

Evidence Brief: Advanced practitioners in community services

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Key publications – the big picture

[Exploring advanced clinical practitioner perspectives on training, role identity and competence: a qualitative study](#) March 2024, BMC Nursing

Advanced Clinical Practitioners (ACPs) are a new role that have been established to address gaps and support the existing medical workforce in an effort to help reduce increasing pressures on NHS services. ACPs have the potential to practice at a similar level to mid-grade medical staff, for example independently undertaking assessments, requesting and interpreting investigations, and diagnosing and discharging patients. These roles have been shown to improve both service outcomes and quality of patient care. However, there is currently no widespread formalised standard of training within the UK resulting in variations in the training experiences and clinical capabilities of ACPs. We sought to explore the training experiences of ACPs as well as their views on role identity and future development of the role.

[GP myth buster 66: Advanced Nurse Practitioners \(ANPs\) in primary care](#) May 2022, CQC

Nurses are increasingly extending and expanding their scope of practice beyond initial registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC).

[The NHS Long Term Plan](#) January 2019, NHS

The NHS Long Term Plan was developed in partnership with those who know the NHS best – frontline health and care staff, patients and their families and other experts.

4.38. We will expand multi-professional credentialing to enable clinicians to develop new capabilities formally recognised in specific areas of competence. This will allow clinicians to shift or expand their scope of practice to other areas more easily,

creating a more adaptable workforce. With partners, we have already developed several credentials, for example the Royal College of Nursing's Advanced Level Nurse Practitioner credentialing scheme and the Royal College of Emergency Medicine's credentialing for Emergency Care Advanced Clinical Practitioners. We will accelerate development of credentials for mental health, cardiovascular disease, ageing population, preventing harm and cancer, with the intention of publishing standards in 2020.

p. 90 The mental health sector is already delivering innovative workforce solutions to meet the needs of patients. As well as an increase in the recruitment and retention in mental health medical training, new roles, such as physician associates, nursing associates, AHP associates and Advanced Clinical Practitioners are an important part of meeting current and future workforce demands. The evidence for these approaches is strong – introducing Peer Support Workers to acute settings has been shown to reduce readmissions.

[Nurses in advanced roles in primary care: policy levers for implementation](#) November 2017, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

Many OECD countries have undergone reforms over the past decade to introduce advanced roles for nurses in primary care to improve access to care, quality of care and/or to reduce costs. This working paper provides an analysis of these nurse role developments and reforms in 37 OECD and EU countries. Four main trends emerge: 1) the development in several countries of specific advanced practice nursing roles at the interface between the traditional nursing and medical professions; 2) the introduction of various new, supplementary nursing roles, often focused on the management of chronic conditions; 3) the rise in educational programmes to train nurses to the required skills and competencies; and 4) the

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adoption of new laws and regulations in a number of countries since 2010 to allow certain categories of nurses to prescribe pharmaceuticals (including in Estonia, Finland, France, Netherlands, Poland and Spain).

Case Studies

[Advanced Clinical Practitioner](#) n.d., Health Education England/ Norfolk Community Health and Care NHS Trust

As an advanced practitioner, Ciaran provides clinical leadership to the multi-disciplinary teams he works within, working with a range of clinical and medical professionals in both the ward setting and in the NEAT.

Ciaran supports the education and training of his team. For example, he is developing a training package on deteriorating patients for nursing colleagues, and will be supporting students undertaking their independent prescribing qualification. He is also advising on a new community virtual ward being set up across Norfolk.

[Advanced Nurse Practitioner](#) n.d., Health Education England/ East of England Faculty of Advancing Practice

In her role as an advanced nurse practitioner, Jenny assesses and treats patients who present with undifferentiated presentations and manages patients with multiple comorbidities, including complex diabetic patients. She acts as a clinical expert in the GP practice for diabetes and group consultations. Jenny has set up an easy to access weight management referral scheme within the GP practice, as well as group consultations for pre-diabetic patients and, most recently, a consultation group for menopausal patients.

