

Advancing Practice Policy



Title:			
Advancing Practice Policy			
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June 2021	Lead Nurse for Advancing Roles and Non-Medical Prescribing Deputy Director of Corporate Nursing Advance Practice Strategic Group	v0.1-0.2	New policy under development
Aug 2021	Lead Nurse for Advancing Roles and Non-Medical Prescribing Deputy Director of Corporate Nursing Advance Practice Strategic Group	v1.0	Approved by Policy Approval Group

Executive Summary

The aim of this policy is to provide a consistent set of requirements that support advancing clinical practice across all healthcare professions, which in turn will provide a platform for the organisation to deliver a sustainable and progressive approach to advancing practice.

This policy also seeks to improve workforce planning, governance arrangements, education and training and evaluation and to ensure that the disciplines, where appropriate have uni professional road maps that support services and individuals aspiring to these roles.

The implementation of the policy will help to:

- Improve workforce planning in relation to advancing roles
- Ensure that there is a robust governance framework around advanced practice
- Ensure all professions have education frameworks with robust clinical mentorship and appropriate clinical placements.
- Support a commitment to Continuing Professional Development and supervision for individuals operating in advanced roles
- Evidence the contribution that advanced roles make to safe, effective and person centred care

The policy is for use across NHS Lothian, recognising that national frameworks are being developed for some professions and are well established for others. This provides a baseline in the absence of detailed national guidance and will be revised as and when national guidance is published or updated.

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1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out an approach to promote consistent, sustainable, and progressive advanced practice for professionals across all disciplines that enables the workforce to be developed to meet future clinical needs.

2.0 Policy statement

New clinical roles have been introduced in the NHS as part of new ways of service delivery and workforce pressures. Advanced roles should be created in NHS Lothian to make best use of the available workforce to meet service demand, by extending talent and allowing individuals to work at the top of their professional license. NHS Lothian will provide equity of opportunity and intention across all professional disciplines to ensure that advancing roles are developed in response to defined workforce need, with appropriate funding and embedded planning for educational and supervisory support.

All staff working in advanced roles will have access to appropriate professional oversight regardless of the line management arrangements within the service.

3.0 Scope

The policy applies to registered clinical professionals in all groups except registered medical and dental practitioners. Individual professions may develop specific education and career pathways that are consistent with the general principals in this policy.

4.0 Definitions

4.1 Advanced Practitioners

Advanced Practitioners are healthcare professionals educated to Master's level and can demonstrate clinical competence in their level of practice. They have developed the skills and knowledge to allow them to take on expanded roles and scope of practice caring for patients.

This level of practice is characterised by high level autonomous decision making, including assessment, diagnosis and treatment of patients with complex multi-dimensional problems. Decisions are made using high level expert, knowledge and skills. This includes the authority to refer, admit, treat and discharge within appropriate clinical areas.

As a clinical leader they have the freedom and authority to act and accept the responsibility and accountability for those actions.

New clinical workforces are being developed that operate at advanced levels which are included in the scope for this policy. The National Education Scotland (NES) Post Registration

Career Framework for Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professions (NMAHP) can be used to support the development of these advanced roles.

Practitioners working in level 7 advanced roles (as defined by NES) should be employed at minimum Agenda for Change Band 7

4.2 Advanced Practitioner - Generic

Advanced practitioners are experienced and highly educated healthcare professionals who manage the complete clinical care for their patient, not solely any specific condition and have a breadth of advanced clinical knowledge and expertise. Advanced practice in this context is a level of practice, rather than a type or speciality of practice and is not necessarily profession specific.

Working as part of the multidisciplinary team, advanced practitioners can work in or across all clinical settings, dependant on their area of expertise.

Examples of such roles operating at this level are Advanced Nurse Practitioners, Advanced Clinical Practitioners, Advanced Frailty Practitioner and Medical Associated Professions.

