model (Antohe et al., 2015). It was recommended that continuing professional development programs on mentorship being offered to nursing staff at the basic and advanced levels.

### 2.2 Person-centred care

Mentors support students´ professional growth in becoming responsible professionals who integrate the approach of person-centred care into nursing practice. This approach is the main focus of students' clinical learning process. It is essential that mentors are competent in guiding students in consciously adopting the perspectives of individuals, families and communities into clinical reasoning and decision-making processes.

### 2.3 European Federation of Nurses Associations competency framework

Clinical mentors are required to support students in such a way that they obtain the eight competency areas defined in Directive 2013/55/EU Article 31 which include: (click here for more details)

- To independently diagnose the nursing care required using current theoretical and clinical knowledge and to plan, organise and implement nursing care when treating patients;
- To work together effectively with other actors in the health sector, including participation in the practical training of health personnel;
- To empower individuals, families, and groups towards healthy lifestyles and self-care on the basis of the knowledge and skills acquired;
- To independently initiative life-preserving measures and to carry out measures in crises and disaster situations;
- To independently give advice to, instruct and support persons needing care and their attachment figures;
- To independently assure quality of and to evaluate nursing care;
- To comprehensively communicate professionally and to cooperate with members of the other professions in the health sector;
- To analyse the care quality to improve their own professional practice as a general care nurse.

# Content: **mentors' individual competence and interaction**

## 3 MENTORS' INDIVIDUAL COMPETENCES AND INTERACTION IN THE WORKPLACE

### 3.1 Mentors' individual competences

The personal characteristics and motivation of clinical mentors has great impact on development of a successful mentor-student relationship. Mentors play a key role in integrating students into work environments and into interprofessional healthcare teams. Mentors must be familiar with mentoring practices and on the available resources that exist for mentoring. Mentors involve all relevant stakeholders such as nurse educators, students and other staff members into the mentoring process.

Important characteristics of clinical mentors include:

- Confidence in personal competence in performing nursing tasks and meeting the responsibilities of being a mentor
- Ability to create a supportive climate for learning
- Taking initiative in strengthening relationships and collaboration with the student and the nurse educator
- Competent in integrating students into healthcare teams and introducing students to colleagues
- Willingness to discuss students' learning experiences on a regular basis
- Ability and willingness to express an empathetic attitude towards mentoring and person-centred care
- Understanding of the mentor's own role and responsibility in the students' learning process.

Motivation towards the mentoring of students can be seen in:

- the mentor's willingness to mentor students and interest in getting to know students
- recognition and understanding on the importance that motivation has on the learning of students
- the mentor's continuous strive to develop as a mentor
- the mentor's ability to identify his or her own level of motivation as a mentor as well as the students' level of motivation to learn

Mentors must be familiar with mentoring practices and on the available resources that exist for mentoring. These are an essential part of mentoring success. This includes:

- knowledge of mentoring practices within one's own organisation and beyond
- knowledge of students' current level of competence, their educational context and background
- the ability to effectively collaborate with the nurse educator and to recognize when there is a need for additional contact
- understanding of resources available to mentors to support them in their mentoring role

# Mentors' role in high-quality clinical learning environments

**Tips on maximising positive learning experiences and outcomes for students as an organisation**

- Tip #1 Integrate positive mentoring practices into the organisational culture of healthcare environments.

- Tip #2 Make a conscious effort to integrate students into work environments and into interprofessional healthcare teams.

- Tip #3 Strengthen mentor-student-nurse educator collaboration as it can help students succeed in clinical practice.

- Tip #4 Recognise the core characteristics of new generation (Millennial and Generation Z) students in order to consider how to successfully engage with and coach these students.

- Tip #5 Use learning and knowledge technologies and case studies during mentoring to enhance students' learning process.

# Content: **Mentors' role in high-quality clinical learning environments**

**Tips on activities that can be integrated into mentoring education**

- Tip #1 Highlight the importance for providing nursing students time to orientate to the new clinical learning environment. Clinical mentors can reflect on how they can help students feel welcome and safe.

- Tip #2 While practicing relevant nursing skills, students need to be supported and clinical mentors must ensure that professional standards are maintained. Clinical mentors can share experiences on strategies used while coaching students in the planning and assessment of patient care.

