



An overview of advanced practice policy across the UK

Briefing Paper – September 2018

This paper provides an overview of policy relating to advanced practice across the UK.

Wales

Definition and requirements

Wales has a [Framework](#) for Advanced Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professional Practice in Wales, which was developed in 2010 and reviewed in 2012. This drew heavily on Scotland's advanced practice toolkit for nursing (2008), incorporating the underpinning principles. It also built upon principles laid out in the Post Registration Career Framework for Nurses in Wales.

Education is mapped to Masters level criteria and encompasses four pillars:

- Management and leadership
- Education (either within clinical practice or education sector)
- Research
- Advanced clinical practice

Wales has seen the emergence of many advanced practice roles.

"[Advanced practice is...] A role, requiring a registered practitioner to have acquired an expert knowledge base, complex decision-making skills and clinical competencies for expanded scope of practice, the characteristics of which are shaped by the context in which the individual practices. Demonstrable, relevant masters level education is recommended for entry level."

ACP achievement can be demonstrated through local employer agreement supported by academic achievements and mapped to the national framework and Knowledge and Skills Framework. The framework includes guidelines on governance standards. A full Masters degree is required to be an advanced practitioner in Wales.

Advanced practice policy

The Welsh Government is investing in advanced practice. It funded Workforce, Education & Development Services (WEDS) £1.25m for advanced and extended practice in 2018/19, an increase on the 2017/18 figure of £1m. This funding is intended to transform the health workforce and improve service delivery across

Wales. The advanced and extended practice budget is ring fenced and covers a wide range of professionals, with specific, significant allocation for primary and community care roles (£750,000 in 18/19). There is a policy push to put more focus on community and primary care, independent prescribing, complex decision making and multi-professional working in line with the parliamentary review of health and social care.

Spend by each organisation is carefully monitored. Commissioning of postgraduate education will move to Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW).

Some advanced practice education for Welsh health and social care providers is provided by English universities. Significant changes planned for advanced practice in England, including a national academy and national procurement of programmes or modules, could have implications for courses commissioned by Welsh bodies.

Scotland

Definition and requirements

Scotland has had an advanced practice toolkit since 2008 and a framework for advanced nursing practice since 2012.

Advanced practice education has four pillars:

- Clinical practice
- Facilitating learning
- Leadership
- Evidence, research and development

In Scotland advanced practice education must be at Masters level, but not necessarily a Masters programme. New funding is supporting postgraduate diplomas.

“Advanced nurse practitioners (ANPs) are experienced and highly educated registered nurses who manage the complete clinical care of their patients, not focusing on any sole condition...ANPs are educated at Master’s level and are competent to work at advanced level as part of multidisciplinary teams across all clinical settings, depending on their area of expertise.”

Advanced practice policy

Advanced practice is an active policy area in Scotland. The policy is driven by *Setting the Direction*, the CNO’s 2014 review of nurse education. The first aim of this review was to develop a sustainable national approach to post-registration and postgraduate education and CPD to support nurses and midwives across career pathways from registration to specialist, advanced and consultant roles.

Scotland has developed a national approach to advanced nurse practitioner (ANP) education based on expectations identified in 2017 by the Transforming Nursing Advanced Practice Group. Specific competencies have been defined for ANPs in paediatric, neonatal, primary and community care, mental health and acute settings. This will be supported by the publication of a refreshed ANP toolkit. A second advanced practice paper is expected from the Transforming Roles group later this year.

Scotland has an aspiration to develop an additional 500 advanced nurse practitioners over the coming years, using £3m of funding from Scottish Government. This is managed by NHS Education Scotland (NES), which has been undertaking work to coordinate and commission post-registration education to meet these targets. NES worked with NHS Boards, general practice and others in 2017 to analyse service and education needs. Providers' returns were used to create projected numbers by specialty across Scotland. [To coincide with this initiative, the Council undertook its own survey of Scottish members' postgraduate provision in 2017. This found 6 advanced practice MSc programmes, four of which were for nursing, and one PG Dip programme (in advanced practice in district nursing with specialist practitioner qualification).]

CoDH Scotland has been working with NES on advanced practice policy. It has indicated members' willingness to explore collaborative and regional approaches to advanced practice education.

