

Evidence Brief: AHP Support Workers

Contents

*Help accessing articles or papers	2
Key publications – the big picture	3
Evaluations	3
Role descriptions and frameworks	5
Case Studies.....	5
The Star for workforce redesign.....	6
Statistics.....	6
National Data Programme.....	6
Published Peer Reviewed Research.....	6
Impact.....	6
Health, wellbeing and burnout.....	9
Role development	9
Training and education	11
Professional development	12
Workforce planning	13
Competency Frameworks	14
General AHP Support Workers	14
Dietetics.....	14
Physiotherapy.....	14
Radiotherapy	15
Speech and Language Therapy	15

Produced by the Knowledge Management team Evidence Briefs offer an overview of the published reports, research, and evidence on a workforce-related topic.

Date of publication: September 2025

Please acknowledge this work in any resulting paper or presentation as:
 Evidence Brief: AHP Support Workers. Katie Nicholas and Katy Greenfield. (September 2025).
 UK: Workforce, Training and Education Knowledge Management Team

There may have been an update to this Evidence Brief - to check you are reading the most current version please see the links below:

- [Complete Evidence Brief list – link for Workforce, Training and Education staff](#)
- [Complete Evidence Brief list – link for External staff](#)

***Help accessing articles or papers**

Where a report/ journal article or resource is freely available the link has been provided. If an NHS OpenAthens account is required this has been indicated. It has also been highlighted if only the abstract is available. If you do not have an OpenAthens account you can [self-register here](#).

If you need help accessing an article, or have any other questions, contact the Knowledge Management team for support england.knowledgemanagement@nhs.net

Key publications – the big picture

10 Year Health Plan for England: fit for the future

Department of Health and Social Care, July 2025

The 10 Year Health Plan is part of the government's health mission to build a health service fit for the future. It sets out how the government will reinvent the NHS through 3 radical shifts:

- hospital to community
- analogue to digital
- sickness to prevention

See Chapter 2 From hospital to community and Chapter 7 An NHS workforce fit for the future

Allied Health Professions' Support Worker Strategy Impact Evaluation

King's Business School, February 2023

This report seeks to provide a formal evaluation of the anticipated benefits and impact of Health Education England's (HEE's) national Allied Health Professions (AHP) support workforce programme. It adds to the evidence base for supporting, developing, and deploying support workers and can be used to support organisations to write business cases aimed at developing and deploying the AHP support workforce.

The Allied Health Professions (AHPs) Strategy for England

NHS England, June 2022

The NHS Long Term Plan acknowledges the essential role for AHPs in supporting the NHS to meet demand. As instructed by this plan (p82, section 4.20), The AHP Strategy for England: AHPs Deliver builds on its predecessor, accentuating the impact AHPs have on delivering excellence in health and care. This new strategy is for the whole AHP community: support workers, assistant practitioners, registered professionals, pre-registration apprentices and students. It is inclusive and reflects how AHPs

work in multidisciplinary teams, so that those who identify as part of the AHP community working in a variety of health and care sectors can use it to continually improve and redesign services.

Developing the role of AHP Support Workers

Health Education England

The Allied Health Professions Support Workforce plays an important role in delivering safe and effective care for service users across health and care. We have spoken to members of the AHP workforce, and they have shared their thoughts and concerns with us.

Allied Health Professions' Support Workforce: A guide to embedding public health in practice

Health Education England, 2022

This guide provides a resource for support workers and their line managers to clarify the four domains of public health and describe how AHP support worker roles benefit the whole population's health and wellbeing.

Evaluations

The Cavendish Review Ten Years on: Are NHS support workers still 'invisible'?

King's College London, July 2024

Comprising 28% of the total NHS workforce, clinical support staff are healthcare employees who work alongside nurses, midwives, physiotherapists, radiographers, orthoptists, and others in patient facing roles performing a wide range of clinical and nonclinical tasks. Their jobs require learning up to, but below, degree level. Their work is not regulated by bodies such as the Nursing and Midwifery Council, but they are frequently the healthcare staff patients, and their families have most direct contact with. Examples of such roles include Health Care Assistants,

Maternity Support Workers, Assistant Practitioners, and Therapy Assistants.

