



# Rehabilitation COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK



World Health  
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# FOREWORD

Most people will need rehabilitation at some point in their life, and often recurrently, as the result of injury, illness, congenital anomaly or the effects of ageing. Rehabilitation is a critical health strategy to enabling participation in education, work, and society; but too often, lack of access to trained rehabilitation workers leaves needs unmet. As health systems progress towards universal health coverage and encounter the growing challenges of rising prevalence of noncommunicable diseases, ageing populations, and the consequences of health emergencies, the importance of a strong rehabilitation workforce becomes more apparent than ever. Yet around the world, the capacity for building and sustaining a multidisciplinary rehabilitation workforce capable of effectively addressing population needs effectively is widely variable and is largely lacking in many low- and middle-income settings.

The rehabilitation workforce is diverse, composed of multiple disciplines and specializations that collectively meet the range of needs existing within populations. While this diversity is necessary and valuable, it can present a particular challenge to resource scarce countries and settings attempting to build their rehabilitation workforce. A competency framework that recognizes the range of activities performed by different types of rehabilitation workers, and the core competencies that enable them to perform effectively, is a valuable resource to academic institutions, educators, accreditation bodies and regulatory agencies in these settings. The WHO Rehabilitation Competency Framework provides such a resource. It is aligned with WHO's strategic approach to workforce competencies, detailed in WHO Global Competency Framework for UHC (2020) and will be foundational to the development of contextually specific competency frameworks and standards needed to strengthen education and training, regulation, and quality care, such as through guiding curriculum development, establishing standards for practice, and building performance appraisal tools. The Rehabilitation Competency Framework also provides common core values and beliefs, as well as a shared language, to harmonize and unify the rehabilitation community for greater impact.

The WHO Rehabilitation Competency Framework is the result of a highly collaborative process and reflects the commitment and enthusiasm of the public health community towards addressing the significant workforce challenges faced around the world. It represents an important step towards the vision of the Rehabilitation 2030 Initiative, where anyone can access the quality rehabilitation they need.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "James Campbell".

**Dr James Campbell**

Director  
Health Workforce Department  
World Health Organization  
Geneva, Switzerland



A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Bente Mikkelsen".

**Dr Bente Mikkelsen**

Director  
Noncommunicable Diseases Department  
World Health Organization  
Geneva, Switzerland

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