

Nursing Associate Consultation

Building capacity to care and capability to treat - a new team member for health and social care: Consultation

Thank you for taking part in this consultation.

The deadline for responding is 00.00 GMT on 11 March 2016.

Health Education England is seeking views on the proposals for the introduction of a new *Nursing Associate* role to support the Registered Nurse workforce in providing high quality care across health and social care settings, in particular to:

- Identify the potential for a new role to sit between a Care Assistant with a Care Certificate and a graduate Registered Nurse.
- Identify the principles for the proposed new care role.
- Consider the learning outcomes that will need to be assessed to assure quality, safety and public confidence in the proposed role.
- Identify what academic achievement would be required, alongside the practical skills and how this learning should be best delivered and assessed.
- Consider whether or not the proposed role should be regulated – and if so, how and by whom.
- Agree the title of this new role.

How to respond:

Throughout this document we ask a series questions on a proposed new *Nursing Associate* role and seek your views on all aspects of the role. Your response will be most useful if it is framed in direct response to the questions posed, although further comments and evidence are also welcome. Health Education England will send an acknowledgement by email to all responses received.

You may respond by completing this response form and send it to:
HEE.nursingassociateconsultation@nhs.net

or post to:

Nursing Associate Consultation, Directorate of Education and Quality,

Health Education England, Blenheim House, Duncombe Street, Leeds LS1 4PL

Please read the background information about the proposed new post: This will help inform your responses. The background information is available [here](#).

Issued: 28 January 2016

Respond by: 00.00 11 March 2016

Territorial extent: This consultation applies to England only.

About you

Confidentiality and data protection

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with access to information legislation (primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998).

If you would like the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please say so clearly in writing when you respond to question 6 below. It would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information, we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded by us as a confidentiality request.

We will summarise all responses and place this summary on our website. This summary will include a list of names or organisations that have responded but will not give personal names, addresses or other contact details.

Quality assurance

This consultation has been carried out in accordance with the Cabinet Office Consultation Principles, which can be found here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/492132/20160111_Consultation_principles_final.pdf

If you have any complaints about the consultation process (as opposed to comments about the issues that are the subject of the consultation), please address them to: HEE.nursingassociateconsultation@nhs.net

Representation of opinions

We would be grateful if you could complete the section on the consultation form that asks about your role, in as much as detail as possible so that we know, for example, whether you are responding on behalf of an organisation or as an individual.

Contact point for further information

If you have any further questions about the contents of this consultation, please email HEE.nursingassociateconsultation@nhs.net

Contact information

1. Title (Mr, Mrs, Ms, Dr etc.)

Dr

2. First Name

Deepak

3. Second Name

Dwarakanath

4. Email

l.paterson@rcpe.ac.uk

5. Address

Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, 9 Queen Street, Edinburgh EH2 1JQ

6. Please tick here if you want your response to be confidential. (Please see the information on page 2)

Tick here

6a. Please give your reasons below (this must be completed if you have requested confidentiality):

N/A

7. Please tick if you are responding on behalf of an organisation:

Tick here

7a. Please name the organisation you represent:

Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh

8. Please tick the option below that most closely applies to you:

- Patient or user of health and care services
- Registered Nurse
- Care Assistant or similar role in health service
- Care Assistant or similar role in social care
- Student nurse or Care Assistant
- Potential student nurse or Care Assistant

- GP
- Provider of education for health and/or social care
- Provider of training for health and/or social care
- Representative of a trade union, royal college or professional body
- Representative of a patient group or campaign group
- Representative of a regulatory body
- Representative of an NHS 'Arm's Length Body'
- Representative of a research or policy body
- Member of the general public
- NHS health care employer/provider
- Health care provider/employer (private sector)
- Health care provider/employer (charity/not for profit)
- Social care provider/employer (NHS)
- Commissioner of health services
- Commissioner of social care services
- Social care provider/employer (local authority)
- Social care provider/employer (charity/not for profit)

'Nursing Associate': consultation questions

Q1. What are the most important issues that need to be addressed in deciding whether to establish a new care role working between a Care Assistant with a Care Certificate and a Registered Nurse? (Maximum 250 words)

It is important to examine the range of roles already in place and be clear that there is an evident gap and need for this new care role. This will help improve “buy in” from all professionals working with the new role and ensure the role compliments the skills mix of teams and the complex needs of patients across a range of settings.