North East and Yorkshire regional synthesis of AHP Workforce Plans

Sheffield Hallam University, July 2023

This report is a synthesis of the AHP workforce plans submitted by 31 NHS Trusts within the former Health Education England (HEE) North-East and Yorkshire footprint.

- Support worker supply and demand p.16
- Action plans for development of the AHP support workforce, resources and risks p.17

The development of the allied health support workforce: An evaluation for Health Education England

Health and Society Knowledge Exchange, University of Cumbria, September 2020

Health and Society Knowledge Exchange (HASKE) was commissioned by Health Education England (HEE) to evaluate the development of the support workforce across the fourteen allied health professions. This project aimed to map the existing allied health support workforce and bring together current knowledge and examples of workforce development. It was therefore delivered in close dialogue with the related project developing the enabling Education and Career Framework. The analysis and conclusions of the evaluation were used to produce a toolkit to enable departmental managers to successfully prepare for and implement the framework.

Allied Health Services Support Worker Policy Landscape End of study report

Allied Health Solutions, 2017

This study was commissioned to gain a greater understanding as to how allied health support workers (AHSWs) are employed and deployed in three areas of North Central and East London: 1.

Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge 2. Barnet 3. Tower Hamlets It also aimed to gather evidence about the education and training needs of the AHSWs and raise the local Allied Health Professionals' (AHPs) awareness of current support worker policy landscape. Since the publication of the Francis Inquiry into Mid-Staffordshire Foundation Trust there has been an increasing appreciation of the importance of the support workforce in delivering healthcare, and the potential this group of workers has to significantly enhance the patient experience. Many of the recent studies and policy developments have focussed on the nursing support workforce. This study, however, has concentrated solely on the support workforce that is employed in services delivered by AHPs.

Allied health professions: support workforce training, education and careers

Health Education England 2021

Support workers, senior support workers, assistants, and assistant practitioners work in, with and alongside the allied health professions (AHPs), providing high quality, life changing care across a range of acute and community services. Access to training and education, and clear career pathways, for this crucial workforce is essential to meeting the needs of patients, populations, and future healthcare. This summary resource supports Chief AHPs, AHP faculties, workforce leads and others. It includes: • Examples of support roles working with the allied health professions. • Training and education to support high quality care and service delivery. • Career progression via apprenticeships.

Role descriptions and frameworks

Allied Health Professional Support Worker

Source: Aspiring Allies

An Allied Health Professional (AHP) support worker is a healthcare support role working alongside AHPs to help people live healthier, more independent lives. Importantly, AHP support workers can also work autonomously within their competencies and hold delegated caseloads, supporting patients safely.

AHP Public Health Role Descriptors

Royal Society for Public Health

These descriptors provide a range of examples of the different ways each AHP profession engages in public health. The list is not intended to be exhaustive. Many examples will span more than one area of public health practice so for the purpose of simplicity these have been positioned in the most obvious domain.

Allied Health Professional Band 4 Assistant Practitioner Consultation with Professional Bodies

The British Association of Prosthetists and Orthotists (BAPO), 2020

The AHP council, which is part of South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw Integrated Care System (SYB ICS), was keen to explore apprenticeships that support AHPs. Therefore, a working group was established to consider developing a framework to support the establishment and expansion of Band 4 AHP Assistant Practitioner roles in the ICS, utilising the Level 5 apprenticeship as appropriate. This report is a result of one of the scoping exercises.

Case Studies

Higher development award in North East and Yorkshire: allied health support worker development Abstract only*

British Journal of Healthcare Assistants 19(8), 2025

This article discusses the background of the higher development award, its progression from a government-led initiative to a regionally governed programme, and the successful pilot implementation in South Tees Foundation Trust. The author discusses its impact on support workers and outlines future strategies for regional expansion, including extending eligibility beyond allied health professional support workers to encompass healthcare assistants and non-clinical staff.. Copyright © 2025 MA Healthcare Ltd.