4.3 Advanced Specialist Practitioner – Profession or Specialism specific

An Advanced Specialist Practitioner is an experienced and highly educated healthcare professional who works within a specific field of practice and has the depth of specialist knowledge to do this. They manage, deliver, advise, and support the care for people within their field of specialist practice and will act as an expert specialist advisor or resource for others.

Examples of roles operating at advanced specialist practice level include Advanced Musculoskeletal Physiotherapist, Advanced Practice Reporting Radiographer and Advanced Clinical Nurse specialist.

4.4 Consultant

The non medical consultant may have their own caseload of patients and will have involvement in advising on direct patient care and delivery. Consultants work within multidisciplinary teams across organisational, professional and agency boundaries and possess a high degree of personal and professional autonomy in making complex clinical decisions. Consultant NMAHPs are expected to lead and influence service and policy development at strategic level while continuing to provide a strong clinical commitment and expert advice to clinical colleagues.

Examples of non medical consultant roles include Consultant Physiotherapist and Consultant Nurse.

4.5 The Four Pillars of Practice

Advanced roles should reflect each pillar of advanced practice and it is anticipated that each discipline will develop a strategy or roadmap outlining the specific requirements in relation to these 4 pillars.

- Clinical Practice
- Facilitating Learning
- Leadership
- Evidence, research and development

5.0 Implementation Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Workforce Planning and Recruitment

Creating an effective workforce requires an evidence-based workforce plan which is integrated with finance, activity and performance plans, and directly involves professional leaders and managers of the service.

5.1.1 Service needs analysis

Service areas proposing to develop advanced roles should undertake a service needs analysis in order to strategically plan their advanced practice workforce. Workforce planning for advancing practice clinical roles should be undertaken with an understanding of the role and how this will support and complement existing clinical teams. Planning should also include an understanding of the knowledge, skills and training required. All advanced roles must be in response to clinical need within a service and supported by appropriate finance to support the training period and substantive post. Planning for advanced roles should include the capacity to deliver the clinical and educational supervision required both during the training phase and as a qualified advanced practitioner.

Workforce plans identifying potential advanced roles should be subject to financial appraisal within the business unit and included in the Boards annual workforce plan via the NHS Lothian Workforce Planning and Development Group

Substantive advanced roles may be filled in a training capacity to develop a future workforce. However, services must identify in their workforce plan the proportion of trainee positions to substantive positions that can be supported. This ensures a pipeline of potential candidates for advanced practice roles.

In order to support consistency within advanced professional roles, , NHS Lothian generic job descriptions must be used where available, or developed separately by each healthcare profession in line with their specific strategy or roadmap .

5.1.2 Identifying potential candidates

The Board normal recruitment procedures must be applied in relation to identifying individuals to be considered for new advanced roles, training positions or filling substantive positions vacated.

Formal competitive recruitment and interview selection processes must be employed.

Where requirement for an advanced role is identified, and where there may not be a large pool of qualified applicants, Annex 21 training posts may be considered, with appropriate training and development provided whilst in post. It must be made clear to the candidates by the recruiting manager, the expected length of training and an exit strategy in the event of the education, competencies or academic level required for the advanced role not being achieved

5.1.3 Funding

Where an advanced role is identified, funding for any required education and training to fulfil a particular post should be provided by NHS Lothian or where available, as part of a specific regional or national funding strategy.

Consideration should also be given to the financial cost of any clinical supervision provided by medical or other healthcare professionals during the training period and beyond

5.2 Education, training and development

Whilst some roles and professions have educational pathways agreed at national or regulatory level, it is recognised that other professions currently do not have these agreements or guidelines in place. Therefore in the absence of these agreements, the following educational principles should apply for advanced roles within NHS Lothian.

All practitioners recruited to work at an advanced level should be educated to Master's level (SCQF level 11) or completed a Master's level pathway with a post graduate diploma as a minimum). This may be as part of a specifically designed academic pathway or standalone modules relevant to the area of work and required role.

