

## Professional Development Framework Application Portfolio

# Letters of Support Samples

### Sample Letter #1 (Fictional)

**TO:** Framework/RSAM Central Committee

**FROM:** Miranda L. Jacobsen, BSN, RN  
Staff Nurse Level E  
Adult Oncology Unit

**Subject:** Letter of Support for Jane Marie Doe

**Date:** February 20, 20XX

Jane Doe asked me to write this letter of support for her application for advancement to Level D in the Professional Development Framework. She requested that I address her practice in relation to the Clinical Skills and Knowledge Domain. I am very pleased to do so as I have known Jane since she first started on the Adult Oncology Unit 6 years ago. I have worked on this unit for the past 15 years. Jane brought past experience in critical care to our unit which was extremely helpful in the care of our patients who have multiple needs and are often extremely unstable. From the very beginning it was clear that Jane was very engaged with her patients and their families as well as the new specialty of Oncology Nursing.

Jane has astute assessment skills and often picks up on very subtle changes in the patient's status. Recently one of our patient's became extremely tired and weak but was afebrile and did not exhibit any other signs of impending decline. With further assessment, Jane recognized that the patient's immune system was compromised from her chemotherapy and she shared with the team her concern that the patient may be septic. As it turned out, blood cultures were positive and the patient was started on IV antibiotics in a timely manner. This type of assessment is very typical of Jane. Another way that Jane stands out is her ability to assess individual patient needs and preferences, and communicate these to the entire team as well as document them within the care plan in Mi-Chart. For example, we recently cared for a patient who did not have family support available as she was recently widowed and her children lived out-of-state. Jane shared this information with the team and identified resources for the patient through social work and the volunteer program. She has been a super-user and ongoing Mi-Chart resource for the unit since we began this new way of charting in 2014. She is well versed in all of the technology used on the unit, but especially helpful to all of us in relation to Mi-Chart.

As a member of the Unit Based Committee Jane did online literature searches for evidence related to some of our quality improvement projects such as our move to bedside change of shift report and inter-unit transfers. Our patients have many educational needs related to their care and Jane has been a champion in this area. She facilitated a way to better document patient education in Mi-Chart so that it is clear what topics have been covered and which ones are yet to be done. Because our patients have many educational needs related to their chemo and symptom management, this is a huge part of patient care on our unit. Jane has become an expert on IV administration of vesicant chemotherapy. She is well versed in all aspects and is therefore one of only 4 people on the unit who can provide check-off on this competency for newly chemo-certified nurses. She is also extremely knowledgeable about all aspects of our often complex procedures and protocols and she shares this knowledge readily with new staff members as well as experienced colleagues on the unit. She has been a frequent contributor to policy revisions, a recent example being her work on the protocol for central line dressing changes to prevent CLABSI.

Jane recently became certified in Oncology Nursing and has started to be active in the Michigan Chapter, thus demonstrating her expert knowledge and commitment to the specialty. I highly recommend Jane in her advancement to Level D. **I have completed peer review education.**

## Sample Letter #2 (Fictional)

February 4, 20XX

Dear Central Committee:

I am writing this letter on behalf of Jane Doe, a nurse on our 32 bed oncology unit. I have worked with Jane since she first came to the unit 5 years ago. Jane asked me to address the domain of Therapeutic Relationships.

Jane came to our unit as an experienced nurse; however, she was new to Oncology Nursing. She was a quick learner and immediately developed the knowledge and skills to care for our patients comprehensively, safely, and effectively, including complex chemotherapy administration. Early on, she distinguished herself as exceptionally skilled in therapeutic communication with patients and families. Jane is lead on our unit for the UMHS Nursing Model of Care, and she has found ways to encourage everyone to learn and share the patient's story. Her "Getting to Know Me" posters for patients, especially those who come for a lengthy stay, has allowed for the story to be located in a prominent place in each patient's room. This has been a tremendous help to not only nurses, but the entire Oncology team. Jane individualizes care at the bedside and reflects that in her documentation. She led an effort on our unit to utilize the "Individualization" and "Mutuality" questions in MiChart in order learn patient preferences.

Jane plans care for and with her patients, and is very effective in planning Patient Education in relation to needs after discharge. I can think of one of our young adult patients with Leukemia who left the hospital with her Spanish-speaking mother as her main caregiver, who was to administer IV medications and fluids at home. Her patience, persistence, and ability to gather resources both here (Interpreter Services, Home Med, Social Work, and our RN Case Manager) and at home (MVN), enabled the patient and her mom to be successful with self-care at home. This is an example of her advocacy in action! That patient did not require readmission and returned to see us, especially Jane, to say a big "thank you" for the care that allowed her to finish her treatment at home.

Jane is especially skilled at advocating for Palliative Care Services well in advance of immediate end-of-life care. She explains these services to patients and families and encourages dialog around the importance of symptom management and comfort, even when the patient continues to go forward with chemo and other medical interventions. Occasionally conflict may arise when patients and families become weary of the monotony and demands of a long-term stay with grueling protocols. Jane is an amazing listener and support person in these situations. She is also able to defuse and resolve conflicts that may arise. This occurred recently when one family was told one thing by one part of the team, and a very different thing from another part of the team. Jane called a family and team meeting and the issues were quickly resolved. In end of life situations, Jane brings peace and comfort to patients and families in their final hours together.

In summary, Jane is a model for effective therapeutic communication on our unit. She has mentored many new staff members in this important area of practice. I wholeheartedly recommend Jane for advancement in the Professional Development Framework. **I have completed peer review education.**

Sincerely,

*(Signature)*

Janice Hanks, BSN, RN  
Level E, Oncology Unit