AHP Support Worker Case Studies

NHS England

Case studies from:

- Emergency Care
- Cancer and diagnostics
- Social care
- Outpatient services
- General medical
- Paediatrics
- Mental health
- Community
- Theatres
- Education

Case studies for the AHP support workforce and accreditation project

Royal College of Podiatry

Two case studies of podiatry support workers.

Rehabilitation Support Worker Resource Pack

NHS England (Produced by the Workforce Working Group of the London Stroke Clinical Network & ISDN), June 2023
See page 10 'Case Studies'

Winners at Celebrating Inspirational AHP Support Workforce National Awards

Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust, January 2023
One of our members of staff, Zanya Petken has been recognised for their exceptional work and outstanding efforts at the Celebrating Inspirational AHP Support Workforce National Awards which took place in December.
The awards showcase the brilliant work carried out by Allied Health Professionals (AHP) support workers and shines a spotlight on the AHP lead support worker roles and case studies.

The Star for workforce redesign

More resources and tools are available by searching for "allied health" and "support worker" in [the Star](#)

Statistics

You can find relevant statistics on the [Health and Care Statistics Landscape](#)

National Data Programme

Workforce, Training and Education staff can look at the [National Data Warehouse \(NDL\)](#) SharePoint site to find out more about datasets and Tableau products.

Published Peer Reviewed Research

Impact

Improving physical function with physiotherapy assistants following intensive care unit admission (EMPRESS): A randomised controlled feasibility study

Journal of the Intensive Care Society, 2025

Introduction: Early rehabilitation of critically ill patients is challenging due to limited staff resources. This study assessed the feasibility of delivering a randomised controlled trial of physiotherapy assistants delivering early protocolised rehabilitation plus usual care compared with usual care.,
Methods: We conducted a randomised feasibility study in three U.K. mixed medical/surgical intensive care units.

Boosting hospital falls prevention using health assistant staff alongside usual care

Patient Education and Counseling 130, 2025

OBJECTIVES: Patient education is crucial for preventing hospital falls, yet workforce constraints can hinder targeted delivery. Utilising supervised healthcare assistants can enhance standard care. This study sought to understand factors that impact the feasibility of supplementing usual care with patient falls education delivered by supervised allied health assistants.,
METHODS: In a qualitative study nested within a randomised controlled trial, focus groups and interviews were conducted with twelve health assistants, seven allied health professionals and two managers from the participating hospital.

The impact of physical therapy assistants on rehabilitation clinical outcomes: a systematic review of the literature Abstract only*

Physical Therapy Reviews 29(4), 2024

Objective: The impact of physical therapy assistants (PTAs) remains a key area of considerable interest, yet no systematic review has occurred after decades of research. This first-time systematic review is to examine PTAs impact on clinical outcomes in all physical therapy settings while providing the most current scientific perspective on this important topic.

The Deployment and Utilization of the Allied Health Professions Support Workforce: A Scoping Review

Journal of Multidisciplinary Healthcare 17, 2024

The demand for healthcare services internationally continues to increase, exacerbated by patient backlogs resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and the difficulties in recruiting and retaining healthcare staff. These difficulties have led to increased interest in workforce redesign, and the upskilling of existing staff in all areas of healthcare, including within the Allied Health Professions (AHP). Clinical support staff are a key component of workforce redesign, yet little has been documented on the utilization of this workforce across the wide range of professions that collectively form the AHP workforce.

Twice daily allied health rehabilitation is feasible in acutely hospitalised older people: an observational study Abstract only*

Australian Health Review, 2024

Objective To evaluate the feasibility of twice daily rehabilitation in older patients admitted to an acute care of the elderly (ACE) hospital ward. Method This was a prospective single-site, cohort study of twice daily interventions provided by ACE physiotherapists, occupational therapists and/or allied health assistants in an ACE hospital ward. The feasibility of twice daily

therapy was evaluated using a range of outcomes including satisfaction, fidelity and limited efficacy.