Commissioning

NHS Boards and independent organisations in Scotland have requested funding from NES for ANP modules commencing between April 2018 and March 2019. This funding supports nurses to complete a postgraduate diploma in advanced practice where an additional ANP post has been identified by the employer.

Three multi-disciplinary advanced practice 'academies' are being developed in Scotland (West, North and East), each comprising Health Boards within the region, national boards and HEIs providing advanced practice programmes. Collaboration includes three shared CPD events for ANPs each year. The academies will also have a governance function establishing regional standards and moderating final sign-off.

England

A Multi-Professional Framework for Advanced Practice was published in 2017. This was the culmination of a concerted effort by multiple stakeholders to introduce consistency, clarity and shared understanding around ACP, recognizing that ACP roles and education had developed differently in different professions and regions in England. The framework is expected to be implemented by 2020.

Publication of the framework coincided with the introduction of an apprenticeship for advanced clinical practitioners.

There are four pillars:

- Clinical practice

- Leadership and management
- Education
- Research

“Advanced clinical practice is delivered by experienced, registered health and care practitioners. It is a level of practice characterised by a high degree of autonomy and complex decision making. This is underpinned by a master’s level award or equivalent that encompasses the four pillars of clinical practice, leadership and management, education and research, with demonstration of core capabilities and area specific clinical competence.

Advanced clinical practice embodies the ability to manage clinical care in partnership with individuals, families and carers. It includes the analysis and synthesis of complex problems across a range of settings, enabling innovative solutions to enhance people’s experience and improve outcomes.”

In 2018 Health Education England (HEE) funded the Council to lead a project on the development of advanced clinical practice (ACP) in England, focusing on the interface with higher education providers. This project included an ACP conference on 14 September 2018.

England’s national ACP steering group has highlighted a number of specific challenges for ACP education in England, including:

- Ensuring that professionals working at the level of ACP have the knowledge, skills and behaviours relevant to their professional setting and job role (specialist competencies)
- Implementation and application should allow for local context but result in sufficient consistency to help transform the workforce in line with the Five Year Forward View approach
- Given the diversity of educational routes possible to develop clinical competence and capability, mapping of previous education or experience is likely to become more important, This may rely on promotion of portfolio approaches and increased consistency and transparency of processes for the accreditation or recognition of relevant prior learning or prior experiential learning (APL/APEL)
- The framework recognises that collaboration across an area or place may be necessary to optimise cost effective training with sufficient flexibility to develop specialty specific competence and broad capability. Specialist modules in particular may need to be delivered across England, regionally or locally to be educationally and financially viable
- Education providers will need to respond not just to the national framework but also to the apprenticeship requirements and market changes created by other developments including Colleges’ credentialing programmes.

At the Council's ACP conference on 14 September HEE invited HEIs to collaborate across the system on the design of a national ACP academy. Delegates also began to discuss possible national procurement of ACP programmes or modules and the benefits of collaboration to create economies of scale, the adoption of a place-based approach and ensure necessary programme provision across England

Council members at the event stressed the need for timely funding decisions and long-term investment to allow for planning and programme development. They agreed that more certainty about the future would allow universities to develop capacity, capability and teams.

The Council is working on a full conference report including recommendations for next steps for the Council, HEIs are HEE.

Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland published an [advanced nursing practice framework](#) in 2014.

There are four pillars:

- Direct clinical practice
- Leadership and collaborative practice
- Education and learning
- Research and evidence-based practice

Education is through a Masters programme based at Ulster University. This offers a Masters in Nursing for nurses from all fields, midwives and health visitors. This covers a range of issues from communication, leadership, person-centred practice and research. In the full-time mode it is typically completed over the course of a year.

Ulster University also offers PgCert, PGDip and MSc education in Advancing Practice for HCPC registered professionals. This provides the graduate with, for example, an 'MSc in Advancing Practice in (Profession)'. Award titles include clinical physiology, diagnostic radiography, occupational therapy, orthoptics, physiotherapy, podiatry, radiotherapy and oncology and speech and language therapy. Specialist areas of study are also offered within these programmes.

For more information contact:

Fleur Nielsen, Head of Policy, fleur.nielsen@cod-health.ac.uk