

The Association of Advanced Nursing Practice Educators (AANPE)

THE DIRECTION OF TRAVEL FOR URGENT CARE: A DISCUSSION DOCUMENT: consultation response on behalf of the Association of Advanced Nursing Practice Educators (AANPE)

Document compiled by:

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The AANPE:

The Association of Advanced Nursing Practice Educators (AANPE) represents a collaborative network of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) across the United Kingdom (UK) whose members are providers of advanced clinical programmes of education for nurses and other allied health professions (AANPE HEI list appended).

The AANPE liaises closely with the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) Nurse Practitioner Association and the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC). In addition, the development work of the AANPE has played a significant part in the Nursing & Midwifery Council (NMC) proposals for a national competency standard for Advanced Nurse Practitioner practice being introduced as a sub-part of the nursing register.

The AANPE has particular interest in the establishment of Advanced Nursing Practice (ANP) education and it is working with key government, regulatory, and service stakeholders to see this framework fully implemented at a national level. We also believe that this framework should act as a guide for other emerging advanced clinical roles across the allied health professions, and be adopted as a standard for a future national competency framework of advanced clinical practice for all those professions. This is implicit in our discussion and explicit in our recommendations within this consultation response.

The AANPE recommends the following:

- **Full acknowledgement of the competency framework for Advanced Nurse Practitioners and its place as a national standard for other developing advanced clinical practice curricula.**
- **The development of a higher education foundation curriculum for advanced clinical practice, identifying a core content in clinical skills sciences required for ALL existing and future advanced clinical roles.**
- **That foundation core curriculum content must include (in brief):**
 - Professional development**
 - Leadership**
 - Anatomy & Physiology**
 - Pathology**
 - Pharmacology**
 - Clinical Therapeutics**
 - Epidemiology / Public Health**
 - Comprehensive health assessment skills**
 - General diagnostic skills**
 - Prescribing skills**
 - Inter-personal and Consultation Skills**
 - Mentor and Educative Skills**

**Management Skills / Change Theory
Research Skills**

- **The development of flexible additional curricula to meet defined educational options for advanced clinical practitioners subsequent to completion of foundation studies in advanced clinical practice.**
- **A nationally coordinated collaboration with all HEIs involved in advanced clinical education.**
- **A careful reassessment of prospective new professional groups following the introduction of the national educational framework of advanced clinical practice.**
- **A commitment to adequate financial, academic and clinical resource for HEIs to deliver the new framework.**
- **The establishment of a Higher Education national framework of ‘advanced clinical practice’ education, embracing developments within existing (and prospective) clinical professions.**

The AANPE has recently (2006) reviewed the Department of Health (DOH) consultation documents on the Foster Report, Emergency Care Practitioners, and Medical Care Practitioners. These responses are available in full from the AANPE Website. The concerns raised in those responses are also reflected in the AANPE response to this consultation document; ‘Direction of Travel for Urgent Care : a discussion document’.

The AANPE acknowledges the consultations general aim and prime intention:

“It suggests a set of principles to frame urgent care... it proposes definitions... it identifies actions needed nationally and locally to implement change... it identifies main levers to make change happen (voice, payment by results, joint and practice based commissioning, standards and quality requirements, clinical and corporate governance).”

The scope of the AANPE response to the Urgent Care discussion document:

The AANPE observes that consultation asks for reply to numerous questions. It is **NOT** our intention to respond to each of these. The main philosophy of the consultation is sound: to examine and improve urgent care. The consultation addresses this by touching on numerous issues of infrastructure and role innovation. However, the AANPE is an association that has specific educational objectives and our response to the consultation is consequently confined to the area of advanced clinical practice, the introduction of new clinical roles, and the prospects for appropriate educational preparation and professional regulation of those new clinical roles.

We focus on the implication of such role development and regulation on the development, delivery, funding, and quality of HEI curricula and their consequent fitness for purpose. Specifically, we identify particular concerns, and we make a number of recommendations on how in the future HEIs and healthcare commissioners can more effectively prepare advanced clinical practitioners on a UK wide basis.

The AANPE Review

- Whilst this consultation refers throughout to innovation of new clinical infrastructures, innovative clinical interventions, new ways of working, and professional clinicians adapting and advancing their skills to meet new demographic and social needs in health care, it does not consider the education requirements to enable such changes.
- Only one reference is made to clinical staff being ‘appropriately trained’ on page 31 of the consultation.
- A consequence of this is that whilst much of this consultations intention is well-meaning, it is undermined by its failure to identify the extensive, long-term, and resource issues required to prepare clinicians for new roles.
- Public safety is a paramount concern. It is not sufficient to identify new working roles, new clinical infra-structures and modes of delivery, without providing a solid and well resourced educational base for the professionals expected to deliver such care.
- The introduction of new clinical roles, nurse practitioners, emergency care practitioners, non-medical prescribers, should be dependent on a well considered national framework of clinical education that is founded on sound principles and is supported by appropriate funding.
- The NMC is currently proposing to establish such education and regulation for Advanced Nurse Practitioners.
- However, other new roles are not yet fully established – for example, advanced clinical paramedics are as yet unregulated and this aspirant profession is as yet not fully integrated with Higher Education.
- The introduction of new advanced clinical roles is still in its infancy, and the AANPE warns against policy that seeks to rush new roles into place to satisfy political agenda without adequate preparation time to education clinicians, and establish new clinical roles in the practice setting. This process, no matter how pressing, is lengthy, resource hungry, and must be carefully implemented if public safety is to be assured.

Conclusion:

The development of advanced clinical roles, and new professional groups, to meet the needs of new urgent care services is **ENTIRELY** dependent of a well considered and

well resourced programme of clinical education that caters to the multiple clinical roles identified.

This strategic discussion document must be built on by considering the long-term educational needs of professional clinical staff, and how these roles may be professionally regulated, financially resourced, thus ensuring public safety. The AANPE would be pleased to assist in this discussion.

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