Boosting inpatient exercise after hip fracture using an alternative workforce: a mixed methods implementation evaluation

BMC Geriatrics 24(1), 2024

Background: Hip fracture has a devastating impact on individuals and is an increasing burden for health systems and society. Compared to usual care, increased physiotherapy provision has demonstrated efficacy in improving patient and health service outcomes in this population. However, physiotherapy workforce challenges prevent sustained implementation.

The evaluation of health, disability and aged care-sector engagement with resources designed to support optimisation of the allied health assistant workforce: a qualitative study

BMC Health Services Research 24(1), 2024

BACKGROUND: Allied health assistants (AHAs) support allied health professionals (AHPs) to meet workforce demands in modern healthcare systems. In an Australian context historically, AHAs have been sub-optimally utilised. Prior research has identified that AHAs and AHPs working in health, disability and aged care sectors, and the Vocational Education and Training (VET) industry, may benefit from access to resources to support the optimisation of the AHA workforce. As a part of a Victorian department of health funded project, several resources were developed in line with workforce recommendations for use in each of the above sectors. Recommendations and resources covered the broad areas of pre-employment training, workforce planning and governance, consumer-centred therapy and supports, recruitment and induction and workplace training and development.

How do stroke early supported discharge services achieve intensive and responsive service provision?: findings from a realist evaluation study (WISE)

BMC Health Services Research 23(229), 2023

BACKGROUND: Stroke Early Supported Discharge (ESD) involves provision of responsive and intensive rehabilitation to stroke survivors at home and it is recommended as part of the stroke care pathway. Core components have been identified to guide the delivery of evidence-based ESD, however, service provision in England is of variable quality. The study sought to understand how and in what conditions the adoption of these components drives the delivery of responsive and intensive ESD services in real world settings.

'Grow your own': optimising the contribution of the occupational therapy support workforce Abstract only*

British Journal of Healthcare Assistants 17(12), 2023

This article describes an innovative approach to workforce development that has been modelled across an integrated care system. Triangulating evidence from published research, an expert panel, economic modelling and discovery workshops with practitioners, including support staff, the cost and benefits of the strategy, which is based on NHS England's allied health professions support workforce programme, were evaluated. The evaluation suggests that investing in support worker development delivers substantial benefits, not just for support workers, but also for registered staff, employers, patients, and more widely. The approach can be used across occupational groups.

A therapy assistant in the intensive care unit (ICU): a pilot project

Abstract only*

Physiotherapy 105, 2019

To evaluate the use and impact of a Band 4 Therapy Assistant (TA) in supporting rehabilitation in Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) and Physiotherapy (PT) in an ICU.

Implementation of an advanced occupational therapy assistant-led groups programme in aged care rehabilitation (Australian study) Abstract only*

Australian Occupational Therapy Journal, December 2013

The use of support workers such as occupational therapy assistants is emerging as a strategy to enhance the health workforce, but there has been little evaluation of the feasibility of expanding support worker roles and responsibilities. This study aimed to implement an advanced occupational therapy assistant-led groups programme in a subacute aged care rehabilitation setting and to evaluate the impact on the clinical outcomes of group participants. Conclusion: The introduction of an advanced occupational therapy assistant to replace an occupational therapist in facilitating a groups programme in aged care rehabilitation did not result in a decline in patient outcomes. However, the results should be interpreted tentatively given the study limitations and the advanced skills of the assistant involved. Further more rigorous longer term research with a larger sample is required.