Jenny has had various clinical leadership roles on a national and local level. She has worked with Health Education England (HEE) and NHS England via a variety of regional and national groups to help progress the recognition of advanced practice roles for nurses and allied health professionals, and develop the multi-professional framework and primary care nurse advanced practice credentials. Jenny also helped develop nurse practitioner and advanced nurse practitioner competencies for the RCN and the RCGP. Jenny is a lead nurse for her local training hub and represents them at regional advanced practice ICS meetings.

[Advanced Clinical Practitioner - Primary Care Mental Health](#) n.d., Health Education England/East of England Faculty of Advancing Practice

Mark sees a variety of conditions ranging from depression and anxiety to complex illnesses such as schizophrenia. He often treats patients using interventions ranging from brief intervention to medical review. Being part of the PCN team brings more joined up working between primary care and secondary mental health care. Part of Mark's role is advising the PCN team on treatments to help patients as well as providing supervision to all health professionals. Another part of his role includes supervising M.Sc. Advanced Clinical Practitioners in training, as well as those learning to become Registered Independent Prescribers.

[Community Urgent Care](#) n.d., NHS England

"Within the urgent care setting I use my skills to ensure patients receive care in a timely manner and to prevent acute hospital admissions. Being able to assess, treat and then diagnose patient conditions in the community means that patients do not have to wait in a hospital to receive care. It's often not an environment patients want to be in unless they really need to. I work to avoid admissions by ordering tests, prescribe and

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administering medication, so that we can try to keep patients where they can receive care in an environment they are comfortable with.”

[Community Mental Health](#) n.d., NHS England

“It was clear to me that Advanced Practitioners can lead and support transformation of services, particularly in mental health allowing them to address the unmet needs of our service users. I think it’s important for healthcare professionals to be able to broaden their capabilities to improve quality of care for our service users. I also wanted to develop and build my career whilst remaining in a clinically-based role, advanced practice offers this opportunity.”

[Advanced Clinical Practitioner \(Paramedic\) Primary Care](#) n.d., NHS England

“Working as part of the wider MDT and linking closely with a wide range of clinicians has allowed me to develop my knowledge, skills and competence. By doing so I have been able to evidence the benefits seen in patient care and their experiences. This role has allowed patients to be assessed & managed, safely and effectively, within a timely manner.”

[Trainee Advanced Practitioner \(Occupational Therapist\) Primary Care, High Intensity User Service](#) n.d., NHS England

“I think [the role] provides an important streamlining of care for patients, enabling them to get the right care due to a speedier and higher level of assessment at the frontline. Patients benefit from continuity of care, seeing the same practitioner regularly to develop a person-centred therapeutic relationship. It also allows practitioners to be better informed about service development, research, leadership, and education opportunities. These are all important skills in developing and leading patient-facing teams.”

[Video] [An Advanced Practitioner's role in a GP practice - Anna's Story](#) September 2021, Health Education England

[Video] [Advanced Practice HEE South West](#) 2022, Health Education England

[Developing advanced clinical practitioner roles in cancer care](#) n.d., Wessex Cancer Alliance

Health Education England (HEE) has funded the Wessex Cancer Alliance to undertake a project to scope and develop AHP First Contact Practitioner (FCP) and Advanced Clinical Practice (ACP) roles in cancer care across Wessex.

This work was commenced in June 2020 by Mary Edwards and Bethan Gane. Following the scoping of this role the project has changed direction and is now looking at the development of multi-professional ACPs in a primary care environment. We have drafted; a full Core Competence Framework for ACP in Cancer Care, a primary care patient symptom pathway and a credential outlining the knowledge, skills and attributes expected for this role. In September 2021 we conducted a workforce capabilities survey in the Wessex region to understand the local workforces’ ability to fulfil an ACP role in Primary care. We are now disseminating the findings of this survey to help shape and influence education and training of the workforce at a local and national level.

