

## RCGP General Practice Foundation

### Nursing Standards in General Practice: Manifesto

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'Practice nurses represent a flexible resource that that is accessible to patients and central to the practice being able to fulfil its terms of service'.

(Aiken K & Lunt 1995 Nurses in Practice University of York)

There are currently around 20,000 practice nurses working in over 10,000 general practices throughout the United Kingdom.

The general practice nurse role is central to achieving health improvement in primary care. General Practice Nurses, supported by Health Care Assistants, manage:

- Long term conditions such as asthma, diabetes, hypertension
- Health screening such as cervical cytology, alcohol, weight
- Vaccination such as childhood and influenza
- Sexual health and family planning
- Minor ailments

A Manifesto to ensure excellence by addressing four key areas relating to nursing in general practice:

1. Ensuring the numbers and skill mix of general  
Practice nursing teams are well placed to promote the highest possible standards of care
2. Clinical and behavioural competency
3. Access to excellent continuing professional development for all General Practice Nurses and Health Care Assistants
4. Ensuring that excellent employment practice is in place within all general practices

## **1. Ensuring the numbers and skill mix of general practice nursing teams are well placed to promote the highest possible standards of care**

- Workforce planning at a strategic level must include General Practice Nurses and Health Care Assistants.
- Education contracts with Higher Education Institutions should include the learning and development needs of general practice staff
- Commissioners to set quality indicators for general practice nursing as part of the service specification within model contracts

## **2. Clinical and behavioural competency**

- Establish the clinical competencies required for each role
- Maintenance of 'competence files' by individuals - providing a record of what they can and cannot do
- Have competence in any new role assessed by a qualified assessor
- Regularly update practice protocols based on the latest national guidance
- Engage in significant event reviews
- Carry out regular audits
- Evaluate patient experience with nursing care

## **3. Access to excellent continuing professional development for all general practice nurses and health care assistants**

- Study leave policy must be in place within practices
- In-house induction programme to be completed within first two weeks with an identified member of staff responsible for this
- Complete an accredited general practice nurse foundation course within one year of employment
- Complete training courses relevant to the job level they are employed to do
- Receive annual mandatory training e.g. anaphylaxis, BLS, infection control, safeguarding children and vulnerable adults
- Receive appropriate training for any new roles
- Management training for those that have line management responsibility

## **4. Ensuring that excellent employment practice is in place within all general practices**

- Robust selection and recruitment process which includes job description, person specification and interview
- System in place for annual check of NMC registration
- Provide a contract of employment within 2 months of start date
- Establish clear lines of accountability
- Appraisal policy in place and appraisals take place annually with a PDP within which any difficulties have agreed goals and action plans