Health, wellbeing and burnout

Exploring the use of mindfulness for prevention of burnout in allied health professionals in Singapore

Work 81(2), 2025

Background: Burnout is becoming increasingly prevalent among healthcare professionals where it impacts quality of care and staff turnover, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. One promising strategy to reduce burnout is the use of mindfulness-based programs, which may aid allied health professionals (AHPs). Objective: To explore the usefulness of a 10-week mindfulness program on reducing burnout symptoms in AHPs in Singapore, as well as to identify AHPs' attitudes and perceptions towards adopting mindfulness in practice.

Feeling valued at work: a qualitative exploration of allied health profession support workers

BMC Health Services Research 24(1), 2024

OBJECTIVES: The aim of this study was to explore Allied Health Professions (AHP) support worker perceptions of feeling valued and to understand what factors contribute to this feeling of "value"., DESIGN: This was a qualitative study with semi-structured interviews undertaken virtually. The data were analysed using a process of thematic analysis in order to gain an in depth understanding of the factors that affect support workers feeling "valued".

Role development

Exploring allied health professionals' perceptions and practice in Ireland regarding guideline recommendations for intensity of multidisciplinary therapy for stroke survivors: A qualitative study

Abstract only*

Clinical Rehabilitation, 2025

Objective To explore the attitudes and practice of allied health

professionals working in stroke care in Ireland regarding recommended amounts of therapy set out in the National Clinical Guideline for Stroke (2023). Design: Qualitative descriptive study using one-to-one semi-structured interviews. Data were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis. Setting Five large acute teaching hospitals in Dublin, Ireland. Participants The 11 participants were allied health professionals working in acute and subacute stroke care in Dublin, and were recruited using a combination of purposive and snowball sampling.

Strategic optimisation of the allied health assistant workforce one step at a time: first step, workforce governance

Australian Health Review 49(4), 2025

Allied health assistants (AHAs) are a vital workforce in Australia, supporting allied health professionals (AHPs) to expand service access and progress care, ensuring workforce sustainability. Tiered models of care that include AHAs can facilitate top of scope and advanced scope work for AHPs, increasing staff satisfaction and retention. Despite the increased research interest on AHAs, barriers to maximising the potential of this workforce persist. The Victorian Department of Health recently released recommendations aimed at optimising the AHA workforce, with inadequate workforce governance recognised as a barrier. Centralising governance processes for AHAs ensures a single point of accountability and standardisation of processes, positively affecting patient safety and quality of care.

Building the private practice workforce in the Northern Territory: Barriers and facilitators for implementation of the allied health assistant role

The Australian Journal of Rural Health 32(6), 2024

OBJECTIVE: To identify barriers and facilitators contributing to the successful implementation of the allied health assistant role in private disability practice to better meet population needs., DESIGN: A qualitative case study., SETTING: This study was

completed with staff working in private disability practices in a regional context in the Northern Territory., PARTICIPANTS: Eight participants were interviewed, including three allied health assistants, three allied health professionals, and two managers with allied health backgrounds.

Allied Health Professions in Research: The Forgotten Workforce

Internet Journal of Allied Health Sciences and Practice 21(4), 2023

Purpose: To understand the experience, involvement, and perceived importance of research among allied health professions and identify how robust research culture might be established in secondary care. Conclusion(s): Involvement in research provides allied health professionals opportunities for career development, job satisfaction and meaningful clinical impact. National Health Service Trusts should provide infrastructure to support research activity in recognition of their skills and potential to increase research capacity for the benefit of patients.

Developing a best practice framework for musculoskeletal outpatient physiotherapy delegation: the MOPeD mixed-methods research study protocol

BMJ Open, 2023

This study aims to design a framework of 'best practice' in delegation to guide the work of clinicians in NHS physiotherapy MSK services and facilitate standardisation of practice to ensure that patients receive safe and effective treatment by the most appropriate person.