Standardised educational requirements that are relevant to an advanced role must be used where available using agreed national guidelines or frameworks to support quality and consistency. It is recognised that this may vary within the healthcare professional groups and will depend on the requirements of the role and availability of academic modules and national guidelines

Educational pre – requisites to apply for an advanced role or to study at an advanced level must be standardised within professional roles to support workforce planning and career progression.

5.2.1 Accredited Courses

An agreed and defined educational pathway or route should be used to reflect relevant national or local competencies for the particular role. Where available, accredited modules provided by a Higher Educational Institute should be used in order to ensure the appropriate academic award is applied for working at an advanced level (SCQF level 11)

It is recognised that some specialist educational modules may not be always be accessible or available as an academically accredited module and that a form of 'in-house' training may be required to provide the specific competency based element of a role. Where this is the case, the education and competencies must be developed and agreed locally in conjunction with relevant guidelines and best practice and in consultation with the relevant NHS Lothian NMAHP education team, to assure quality and consistency.

5.2.2 Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

CPD in the context of this policy refers to advanced practitioners working in established roles

All healthcare professionals have to evidence a minimum amount of CPD as part of their professional revalidation requirements

Healthcare professionals working at advanced level should have agreed CPD time as part of their job plan in order to maintain and develop their roles under the four pillars of practice.

CPD planning should encompass the supervision and development requirements of the particular advanced role and should include professional regulatory body requirements. Regular CPD meetings for advanced roles should allow for discussion around ways of working, identifying learning needs/opportunities, opportunities for feedback, peer review maintaining standards/capabilities, and embracing life-long learning. CPD supervision provides an excellent opportunity to develop teams and promote self-care/ resilience and wellbeing. Educational opportunities can form part of this and can be inter-professional, uni-professional, or ideally a mix of both.

Additionally and as part of the four pillars of practice, those working at an advanced level should be facilitating the learning of others in order to continue to develop in their own role.

5.2.3 Job Planning

All advanced practitioners should have a job plan that is agreed and shared between the post holder, their line manager and supervisor. During the trainee period this should identify time focussed on training and supervision. For qualified advanced practitioners this should reflect any agreed commitment to AP mentorship, supervision for non-medical prescribing, teaching or research commitments.

Job planning will be based on the individual profession's process and will be reviewed on a yearly basis as part of personal development planning (PDP) or more frequently if there are material changes to the role

5.2.4 Educational Supervisor requirements

To be able to supervise or assess advanced practitioners, supervisors and assessors must be able to demonstrate that they have undertaken appropriate preparation which is evidenced in a portfolio of evidence. Minimum requirements to undertake supervision or assessment should be defined in specific strategies or route maps.

5.2.5 Providing clinical experience for non NHS Lothian employees

A clear understanding and agreement of the particular experience and competency required should be agreed by the host service and an observer or honorary contract will be required. Guidance can be found on the [Employability and Placements page on the HR Online pages of the NHS Lothian intranet](#).

An example of this might be optometrists working in the private sector who may need support to train or gain experience at an advanced level in the NHS.

5.3 Strategy or Route maps

Each health care profession will have their own advanced route map or strategy but all must contain common elements as described below. These elements should be used in conjunction with any regulatory or professional body requirements and align with this policy.

- Clear examples of advanced roles and career progression within each speciality and how these roles fit into the existing workforce
- Minimum educational requirements and experience
- An agreed and consistent training pathway
- Clarity of professional line management within the clinical team
- CPD requirements and expectations to evidence on going competency and development for advanced roles
- Generic job descriptions that accurately reflect the requirements of the role
- A standardised recruitment process that provides equity of opportunity
- Identified sources of funding to support the recruitment and training of advanced roles

5.4 Regulatory and Professional bodies

The title 'advanced' is not currently regulated, although parts of some advanced roles, for example independent and supplementary prescribing is annotated to professional registers and regulated as such.

Individual regulatory and professional bodies have principles and guidelines for healthcare profession working at advanced level.