- Tip #3 Integrate strategies into mentoring education that assist clinical mentors in developing the student-mentor relationship and other competence areas essential for effective mentoring in clinical placements.

# Content: **mentors' cultural competence**

## 4 MENTORS' CULTURAL COMPETENCE

### 4.1 Development of mentors' cultural competence in mentoring

During clinical placement, nursing students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds often face challenges related to cultural differences and language barriers. The role of the clinical nurse mentor can be a challenging one and require special attention on the development of mentors' cultural competence in mentoring. The need to educationally prepare mentors in providing culturally appropriate mentoring and to meet the professional learning needs of students is key.

### 4.2 Definition of cultural competence in mentoring

Cultural competence has been defined as a "complex know-act grounded in critical reflection and action, which the health professional draws upon to provide culturally safe, congruent, and effective care in partnership with individuals, families, and communities living health experiences, and which takes into account the social and political dimensions of care" (Blanchet Garneau and Pepin, 2015, p. 12). Cultural competence in mentoring is defined as "the process in which the faculty mentor continually strives to achieve the ability and availability to effectively mentor within the cultural context of the student mentee" (Campinha-Bacote, 2010, p. 131).

Mentors' cultural competence encompasses the following attributes.

- cultural awareness, sensitivity and knowledge

- intercultural communication and interaction

- cultural skills and the ability to create a culturally safe learning environment.

### 4.3 Mentoring of diverse nursing students

Specific competences required to provide culturally congruent person-centred care and culturally conscious mentoring to culturally and linguistically diverse students are defined below.

Cultural awareness, sensitivity and knowledge:

- desire and commitment to integrate, mentor, and support culturally and linguistically diverse students
- knowledge of one's own cultural background
- reflection on how one's own culture and belief system impacts one's actions as a professional and interactions with others
- willingness to give up possible prejudices and attitudes towards patients/clients or students and to develop cultural sensitivity
- recognition of the importance of cultural acceptance of culturally diverse patients/clients and students
- fostering a welcoming attitude towards different cultures and views of care
- respect for diversity in person-centered care and in the mentoring of students

Intercultural communication and interaction:

- having the skills to engage in effective communication and to interact with culturally diverse patients/clients and students
- having an understanding of the effects of culture on patterns of verbal and nonverbal communication

Cultural skills in nursing and mentoring:

- having the skills to deal with culturally challenging situations in person-centred care and in mentoring

# Mentoring of diverse nursing students

**Tips on activities that can be integrated into cultural competence education for mentors**

- Tip #1 Clinical mentors reflect on their role in assisting the culturally and linguistically diverse student to overcome challenges faced in clinical placement and on their role in supporting the integration and adaptation process of the student.

- Tip #2 Clinical mentors identify and define the attributes of cultural competence in mentoring and use these to plan their personal development in cultural competence.

- Tip #3 Clinical mentors reflect on their own personal cultural background and how their own value and belief system may have an impact in multicultural encounters.

- Tip #4 Culture often has an effect on patterns of verbal and nonverbal communication. Integrate content on how students' professional language development and proficiency in the local language can be supported. Consider utilizing the expertise of linguistic experts in developing content regarding the topic.

- Tip #5 Clinical mentors' play a vital role in ensuring safe, culturally sensitive clinical learning environments that support culturally and linguistically diverse students' learning. Mentors must take immediate action to address possible prejudice, stereotypes and racism in clinical learning environments. Create simulation exercises where clinical mentors can practice their cultural skills in various real-life mentoring scenarios.

- Tip #6 Mentoring culturally and linguistically diverse students can be stressful and time-consuming. Clinical mentors can think of ways they can get the support they need to succeed in their role.

- Tip #7 Allow the voice and experiences of culturally and linguistically diverse students be heard. Integrate strategies into mentoring education such as videos, digital stories, interviews or panel discussions with students.

# Content: **mentors' competence in supporting students' learning process**

## 5 MENTORS' COMPETENCE IN SUPPORTING STUDENTS' LEARNING PROCESS

### 5.1 Assessment of nursing students' clinical competence

Assessment of nursing students' clinical competence is complex and challenging for both mentors and nurse educators. It is extremely important to maintain objectivity during the process of finding out whether or not the student has achieved required competencies. The use of effective assessment methods and reliable and valid assessment tools is encouraged.