Occupational Therapist and Occupational Therapy Assistant: We are Proud of These Titles

The Open Journal of Occupational Therapy 11(4), 2023

As the editors of the Open Journal of Occupational Therapy (OJOT), we have high regard for the roles of occupational

therapists and occupational therapy assistants and appreciate the delineation of these roles and the value of each as described by the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) and the World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT). According to AOTA and WFOT, occupational therapists are autonomous health care professionals who promote participation in daily activities that give value and meaning to life. They are responsible and accountable for all aspects of occupational therapy service delivery, including the safety and effectiveness of their services (AOTA, 2021; WFOT, 2023, para. 3). Occupational therapy assistants are health care professionals with expertise in carrying out and modifying occupational therapy treatment plans and provide "occupational therapy services only under the supervision of and in partnership with the occupational therapist" (AOTA, 2021).

Developments in allied health professionals' role in UK neonatal units: a speech and language therapy perspective

Infant 17(4), 2021

The recent Getting It Right First Time (GIRFT) survey (2019) has highlighted the significant lack of allied health professional (AHP) provision in neonatal care in the UK. Speech and language therapists (SLT) are part of the AHP workforce currently under-represented in neonatal care. This article summarises how SLTs are addressing the feeding and early communication service requirements and SLT skills needed to support newborn infants and families, and contributing to the wider multidisciplinary neonatal care team.

Extended roles for allied health professionals: an updated systematic review of the evidence

Source: Journal of Multidisciplinary Healthcare

Publication date: 2014

Background: Internationally, health care services are under increasing pressure to provide high quality, accessible, timely

interventions to an ever increasing aging population, with finite resources. Extended scope roles for allied health professionals is one strategy that could be undertaken by health care services to meet this demand. This review builds upon an earlier paper published in 2006 on the evidence relating to the impact extended scope roles have on health care services.

Allied health assistants and what they do: A systematic review of the literature

Journal of Multidisciplinary Healthcare, 2010

Allied health assistants (AHAs) are an emerging group in allied health practice with the potential to improve quality of care and safety of patients. This systematic review summarizes the evidence regarding the roles and responsibilities of AHAs and describes the benefits and barriers to utilizing AHAs in current health care settings. Conclusions: There is consensus in the literature that AHAs make a valuable contribution to allied health care. Whilst there are clear advantages associated with the use of AHAs to support allied health service delivery, ongoing barriers to their effective use persist.

Defining and identifying common elements of and contextual influences on the roles of support workers in health and social care: a thematic analysis of the literature Abstract only*

Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice, 2010

Rationale, aims and objectives: Support workers are the largest single group of staff involved in the delivery of health and social care in the UK; however, their roles are heterogeneous and are influenced by several contextual factors. The aim of this study was to elucidate the contribution of the elements and context of work undertaken by support workers in health and social care. Methods: Thematic review of the literature 2005/2006, updated in 2008.

Training and education

Conference abstract: Optimising the capability and capacity of the NHS AHP support workforce in England to improve care

Physiotherapy 123(Supplement 1), June 2024 Abstract all available

The Health Education England (HEE) AHP support workforce strategy was the first and most comprehensive workforce programme developed in the NHS to address long standing recruitment, capacity, capability and progression issues support staff, including physiotherapy assistants, can face. This work describes a project that modelled the impact of that strategy across an ICS in North West London.

Supporting AHP students: A resource for non-registered AHP support staff Abstract only*

Physiotherapy 113, December 2021

Purpose: Practice placement education (PPE) is a key component of healthcare training and therefore it's essential that PPE provides a supportive and safe learning environment for students (HCPC, 2017). In searching for innovative ways to increase our practice learning experience and capacity for PPE and from student feedback we identified the significant role our non-qualified workforce play in PPE, not only in improving the quality and pastoral support for students but also as role models with a wealth of knowledge and skills to share. Therefore a 1-day course was created to provide our non-qualified workforce with the skills to directly support PPE and work alongside clinical educators (CEs). Through this we aim to enhance our placement quality, capacity and productivity.

Emotional labour in palliative and end-of-life care communication: A qualitative study with generalist palliative care providers Abstract only*

Patient Education & Counseling 102(3), 2019

Objective: To explore generalist palliative care providers' experiences of emotional labour when undertaking conversations around palliative and end-of-life care with patients and families, to inform supportive strategies.

