Glossary

Reference: PFN Last Updated: 29/10/2026

The following terms and their accompanying explanations relate to the context of the standards of proficiency for nursing associates.

Abuse: is something that may harm another person, or endanger their life, or violate their rights. The person responsible for the abuse may be doing this on purpose or may not realise the harm that they are doing. The type of abuse may be emotional, physical, sexual, psychological, material or financial, or may be due to neglect.

Candour: being open and honest with patients when things go wrong.

Contraindications: a condition or factor that serves as a reason to withhold a certain medical treatment due to the harm that it would cause the patient.

Demography: the study of statistics such as births, deaths, income, or the incidence of disease, which illustrate the changing structure of human populations.

Evidence based care: making sure that any care and treatment is given to people, by looking at what research has shown to be most effective. The judgment and experience of the nurse and the views of the person should also be taken into account when choosing which treatment is most likely to be successful for an individual patient.

Genomics: branch of molecular biology concerned with the structure, function, evolution, and mapping of genomes.

Health literacy: the degree to which individuals can obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions.

Human factors: environmental, organisational and job factors, and human and individual characteristics, which influence behaviour at work in a way which can affect health and safety.

People: individuals or groups who receive services from nurses, midwives and nursing associates, healthy and sick people, parents, children, families, carers, representatives, also including educators and students and other within and outside the learning environment.

Person-centred: an approach where the person is at the centre of the decision making processes and the design of their care needs, their nursing care and treatment plan.

Vulnerable people: those who at any age are at a higher risk of harm than others. Vulnerability might be in relation to a personal characteristic or a situation. The type of harm may be emotional, physical, sexual, psychological, material or financial, or may be due to neglect.