

National Council for the Professional
Development of Nursing and Midwifery

Framework for the Establishment of Advanced Nurse Practitioner and Advanced Midwife Practitioner Posts

2nd Edition

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*National Council for the
Professional Development
of Nursing and Midwifery*

*An Chomhairle Náisiúnta d'Fhorbairt
Ghairmiúil an Altranais agus
an Chnóimhseachais*

Introduction

Advanced practice in nursing and midwifery has developed internationally and nationally.

The Commission on Nursing recognised that promotional opportunities should be open to nurses and midwives wishing to remain in clinical practice and accordingly recommended a clinical career pathway leading from registration to clinical specialisation and to advanced practice (Commission on Nursing 1998 6.26). The development of this career pathway serves to develop clinical nursing expertise in the interests of holism and excellence in patient/client care.

The establishment of this clinical career pathway is a function vested in the National Council for the Professional Development of Nursing and Midwifery. The National Council has developed a definition and core concepts of the role of the Advanced Nurse Practitioner/Advanced Midwife Practitioner (ANP/AMP) and determines the requirements for nurses and midwives to be accredited as ANPs/AMPs.

The process for the establishment of ANP/AMP service comprises two important parts. Firstly the service applies to have the post (Part 1. job description and site preparation approval) approved as an ANP/AMP post. Secondly the nurse/midwife then applies to be accredited as an ANP/AMP to the approved post (part 2. individual accreditation).

This document outlines the process for approval of ANP/AMP posts and accreditation of ANPs/AMPs.

To date a number of ANP posts have been developed by services and approved by the National Council and ANPs have been accredited. The posts established reflect service needs in the specific areas and their development has required creativity and leadership on behalf of all those involved. The development of these initial posts has paved the way for other service providers to use advanced nursing and midwifery expertise to respond to patient/client and service need.

This document, building on the framework outlined in the first edition (National Council for the Professional Development of Nursing and Midwifery 2001), outlines the background to the development of ANP/AMP posts in Ireland. It defines ANP/AMP roles and outlines the criteria that nurses and midwives must meet to in order to become ANPs/AMPs. It also provides guidance for nurses and midwives who are working through the processes. Templates are provided to assist in the applications processes.

The development of ANP/AMP roles and services is part of the strategic development of the overall health service and needs to take place in the context of contemporary health and social policy, the requirements of population health and the service planning process. The National Council endeavours to provide support to those involved in service development. For organisations that have identified a need for an ANP/AMP service and are committed to its development, the officers of the National Council are available at each stage of the process to provide advice and support.

The Health Service Reform Programme and the future direction of ANP/AMP role development

The Health Service Reform Program offers an exciting new framework through which a quality service will be delivered to consumers in a streamlined way. The development and enhancement of nursing and midwifery roles is a key factor part in the implementation of this reform. The development of ANP/AMP roles is a significant part of this and has been recognized as an ongoing and vital component of health service reform (Report of the Taskforce on Medical Staffing 2003).

The monitoring and approval of advanced practice posts in accordance with agreed standards, together with the accreditation of individuals as ANPs/AMPs remains with the National Council (Department of Health and Children 2003). The approval of postgraduate education courses (including those preparing nurses and midwives as CNS/CMSs & ANP/AMPs) is the responsibility of An Bord Altranais.

Process for the Establishment of Advanced Nursing Practice/Advanced Midwifery Practice Posts and Accreditation of Practitioners

The process for the establishment of ANP/AMP posts and the accreditation of ANP/AMP comprises two parts:

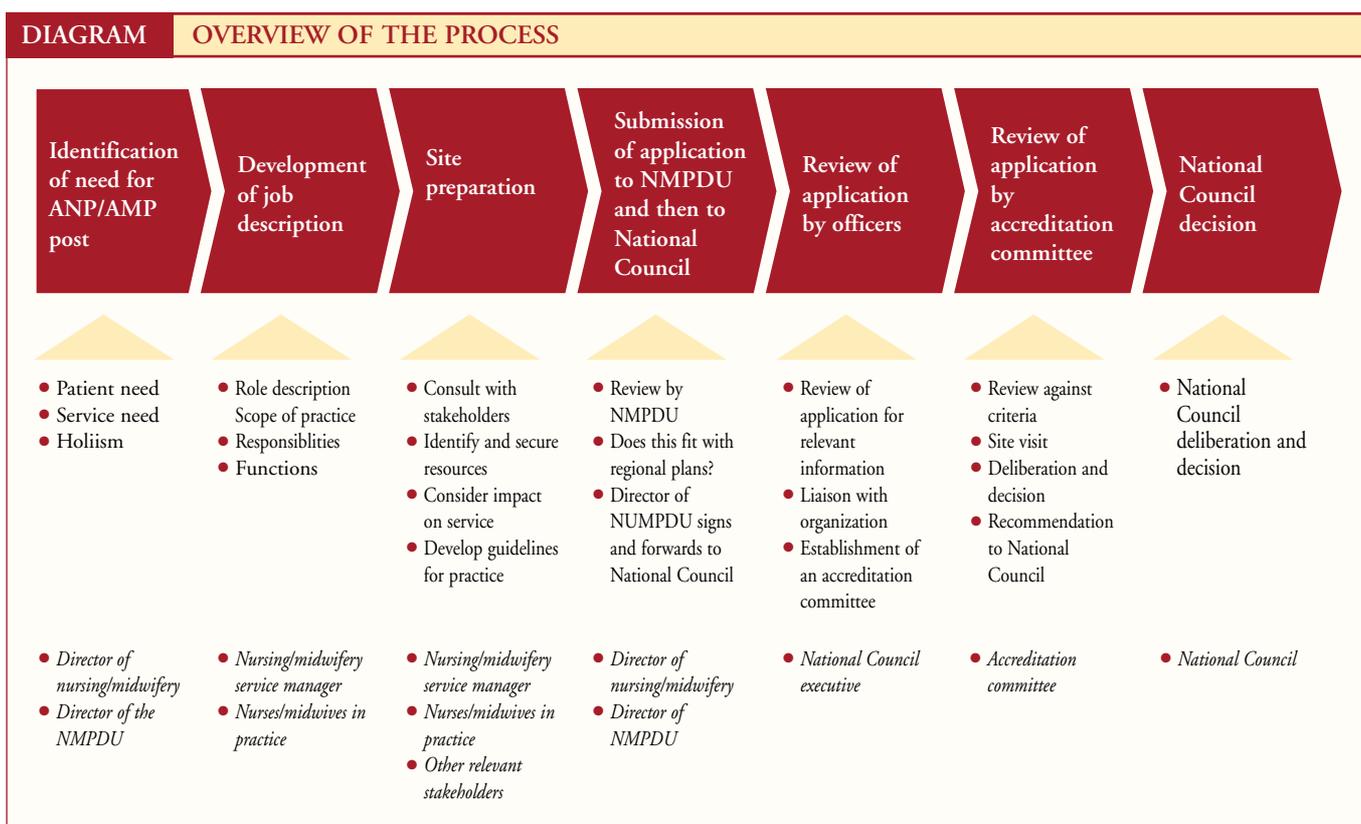
Part 1: Application by the health care organisation for approval of job description and site preparation

The job description and site preparation must be approved by the National Council before the nurse or midwife can be accredited. This is important in ensuring that posts develop in accordance with the National Council's vision for ANP/AMP roles in Ireland. This first stage is the responsibility of the Director of Nursing or Midwifery and/or the relevant manager.

An application can be made for approval of more than one post in a particular speciality or area of practice at a time. In the case of a number of posts being included in an application, while the job descriptions may essentially be the same, the site preparation details may differ. For example, justification needs to be made for the number of posts applied for and resource implications will need to be explicit for the specific number of posts.

Part 2: Application by nurse or midwife for accreditation as an ANP/AMP.

While nurses or midwives may conform to the definition of or meet the accreditation criteria for ANPs/AMPs they will be eligible to apply for accreditation as an ANP/AMP only where they are employed in an approved ANP/AMP post. Each nurse/midwife must successfully undergo the accreditation process of the National Council before he/she can use the title ANP/AMP. Therefore the title may only be used by nurses/midwives who are accredited as ANPs/AMPs by the National Council.



PART 1 JOB DESCRIPTION AND SITE PREPARATION						
Identification of need for ANP/AMP post	Development of job description	Site preparation	Submission of application to NMPDU and then to National Council	Review of application by officers	Review of application by accreditation committee	National Council decision

The identification of the need for ANP/AMP role(s) is the first vital step in the process of establishing an ANP/AMP post or service. This takes place at both regional and local level and involves:

- review of national and regional policy documents relevant to the service area;
- review of regional and local demographics and epidemiology including public health data, HIPE (Hospital In-patient Enquiry) and case mix data, actionables and deliverables outlined in the Health Strategy (Department of Health and Children 2001);
- review of service need and
- review of current roles and their effectiveness through audit.