Conclusion: Diverse strategies to support the emotional needs of generalist staff are crucial to ensure high-quality end-of-life care and communication, and to support staff well-being.

Value of Occupational Therapy Assistant Education to the Profession Abstract only* (US paper)

American Journal of Occupational Therapy 69, 2019

The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) recognizes the value, necessity, and viability of occupational therapy assistant education. Occupational therapy assistant educational programs meet standards of performance established by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE®) to produce competent entry-level occupational therapy assistants who are eligible for national certification and state licensure. Occupational therapy assistants work collaboratively with occupational therapists in contributing to the profession's pursuit of providing high-quality, cost-effective services to promote health and wellness by meeting society's occupational needs. Occupational therapy assistant education provides a sound foundation for practice with the development of competent skill sets to fulfill various professional roles within contemporary practice. These roles include direct care provider, educator, manager, leader, and advocate for the profession and the consumer (ACOTE, 2018).

Professional development

Professional Belonging Scale for Occupational Therapy Students: Development and Preliminary Validity and Internal Consistency Reliability Abstract only*

American Journal of Occupational Therapy: Official Publication of the American Occupational Therapy Association 79(2), 2025
Abstract: IMPORTANCE: Belonging is a dynamic contextual construct valued within occupational therapy and connected with students' academic success and career transitions. Although belonging has been measured in higher education, there is no specific tool to measure it in occupational therapy education., OBJECTIVE: To create the Professional Belonging Scale for Occupational Therapy Students (PBSOTS) and assess its validity and internal consistency reliability for measuring belonging among occupational therapy and occupational therapy assistant students., DESIGN: Scale development and preliminary psychometric study.

Therapists to Therapy Assistants: Experiences of Internationally Educated Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapists

Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy, 2025

Background: In Canada, internationally educated physiotherapists (IEPTs) and occupational therapists (IEOTs) may work as occupational/physical therapy assistants (OTAs/PTAs) while pursuing Canadian licensure. This experience presents personal and professional opportunities and challenges. Purpose: We explored a) the barriers and facilitators experienced by IEPTs and IEOTs working as OTAs/PTAs while pursuing licensure in Canada and b) how might their professional identity changes during this period.

Examining intraprofessional competencies for occupational therapist and occupational therapy assistant collaboration

Abstract only*

Occupational Therapy in Health Care 32(1-4), October 2018

This study examined competencies perceived by occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants as important for intraprofessional collaboration. While interprofessional practice is well defined, less is known about collaboration within professions with varied levels of practice credentials.

Workforce planning

Clinical care ratios for, and tasks undertaken by, allied health professionals: A scoping review of the literature

PloS One 19(11), 2024

BACKGROUND: With the increasing demand on the global health system and the presence of persistent healthcare disparities, it becomes imperative to utilize the full potential of the healthcare workforce, including allied health professionals (AHPs). To date, no review has mapped the literature on clinical care ratios (CCRs) for AHPs. This information is vital in guiding future work-force planning to address healthcare issues such as understaffed and at capacity hospitals. This scoping review mapped available evidence to offer a comprehensive insight into current AHP CCRs, enabling evidence-based decision-making that ensures optimal care and enhanced system efficiency

Clinical care ratios: differences in allied health roles in New Zealand

Abstract only*

Australian Health Review: A Publication of the Australian Hospital Association, 2024

Abstract: Objective Allied health workforce planning is difficult and needs to be informed by data. Clinical care ratios (CCR) are commonly used to differentiate between clinical and non-clinical demands. This study aimed to identify trends within and across

allied health disciplines and determine if the CCR differed by allied health discipline within one New Zealand district.

