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The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) Competency Framework for Rheumatology Nurses (2020) has been well received by rheumatology nurses and the wider rheumatology community. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has delayed its full implementation and impacted its dissemination. This evaluation aims to explore rheumatology nurses' view of the competency framework and to identify any recommendations for further work. A survey which utilised a combination of a questionnaire and semi-structured





## Questionnaire results

106 people responded to the survey, with 99 (93%) working as adult rheumatology nurses. There were 55 (52%) band 7 nurses, which was just over half of the total sample. There was a wide range of job titles which may contribute to difficulties in

Respondents were also asked what didn't work well. Comments were mainly themed around role development, advanced practice and current knowledge. See below for comments.

I would like to have a framework for development outlining what I need to do and how long this should take to mo oo a

## Interview results

There were 15 nurses who responded that they would be happy to take part in an interview. One of these did not respond to interview requests via emails, so 14 were conducted in total. They were conducted from May 2021 until August 21. The longest interview was 31.4 minutes, with an average of 12 minutes for each interview, in total the interviews lasted 171 minutes.

The results from the interviews described individuals' experience of using the framework. Specific questioning included:

- enquiring why individuals used the competency framework
- any potential strengths or limitations
- how much time it took to use
- whether they would use the document again
- suggesting any potential improvements to the document
- if they would they recommend it to others.

They were also asked whether it was easy to locate the competency document.

The interviewees were asked if they had any ideas of any other resources they would like to be developed to help with their rheumatology nursing role. Suggestions included a paediatric rheumatology educational module, a specialist validated educational course easily accessed for all and a further focus on the development of the management and leadership of experienced rheumatology nurses.

The interviewees were asked to summarise the competency document in five words which proved a little difficult for some. Therefore, these responses ranged from three to 15 words and illustrated powerfully how the respondents viewed the document, such as "comprehensive, useful document, great grounding framework" and "a reliable tool to improve quality care and set standards for the education of nurses".





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