Mentors can overcome assessment challenges by consciously supporting students learning process throughout the entire clinical practice. The mentor and student continuously reflect on clinical learning and on achievements made during clinical practice.

### 5.2 Student-centeredness during evaluation

A student-centred approach to evaluation can be facilitated when the mentor succeeds to integrate the following continuous cycle into daily mentoring practice.

1. Goal orientation

2. Reflection during mentoring

3. Constructive feedback

### 5.3 Goal orientation in mentoring

Goal orientation in mentoring means that the mentor and student work together as a team so that the student can achieve the learning goals that have been set for the clinical practice. It is essential that goals are clearly defined at the start of the student's clinical practice. Mentors should have knowledge on the competencies that nursing students are required to achieve and on how to support students in achieving these competencies.

Mentors can support students in setting their learning goals by:

- explaining clinical activities and interventions that can be completed during the clinical practice
- referring to the learning goals and assessment criteria set by the educational organisation for the clinical practice in question
- identifying the student's level of competence prior to the start of the clinical practice and making a plan to assist competence development through the assignment of appropriate tasks
- ensuring that the student sets short and long term goals that are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound.

### 5.4 Reflection during mentoring

Reflection during mentoring means that the mentor encourages the student to critically reflect on, for example, how clinical tasks were performed or how the student succeeded in interactions with clients. The mentor and student embark in regular reflective discussions.

# Supporting students' learning process

**Tips on activities that can be integrated into mentoring education**

- Tip #1 Introduce important issues related to the evaluation of students' learning process. Present various real-life assessment scenarios to clinical mentors and ask them to think of strategies to overcome assessment challenges.

- Tip #2 Clinical mentors can share experiences on maintaining the triangle of communication between the nurse educator, nursing student and the mentor – which can succeed to avoid feelings of working in isolation.

- Tip #3 Support clinical mentors in identifying the individual learning needs of students and in identifying aspects essential in creating effective clinical learning environments. Provide different real-life case examples and tips on how to support students' learning process throughout the entire clinical placement.

- Tip #4 Help clinical mentors to feel empowered in establishing effective mentoring relationship, assessing nursing students' learning and creating a safe environment for learning.

# Recommendations

**Recommendations urge clinical nurse mentors to:**

- **Refer to set criteria and guidelines that support implementation of quality mentorship and use these to guide the mentoring process.**
- **Effectively support students in achieving their set learning goals and the eight competency areas defined in Article 31 of Directive 2013/55/EU.**
- **Create and maintain a physically, socially and emotionally safe atmosphere in clinical learning environments.**
- **Continuously reflect upon personal mentoring competence and plan strategies to develop professionally and as a mentor.**
- **Ask for constructive feedback on personal mentoring competence from students and colleagues and use this while creating strategies for competence development.**
- **Facilitate collaboration with nurse educators from educational organisations to strengthen nursing students' learning process and achievement of learning outcomes.**

# Recommendations

**Recommendations urge healthcare organisations to:**

- **Assess the current level** of quality in mentorship on a regular basis within the organisation.

- Plan and implement effective strategies on an organisational level that **improve the quality of mentorship** of nursing students completing clinical practice.

- **Empower staff** members to develop their mentoring competence according to the Evidence-Based Clinical Nurse Mentors' Competence Model (Mikkonen et al., 2019).

- **Support staff members'** continuous professional development and ensure that the necessary resources are in place for effective mentoring. Offer mentoring education to all staff members who mentor students.

# Recommendations

**Recommendations urge EU level and national institutions to:**

- Include the topic of strengthening quality mentorship of nursing students in political agendas in order to build resilience in the nursing workforce.

- Ensure that each Member State is obliged to set criteria that enable quality mentorship of nursing students completing clinical practice under the supervision of qualified mentors.

- Promote the use of the EFN Competency Framework as a tool to ease the implementation of Article 31 of Directive 2013/55/EU into nursing curricula throughout the EU.

- Develop further standards and mandatory regulation through national laws and curricula through which clinical nurse mentors can be supported and educated in providing quality mentorship.

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