Fellows of the College have suggested that proposals which bring new members of the workforce into nursing and care are to be encouraged due to the chronic shortage of registered nurses. The experience of Fellows has been that registered nurses spend a lot of time on tasks which do not necessarily reflect their training, and there could therefore be a benefit in giving status and encouragement to a new level of care role.

The widening of the nursing career framework is positive but it is important that the role be recognised as a valued post within the nurse care workforce and should not be regarded as an ‘inferior’ position or merely a stepping stone to registered nursing. There needs to be specific skill set emphasising the attributes of compassion, respect and dignity focusing on patient centred care.

Q2. What contribution to patient care do you think such a role would have across different care settings? (Maximum 250 words)

This role has the potential to make a key contribution to patient care. Nurses are increasingly required to work in highly complex settings and with patients with high dependency needs. This proposed new role should allow nurses to direct their expertise accordingly and delegate specific tasks to the new role, aligned to the skills and competencies of the post.

The role could make a significant contribution across all care settings from acute hospital settings across all community settings. Given that many of the recipients may be elderly the creation of the proposed position could enhance community care and allow more patients to remain at home.

Q3. Do you have any comments on the proposed principles of practice?

Yes

No

Please add your comments here. (Maximum 250 words). If you have no comments, please go to the next question.

This would benefit from clear articulation of the duties and responsibilities of the proposed role and a recognition that the position envisaged is a distinct position and not merely a

stepping stone for entry to registered nursing. The position should be seen as a valued worker with the care team framework.

Flexibility in skills and competencies will be vital to make sure there is an appropriate skill mix in multi-disciplinary teams so the role can meet the needs of a range of populations. A clearly defined framework of training and skill set will be essential to define the role's domain of practice within the multi-disciplinary team.

Producing a career pathway for Care Assistants should be strongly encouraged: many already make the jump from care assistant directly to registered nurse, and where appropriate this should remain an option.

Q4. Do you have any comments on the aspects of service the proposed role would cover?

Yes

No

Please add your comments here. (Maximum 250 words). If you have no comments, please go to the next question.

This role should cover a range of services and extend into the community where appropriate, to prevent hospital admissions. Practical technical skills; care and compassion; knowledge of IT and provision of care to the elderly are likely to be key elements of the role.

Q5. Do you have any comments on the proposed list of knowledge this role requires?

Yes

No

Please add your comments here. (Maximum 250 words). If you have no comments, please go to the next question

This role would require skills and competencies which should be underpinned by appropriate training within a clearly defined curriculum, aligned to clear learning outcomes for the proposed role. Person – centred care; supporting people to live with long term conditions; end of life care and the frail elderly are all key areas the role could support. Understanding the key role of other health professionals would also be essential to ensure effective team work.

Q6. What do you think the title of this role should be?

Please list your suggestions below.

Fellows of the College and members of the College's Lay Advisory Committee made a number of suggestions on the title of the role but were all clear that the title should not be open to misinterpretation. Suggestions included:

1. Enhanced Care Assistant
2. Senior Health Care Assistant
3. Nursing Care Associate
4. Nursing Support Associate

There was a suggestion that if the focus of the role is on care rather than nursing, a title emphasising 'care' would be logical. Patients and their families may hear 'nurse' or 'nursing' and have limited understanding of the grades and skills sets and responsibilities. There may be circumstances whereby patients and families could become confused and opportunities for miscommunication could be created.

Q7. Please comment on what regulation or oversight is required for this role and which body should be responsible. (Maximum 250 words).

Suggestions were made that the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) may be the most relevant if the role has a focus on care, or potentially the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) may be suitable if the role focused more on nursing. There was generally support for regulation from Fellows and Lay Advisors in order to give public confidence and status.

The consultation would welcome any further views (maximum 250 words).

Although the information talks about the need for higher skills, there is perhaps a tension between this and the aim to recruit people with "traditional skills - kindness, dignity, care and respect, maturity and resilience" which are described as "crucial in meeting the fundamental care needs of patients and people." In many other contexts (ie non-medical) higher skills are generally regarded as being about knowledge, the ability to assimilate information, solve complex tasks etc. Therefore, clarity of role and expectations for each role so that patients, carers and the public understand what they can expect is vital. In addition for those considering taking on the role as a career they need to be clear about what skills and competencies will really be valued.

If the focus of the role is to provide care and kindness etc, it would also be important to emphasise that registered nurses and other health care professionals do not (or are not perceived to) abdicate responsibility for these important qualities.

Thank you for taking part in the consultation.