Understanding the role of allied health professional support workers with exercise qualifications in the delivery of the NHS Long Term Plan within allied health professional services in England

BMJ Open Sport & Exercise Medicine, 2023

Demand modelling for the allied health professionals (AHPs) workforce showed that significant expansion would be needed to successfully deliver on the National Health Service (NHS) Long Term Plan. The aim was to explore the use of AHP support workers with exercise qualifications in AHP services and to understand their current and potential role in NHS commissioned AHP services in England. The project had two phases and took place between October 2020 and January 2021.

Assistant radiographer practitioners: Creating capacity or challenging professional boundaries?

Abstract only*

Radiography, 2018

Introduction: Over the last 2 decades the assistant radiographer practitioner (ARP) role has been introduced into NHS diagnostic imaging departments as a strategy to expand the workforce and create capacity. This skill mix initiative has not been implemented in a standardised way and there is limited knowledge of the current role scope within general radiography (X-Ray). Conclusion: ARPs are helping to maintain capacity in imaging departments but we suggest there is further scope for expansion. The practice described by the post holders suggests that many are working beyond the scope envisaged by the radiography professional body.

Competency Frameworks

General AHP Support Workers

Allied Health Professions Support Workers – Career portfolio

NHS England, 2024

This career portfolio tool is looking to implement the domains of the AHP Support Worker Competency, Education and Career Development Framework and to support healthy and constructive career conversations.

AHP Support Worker Competency, Education and Career Development Framework

NHS England

This framework enables employers, networks, integrated care systems (ICSs) and services effectively plan, develop, and deploy their AHP support workforce. It provides guidance on training, education and competencies for AHP support workers and demonstrates a clear pathway for recruitment and progression, with common and transferrable skills across eight domains.

AHP support workforce – understanding education, qualifications and development

Health Education England

This guide provides a brief overview of the formal education and development opportunities that assist support worker learning, including Functional Skills and Technical levels (T levels). It is one of several associated Guides that HEE has published to support the AHP Support Worker Competency, Education and Career Development Framework. The Framework is one element of HEE's AHP workforce strategy, which aims to build capacity and capability across the professions and secure the future workforce nationally, regionally and locally.

A Digital Framework for Allied Health Professionals

Health Education England, 2020

This framework has been developed to support the enhancement of digital competence (knowledge and skills associated with digital technology in practice) for all allied health professions from band 3 to band 9. It is intended to be a developmental and supportive tool that can enable all staff to meet their digital potential.

Dietetics

Dietetic Support Workforce Professional Development Framework

British Dietetic Association, 2023

The Dietetic Support Workforce Professional Development Framework (referred to as The Framework here on) sets out the knowledge, skills, and behaviours that it is expected a member of the Support Workforce would acquire over time and demonstrate in their role. Knowledge, skills and behaviours are known collectively as competency. Ensuring that staff have the right competences for their job means that they will be able to perform tasks and responsibilities delegated to them effectively, efficiently, and safely.

Physiotherapy

Optimising capability in the physiotherapy support workforce

Chartered Society of Physiotherapy, Reviewed February 2020

This resource aims to assist all CSP members and other stakeholders to understand the different levels of physiotherapy support worker practice. It outlines how support workers might achieve the full capabilities necessary to work at a variety of practice levels and progress in their careers. It also serves as a framework to guide the development of support worker

roles. The guideline is divided into three sections, all of which cover different aspects.

Radiotherapy

Education and Career Framework for the Radiography Workforce (4th edition)

The College of Radiographers, 2022

This framework is therefore patient centric and for use by all members of the radiography workforce from across the four nations of the UK, including those involved in managing the workforce and developing new roles, in education and training, and research. The ECF is also an information resource for those considering a career in radiography, current learners, and members of the public.

Speech and Language Therapy

Support worker framework

Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists, Updated June 2023

The RCSLT with funding from Health Education England (HEE, now NHS England), has developed a support worker framework to support the professional training and development of support workers in speech and language therapy. Our page on [equality, diversity and inclusion in the support workforce](#) should be referred to, alongside the framework. It builds upon the work of NHS England (previously Health Education England) and NHS Scotland in developing generic learning frameworks for those working in a healthcare support worker role.