

QNI/QNIS Standards for Senior General Practice Nurse Education and Practice Project.

Introduction to the Project

This project has been funded by the Queens Nursing Institute (QNI) (covering England, Wales and Northern Ireland) and the Queens Nursing Institute Scotland (QNIS). A survey of General Practice Nurses (GPN) published by the QNI in 2016¹ identified that there was a lack of consistency in the educational opportunities for GPNs and a pressing need to recruit more nurses to these roles. The NMC Standards for Specialist Practice for General Practice Nursing had not been updated, in effect, since 1994 and were not felt to reflect contemporary GPN education and practice. The project commenced in January 2016 and has been guided by a project advisory group reflecting a range of perspectives across the four UK countries. To date information has been gathered from a literature review, online and face to face focus groups with GPN clinicians, telephone interviews with Practice Managers and GPN educators and feedback from GPs.

These standards are focused on the role of the **Senior GPN (SGPN)** and have been designed to reflect the requirements of this role working in new models of care and to reflect the rapid changes in General Practice and broader primary care. They are **NOT** designed to be for nurses new to General Practice and a separate stream of the project is developing standards to reflect the requirements of educational preparation at this level.

Currently educational provision for general practice nursing varies between the four UK countries. Courses approved by the NMC are not offered in Northern Ireland and Scotland and provision of these courses in England and Wales is limited. The QNI/QNIS believes that these standards will:

- Identify consistency in the expectations of GPNs in these senior roles to employers, commissioners and GPN clinicians.
- Offer a career pathway for GPNs to enhance recruitment and retention
- Provide guidance to education providers to ensure courses enable students to have the knowledge, skills and behaviours to meet these standards.

The QNI/QNIS recognise that not all education providers will wish to develop a course that meets the 1994 NMC specialist practice standards and the new QNI/S standards but feedback from GPN educators has identified that the new standards would be welcomed and universities would map their courses to the standards. The QNI/S would expect that any such course would have protected time in practice to develop and enhance skills, be assessed in practice and for the student to be supported by a mentor.

¹ https://www.qni.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/gpn_c21_report.pdf
General Practice Nursing in the 21st Century – a time of opportunity.

The standards have been written as practice outcomes to describe what senior GPNs should be able to do in practice. It is recognised that every General Practice is different and GPNs face particular challenges in negotiating professional support and development in demanding workplaces however it is believed that adoption of these standards will support and guide GPNs as they face future challenges. The outcomes of the work undertaken so far has used the central pillars of the Advanced Practice Toolkit as the framework for the standards and this fits with both the HEE Career and Education Framework for General Practice Nursing and also the Scottish Career and Development Framework for GPNs.

The purpose of this consultation is to get a “sense check” that the practice standards reflect both the contemporary and future requirements of the senior GPN and, as far as possible, take account of the future strategic developments or influences over the next 5-10 years. The consultation does not seek to change wording or debate in which domain a practice standard should be placed as these are often arbitrary decisions. Therefore it is important to see the framework as a whole to ensure the key elements are included. It is also important to recognise that knowledge and application is implicit in achieving the practice standards. Before undertaking the survey please be aware that:

- These standards are aimed at senior GPNs who have already achieved and consolidated core competencies in practice nursing and are likely to have academic credit at minimum level 6 (Scottish CQF level 10)
- Feedback to the project was split on the need for non-medical prescribing to be included. Therefore a model has been developed whereby this could be an option although all GPNs meeting the standards will be expected to have undertaken advanced assessment skills which are a prerequisite for prescribing courses.
- Although there is a degree of overlap in some areas the standards do not lead to Advanced Nurse Practitioner status. GPNs wishing to develop as Advanced Nurse Practitioners should follow a course leading to this qualification.
- The standards are deliberately broad as it is not feasible to list every scenario that may be encountered but rather to identify the skills necessary at this level which will enable an analytical approach to practice.

The QNI and QNIS believe it is important to consult as widely as possible but recognise that this must also be a manageable process. Therefore a survey monkey questionnaire has been designed to reflect the above requirements. Most of the questions are “closed” but there is an opportunity for some qualitative feedback.

Below are the practice standards. In developing these, the project has used the NMC Standards of Competence for new registrants as its baseline to ensure the practice standards expand and develop the requirements of registrants. The project has also used the NMC definition of competence when developing the practice standards:

The term competence refers to the overarching set of knowledge, skills and attitudes required to practise safely and effectively without direct supervision. It has been defined as ‘the combination of skills, knowledge and attitudes, values and technical abilities that underpin safe and effective nursing practice and interventions’.