Wessex Cancer Alliance has been successful in a bid to pilot an ACP role in a Primary Care Network. We have selected a PCN and are in the process of selecting an ACP. The pilot will commence in the early part of 2022. We welcome hearing from stakeholders, professionals and public to help shape and inform the development of these new and innovative roles and hold regular steering groups to help progress this work.

The Star for workforce redesign

More resources and tools are available in the “**advancing practice**” and the “**Community-based care**” and “**Primary care**” section of [the Star](#)

Statistics

You can find relevant statistics on the [Health and Care Statistics Landscape](#) under “**Health and Care**” and use the “**Workforce**” filter

National Data Programme

Workforce, Training and Education staff can look at the [WT&E Data and Analytics Service](#) resources including the National Data Warehouse SharePoint site to find out more about datasets and Tableau products.

Published Peer Reviewed Research

Development of the role

[Exploring the implementation of the nursing associate role in general practice November 2023, Primary Health Care](#)

There is limited evidence regarding the implementation of the nursing associate role, particularly in general practice settings. This study, believed to be the first of its kind, provides insights into why, how and to what extent the nursing associate role has been implemented in general practice. Barriers to its implementation appear to include a lack of clarity about the role,

a mismatch between nursing associates’ training and the needs of general practices, the lack of a strong narrative for the role, and the challenges encountered by nursing associates in developing a professional identity. The author suggests that in general practice the nursing associate role is not yet fulfilling its original policy purpose, and that it needs to be better supported and more widely accepted and implemented.

[Comparison of Work Patterns Between Physicians and Advanced Practice Practitioners in Primary Care and Specialty Practice Settings June 2023, JAMA Network Open](#)

Despite the increasing involvement of APPs in care delivery across specialties, the work patterns of APPs compared with physicians and how they are integrated into care teams has not been well characterized. This understanding is crucial for designing effective multidisciplinary teams, particularly in primary care, where APPs have been considered a key part of the movement toward team-based care, as well as a key strategy in alleviating workforce challenges facing primary care.^{10,11} One tool that can provide insights into the ways that APPs are being integrated into care is to examine data that can be extracted from electronic health records (EHRs). Data from EHRs can provide insight into time expenditure during and after hours by physicians and APPs and can potentially highlight opportunities for redistribution of work among role groups to enhance job feasibility. By highlighting the types and complexity of visits seen by each role group, EHR data also can inform prioritization or reconsideration of the types of appointments scheduled for physicians vs APPs to facilitate the best care delivery.

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[General practice pharmacists' implementation of advanced clinical assessment skills: a qualitative study of behavioural determinants](#) October 2022, *International Journal of Clinical Pharmacy*

Advanced Clinical Examination & Assessment (ACE) courses and the skills gained increase General Practice Clinical Pharmacist (GPCPs) confidence in relation to implementation of knowledge, skills and behaviours required to deliver advanced pharmacist practice. ACE courses would seem key to development of a versatile Advanced Pharmacist Practitioner (APP) workforce in General Practice with potentially significant impacts for delivery of primary care services. While ACE courses provide skills acquisition for advanced clinical assessment, training programmes are needed to triangulate and embed these skills and so support transition to autonomous APP-level practice. Policy, and review of implementation strategies are urgently required to ensure pharmacists that have gained advanced clinical assessment skills can provide advanced clinical care to patients in support of existing healthcare services.

[The development of community paramedicine; a restricted review](#) September 2022, *Health & Social Care in the Community*

This review identified and explored community paramedicine literature focused on five key areas: education, models of delivery, governance and clinical support, the scope of the role and outcomes associated with community paramedic models. The findings of this review demonstrate a lack of research and understanding of the education and scope of the role of community paramedics, and also highlighted a need to develop common approaches to education and scope while maintaining flexibility in addressing community needs. There was a lack of standardisation in the implementation of governance and supervision models which may prevent community paramedicine from realising its full potential. Finally, although there has been an increased focus on outcomes in the literature, such reporting

is inconsistent. This inconsistency, and the gaps evident across the other areas of focus, makes it difficult to articulate what community paramedicine programmes can achieve and their impacts on the healthcare system.

