

GENERAL PRACTICE NURSING STANDARDS



Working together to improve patient care

The General Practice Foundation (GPF) nurse leads are concerned over the inconsistent standards of nursing currently provided in general practice across the UK. The GPF has produced the General Practice Nursing Standards which aim to improve standards of patient care by empowering general practice nurses (GPNs) to experience excellent employment practice and high job satisfaction, have access to appropriate training and education and to ensure the successful recruitment and retention of the general practice nursing workforce.

The standards cover clinical, professional and employment practice for nurses and healthcare assistants working at all levels in general practice. They have been mapped against existing regulatory standards and those promoted by the NHS and professional organisations, in an attempt to achieve consensus on which standards should be 'good, better and best' and are intended to be used as a benchmark by employers, GPNs, commissioning groups and primary care organisations.

The exemplary primary care organisation will

- 1 Ensure that workforce planning at a strategic level includes general practice nurses and healthcare assistants
- 2 Ensure that educational contracts with higher education institutions include the learning and development needs of general practice nursing staff
- 3 Ensure that the service specification in contracts for primary care providers include quality indicators for general practice nursing

The exemplary general practice will

- 1 Ensure there is a robust recruitment and selection process for the employment of nurses and healthcare assistants which includes a job description, person specification and interview
- 2 Provide a contract of employment within two months of the start date
- 3 Have a robust system to check annually the NMC registration status for all employed nursing staff
- 4 Ensure that there are clear lines of accountability for all nurses and healthcare assistants employed in general practice
- 5 Have an appraisal policy in place and annual appraisals with a personal development plan within which there are clear goals and an action plan
- 6 Have a study leave policy for all nurses and healthcare assistants employed by the practice
- 7 Ensure that there is an induction programme which is implemented within the first two weeks of employment with an identified individual responsible for ensuring it occurs and meets objectives
- 8 Ensure nurses complete annual training on anaphylaxis, life support, infection control, and safeguarding children and vulnerable adults
- 9 Ensure that nurses and healthcare assistants employed by the practice receive appropriate training for any new role which is assessed by a competent assessor including management roles
- 10 Ensure that there are up-to-date evidence-based protocols which are regularly reviewed to support nurses and healthcare assistants in their daily duties
- 11 Evaluate patient experience with nursing care

The exemplary registered nurse will

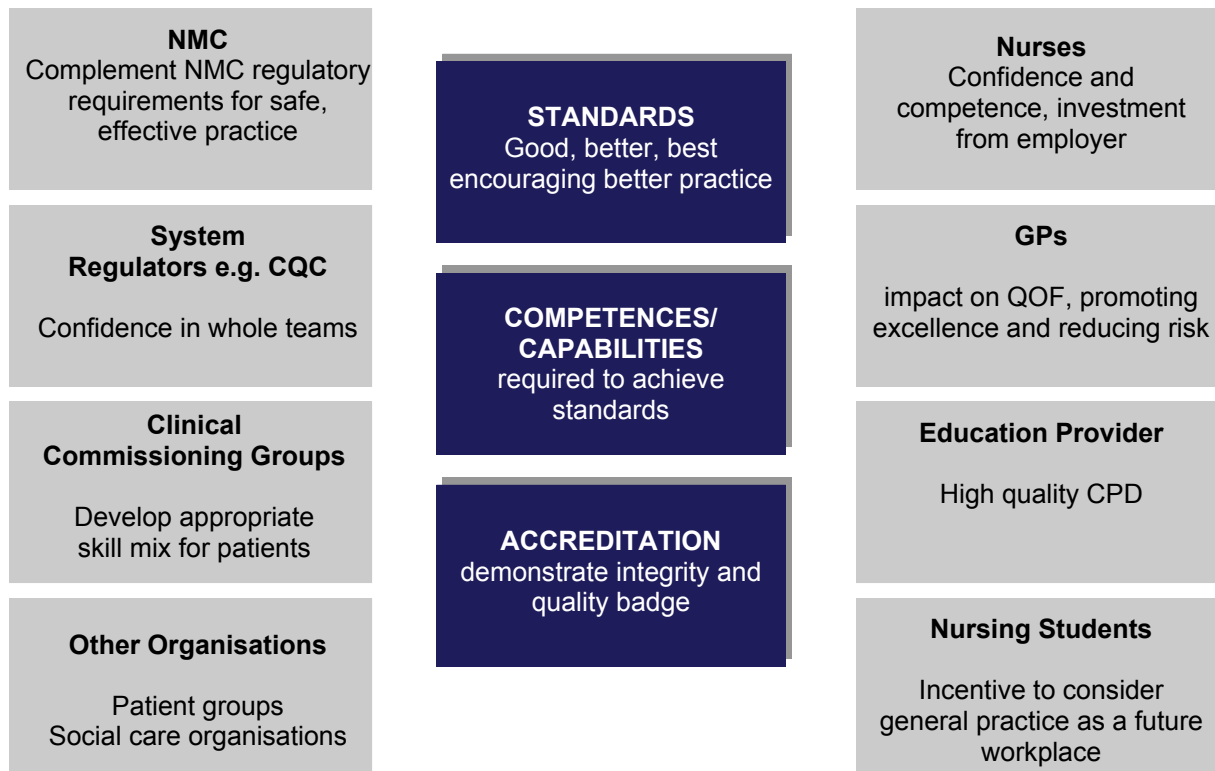
- 1 Ensure that they have the required clinical and behavioural competencies to perform their role to a high standard
- 2 Maintain a 'competence file' which provides an account of what they can and cannot do

1 The numbers and skill mix of general practice nursing teams must be designed to promote the highest possible standards of care

2 General practice nurses and healthcare assistants must have access to appropriate continuing professional development to ensure clinical and behavioural competency

3 Excellent employment practice must be in place within all general practices

QUALITY PATIENT CARE IN GENERAL PRACTICE



References

Royal College of Nursing, Principles of Nursing Practice
http://www.rcn.org.uk/development/practice/principles/the_principles

Nursing and Midwifery Council, Code of Conduct
<http://www.nmc-uk.org/publications/standards/the-code/introduction/>

Care Quality Commission, Essential Standards of Quality and Safety
<http://www.cqc.org.uk/usingcareservices/essentialstandardsqualityandsafety.cfm>