The survey can be accessed via the following link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/3WNCW3F>

Senior General Practice Nurse (SGPN) – PRACTICE STANDARDS

At the end of a programme mapped against the QNI/QNIS voluntary standards the SGPN will be able to:

Domain 1 – Clinical Care

- 1.1 Demonstrate a broad range of evidence informed general practice nursing (GPN) clinical expertise that supports high quality, person centred care for individuals across the age range in the practice population including children and young people where appropriate. Evaluate therapeutic and other care management strategies ensuring effectiveness and patient concordance.
- 1.2 Use advanced assessment skills when assessing individuals with complex multi-morbidity health care needs, using a range of evidence based assessment tools to enable accurate decision making and identifying variation in individuals with a diagnosis, ensuring correct referral and management pathways are followed and prescribing across a range of interventions within their scope of competence.
- 1.3 Appreciate the connection between physical health and mental health issues, identifying patients with mental health issues and develop strategies to provide emotional support, mental health promotion and well-being with patients and their carers, collaborating with mental health professionals and General Practitioners (GPs) when identifying needs and mental capacity, using recognised assessment and referral pathways and best interest decision making.
- 1.4 Engage in effective multidisciplinary and multi-agency team working whilst recognising professional accountability to ensure optimal patient care ensuring transitions across health care and other agency boundaries are smooth and reassuring to patients.
- 1.5 Demonstrate advanced communication skills and be able to foster therapeutic relationships with patients, enabling patients to know they have been listened to with respect and compassion. Use creative problem solving, influencing and negotiation to enable shared decision making when developing care and management plans and anticipatory care.
- 1.6 Demonstrate partnership approaches when undertaking consultations, fostering a culture of patient-centred practice and promoting the concept of self-care and patient

led care where possible and providing appropriate health promotion, education and support.

- 1.7 Facilitate behaviour change interventions for patients using extended brief interventions where appropriate and support the team to incorporate and evaluate behaviour change interventions in their consultations, including social prescribing.
- 1.8 Engage and use digital technologies to support patient self-care and the efficiency and effectiveness of the General Practice Nursing team.
- 1.9 Develop one area of specialist nursing practice interest according to the needs of the practice population.
- 1.10 Assess, evaluate and articulate risks to both patients and staff using a range of tools, professional judgment and experience. Develop and implement risk management strategies that take account of people's views and responsibilities, whilst promoting patient and staff safety and preventing avoidable harm.

Domain 2 – Leadership and management

- 2.1 Demonstrate professional and clinical leadership of the general practice nursing team and clinically supervise, support and appraise the team in their delivery of nursing interventions in the practice. Use advanced communication skills to enable confident management of complex interpersonal issues and conflict management. In larger nursing teams support and enable other team members to induct, appraise, support and develop junior members of the team.
- 2.2 Manage the general practice nursing team within regulatory, professional, legal, ethical and policy frameworks. Promote and model effective team work ensuring staff feel valued and have opportunities for development and to enhance resilience but also create and implement strategies when performance needs to be addressed.
- 2.3 Analyse the clinical caseload for the GPN team, ensuring a safe and effective distribution of workload using delegation, empowerment, education skills and effective resource management.
- 2.4 Demonstrate knowledge of social, political and economic policies and drivers that impact on the wider community and analyse how these may impact on the design and delivery of general practice nursing services to meet the needs of the practice population.
- 2.5 Understand national and local public health strategies and how these are aligned to support the health of the practice population. Collaborate effectively with other

disciplines and agencies to identify how the GPN team can lead and assist in the implementation of these strategies.

- 2.6 Ensure every member of the GPN team is able to recognise vulnerability of adults and children and understand their responsibilities and those of other organisations in terms of safeguarding legislation, policies and procedures.
- 2.7 Confidently articulate the unique contribution and value of the general practice nursing team to both the business objectives of the Practice and to improved health outcomes for patients whilst maintaining a strategic system wide perspective..
- 2.8 Apply a range of change management strategies to respond flexibly and innovatively to changing contexts of care and the need for amended service provision.
- 2.9 Analyse the practice population to ensure all patients with long term conditions are identified, undertaking risk stratification, where appropriate, to ensure evidence based pathways of care are followed and there is effective case management of patients with complex needs across the practice/federation.

Domain 3 – Facilitation of learning

- 3.1 Complete an NMC approved mentorship award/programme (if not previously achieved), supporting and facilitating the development of placements within General Practice for nurses and other health care professionals.
- 3.2 Create positive teaching and learning environments and mentorship and preceptorship schemes that enhance the development of nursing students, nursing staff and other professions learning about care in General Practice and the wider community. Evaluate the impact of educational interventions for students, staff and patients.
- 3.3 Develop systems to assess the learning and development needs of the GPN team and negotiate strategies with the Practice to meet these needs.
- 3.4 Take responsibility for the practice assessment of nurses undertaking “foundation/fundamental” or “specialist practice” general practice nursing courses and ensure excellent liaison with approved education institutions.
- 3.5 Role model non-judgmental and value based care in practice creating a culture of openness and recognition of the duty of candour, promoting these values in other members of the GPN team.
- 3.6 Support registered nurses in the team in the revalidation process, acting as a confirmer as necessary.

Domain 4 – Evidence, Research and Development

- 4.1 Source and discern between different forms of evidence, engaging with the development of evidence based guidelines for the Practice or broader Federation/Cluster. Support staff to ensure all care is evidence informed and based on best practice.
- 4.2 Contribute to the development, collation, monitoring and evaluation of data relating to service provision and development, quality assurance and improvement. Analyse this information for benchmarking of GPN services, where appropriate, in the local area. Identify trends that may impact on the GPN service and, where appropriate, produce data-informed business/operational plans to support service development and innovation.
- 4.3 Participate in the development of systems, including face to face engagement, valuing considered, honest and reflective patient feedback that enable patients to share their experiences of care confidentially. Develop processes for the systematic improvement of service in response to patient feedback.
- 4.4 Ensure governance systems are in place for GPN staff to ensure patient follow up, referrals, correspondence and safety alerts are actioned.