Where a need for new roles is identified it is useful to examine national and international experience concerning the effectiveness and appropriateness of similar roles. On the basis of this evaluation and if the service deems ANP/AMP post(s) necessary it is the responsibility of the local manager to use the service planning process to seek funding and work closely with the Nursing and Midwifery Planning and Development Unit (NMPDU) regarding parameters of role and regional developments .

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A detailed job description should be devised containing details of the role and the responsibilities of the post, the appropriate reporting relationships for the post-holder and reflecting the required experience and education as specified by the National Council. The job description should incorporate the core concepts and definition of the ANP/AMP role, together with the specific competencies required for the post. The job description should be developed in line with the service plan and in consultation with the NMPDU. A template outlining the required information for job descriptions is provided in the template for part 1 application on page **of this document.

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The integration of the ANP/AMP into a practice setting will have implications for patients/clients, individual nurses/midwives, the nursing and midwifery professions, other healthcare providers and other healthcare professionals in the setting that the new role is to be introduced. The National Council advises that due consideration be given to assimilating the post and post-holder into the organisation in a manner beneficial to patients/clients, individual ANPs/AMPs, the nursing and midwifery professions, the healthcare providers and other healthcare professionals.

In preparation, employers need to articulate both the practice expectations of the ANP/AMP and their willingness to provide the necessary support to ensure successful integration of the role, giving due consideration the definition and core concepts of the ANP/AMP role.

Having identified the need for a specific area of care provision, the organisational manager must consider how an ANP/AMP might fit the service requirement, and how the introduction of a new role will impact on the service as a whole, in terms of benefit to the patient/client group, the workload of other healthcare professionals, the culture of the service and the distribution of resources within the service. Consideration should also be given to the sustainability of the ANP/AMP role and to the ongoing development of the individual ANP/AMP.

It is crucial that the development of the ANP/AMP role is carried out within the context of the service planning process. This includes obtaining funding for the post and the associated site development. Evidence of this is required by the National Council through the completion of the Financial Approval Form (available in the template for part 1 application on page ** of this document).

The organisational manager must:

- Ensure that the healthcare need to be addressed by the introduction of the ANP/AMP has been identified from health service need, from patient/client feedback and/or in service plans;
- Have a clear understanding of the legislation, rules, regulations and guidelines that govern nursing/midwifery practice (both directly and indirectly) and their implications for the proposed ANP/AMP service;
- Ensure that the service insurance arrangements incorporate all relevant aspects of the post;
- Ensure that guidelines for good practice are developed collaboratively;
- Determine how the patient/client will benefit from the ANP/AMP service;
- Ascertain that the service to be provided by the ANP/AMP is consistent with service/organisation philosophy;
- Project how the change will help to meet the goals of the service plan;
- Give consideration to the optimal location of the service
- Ensure that processes are in place to establish baseline measurements against which the service can be evaluated in the future;
- Give consideration to managing the integration of the ANP/AMP into the multidisciplinary team and the effect of the new role on the work of other healthcare professionals;
- Define role content of the ANP/AMP service within a framework of nursing/midwifery practice, identifying areas of responsibility, levels of authority and channels of accountability (these should be contained within the job description); and
- Identify resource implications (see Box 1).

The site preparation details should outline all the measures taken to develop the post and integrate it into the overall service, incorporating the recommendations made by the National Council on page ** of this document. A template for submission of site preparation details is provided in the template for part 1 on page** of this document.

BOX 1

IDENTIFICATION OF RESOURCES

The ANP/AMP must be enabled to work as effectively and efficiently as possible from the time of taking up the post. This may be achieved by identifying and securing the necessary resources in advance of his/her taking up the post. Furthermore, it must be ensured that the ANP/AMP, who is assuming new responsibilities and developing new skills in new territory, will have appropriate support and feedback so that motivation and commitment is maintained.

Resources that will enable the ANP/AMP to make effective use of his/her time and to undertake the responsibilities associated with the core competencies of his/her role include:

- Adequate staffing, in terms of secretarial and administrative support;
- Equipment and facilities, such as clinical space, diagnostic and treatment equipment and office space, computer, other information technology and appropriate furnishings;
- Access to research and other evidence applicable to the area of practice, including access to library resources and/or access to a third level institution and internet access;
- Opportunities for networking;
- Opportunities for engaging in continuing professional development; and
- Facilities to audit and evaluate his/her work, to undertake research, and to develop and provide evidence-based services. This should include a liaison arrangement with an appropriate department of a third-level educational institution.