5.5 Quality assurance and annual appraisal

It is essential that services have mechanisms in place for quality assurance and this should be reflected in the practitioner's ePortfolio. It's recommended that a basket of measures is used that can demonstrate safe, effective and person centred care. Formal annual review or appraisal requirements should be defined in specific strategies or route maps.

5.6 Organisational Governance

Organisational oversight of the discipline specific strategies and route maps will be via the Advancing Practice Strategic Group, which is chaired by the Executive Director of Nursing, Midwifery and AHPs.

All practitioners in advanced roles must have access to appropriate professional support and both clinical and educational supervision regardless of the line management arrangements within the service. The extent of this may vary depending on the post, role and individual.

5.7 Staff roles and responsibilities

5.7.1 Executive Lead

The Executive Director of Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professionals has strategic leadership of this policy.

5.7.2 Line managers

Managers are responsible for ensuring that relevant staff within their line management are made aware of, and implement, this policy and the relevant strategy which support it

5.7.3 Practitioners

It is the responsibility of all staff within NHS Lothian who are employed in a clinical advanced level role to ensure that they provide high quality, person-centred and dignified care and maintain any organisational and regulatory requirements.

6.0 Associated materials

[NHS Lothian Advanced Nurse Practice Strategy 2021-2025](#)

[NHS Job Evaluation Handbook – NHS Employers](#)

[NHS Lothian Framework for Independent and Supplementary Prescribing](#)

[Agenda for Change, Guidance Note 25, Annex U – Arrangements for Pay and Banding of Trainees](#)

7.0 Evidence base

- [Chief Nursing Officer’s Directorate \(2021\) Transforming Nursing Roles Paper 7 Advanced Nursing Practice – Phase II, Edinburgh: Scottish Government](#)
- [Chief Nursing Officer’s Directorate \(2021\) Paper 8 Review of Clinical Nurse Specialist and Nurse Practitioner Roles within Scotland: Edinburgh: Scottish Government](#)
- [British Medical Association. New clinical roles in the NHS.](#) (Accessed 14/05/21)

- [Chief Nursing Officer’s Directorate \(2017\) Transforming Nursing, Midwifery and Health Professions \(NMaHP\) Roles: Paper 2 Advanced nursing practice. Edinburgh: Scottish Government](#)
- [Faculty of Physician Associates](#)
- [National Education for Scotland Post Registration Career Framework for Nurses, Midwives and AHPs](#)
- [National Education for Scotland Pharmacist Career Framework Review \(September 2020\)](#)
- [NHS Scotland Workforce Planning \(Accessed 06/08/21\)](#)
- [NHS National Education England for England First Contact Practitioners and Advanced Practitioners \(musculoskeletal\) in Primary Care](#)
- [NHS Scotland Advanced Practice Toolkit. An online resource of information and tools that help support Advanced Practice was developed by the Scottish Government now maintained by NHS Education for Scotland](#)
- [Nursing and Midwifery Council \(2018\) The Code: Professional Standards of Practice and Behaviour for Nurses, Midwives and associates. London: NMC](#)
- [Professional Standards Authority](#)
- [Royal College of Anaesthetists: Anaesthesia Associates](#)
- [Royal College of Nursing \(2018\). Advanced Level Nursing Practice: Introduction RCN Standards for advanced level nursing practice, advanced nurse practitioners, RCN accreditation and RCN credentialing \(Accessed 02/05/21\)](#)
- [Scottish Government \(2010\) Consultant Nurse , Midwives and Allied Health Professionals Guidance for NHS Boards](#)

8.0 Stakeholder consultation

The Advancing Practice Policy was developed and reviewed by a multi-disciplinary working group with input from a range of professional stakeholders. Feedback from wide stakeholder consultation has been considered by NHS Lothian Advanced Practice Consultation Group and NHS Lothian Advanced Practice Strategic Group in the development of the policy.

9.0 Monitoring and review

This policy will be formally reviewed every three years. The Executive Director of Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professionals as the lead Executive will continuously review implementation of the policy and procedure and prompt earlier review if required.