[The introduction of advanced practice physiotherapy within Dutch primary care is a quest for possibilities, added value, and mutual trust: a qualitative study amongst advanced practice physiotherapists and general practitioners](#) April 2022, *BMC Health Services Research*

The results of this study show that implementing an APP model of care is challenging within the Dutch healthcare system. The deployment of APP does not sufficiently align with the core values of GPs, and GPs appear to be reluctant to hand over some control over patient care to APPs. Therefore, APPs do not appear to have ownership over the implementation, given their strong dependence on the practice, values and needs of GPs.

[Role dimensions of practice nurses and interest in introducing advanced nurse practitioners in general practice in Ireland](#) March 2022, *Health Science Reports*

General practice nurses appear to have an agenda in relation to activities associated with wound care, immunizations, respiratory and cardiovascular issues. Just over half of the respondents were not interested in becoming an ANP. Their perceived challenges associated with the implementation of the role include a lack of support from general practitioners, a lack of resources, insurance issues, and a lack of understanding of the role. Challenges were associated with undertaking further training and their experience of having more work transferred to general practice without concomitant reallocation of resources.

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[Nationwide evaluation of the advanced clinical practitioner role in England: a cross-sectional survey January 2022, BMJ Open](#)

In response to growing pressures on healthcare systems, the advanced clinical practice (ACP) role has been implemented widely in the UK and internationally. In England, ACP is a level of practice applicable across various healthcare professions, who exercise a level of autonomy across four domains, referred to as the four pillars of practice (education, leadership, research and clinical practice). A national framework for ACP was established in 2017 to ensure consistency across the ACP role, however current ACP governance, education and support is yet to be evaluated. This study aimed to analyse data from a national survey of the ACP role to inform the development and improvement of policies relating to ACP in the National Health Service (NHS) in England.

[Role of advanced practice pharmacists in general practice January 2022, Clinical Pharmacy](#)

Advanced practice pharmacists working in general practice represent the next step in the evolution of primary care clinical pharmacy. This article outlines the role of the advanced practice pharmacist and the various routes pharmacists can take to become one. It also provides examples of some of the roles they can take on in general practice.

[The changing context of advanced practice nursing within the UK community care setting December 2021, British Journal of Community Nursing](#)

Advanced practice nursing (APN) roles have developed partly to address demand and workforce issues. In community care settings and general practice, an advanced nursing practitioner is generally understood to mean a nurse who has undertaken additional education and training in clinical assessment, including history-taking and physical examination, clinical reasoning and independent prescribing, so they can safely

manage patients presenting with undifferentiated and undiagnosed conditions. Capabilities in the Skills for Health framework cover everything from communication and consultation skills, practising holistically and personalised care, to working with colleagues and in teams. The framework is intended to ensure advanced nursing practitioners work to an advanced level. It is also designed to support them to demonstrate and evidence their capabilities to service commissioners, employers, people accessing healthcare and the public.

[The introduction of advanced paramedics into primary care in Northern Ireland: a qualitative descriptive study of the experiences of general practitioners December 2021, British Paramedic Journal](#)

The thematic analysis produced three superordinate themes of alleviating pressure, acceptance and psychological well-being. These were underpinned by seven ordinate themes that were supported using verbatim quotes. These were then discussed and contextualised with themes from existing literature. Generally, there was widespread support from the GPs for the introduction of advanced paramedics into primary care teams. The reasons were multi-factorial but the reduction in GP workload featured prominently. The participants reported benefits in terms of increased resilience and work-life balance. The capacity to provide a clinician with experience of dealing with acute and emergency presentations, in combination with managing routine procedures, was also reported to be of great importance.

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[“A little bit more looking...listening and feeling” A qualitative interview study exploring advanced clinical practice in primary care and community pharmacy](#) November 2021, *International Journal of Clinical Pharmacy*

While pharmacists have been practising at an advanced level in primary care settings for a number of years, an increasing number of community pharmacists are practising at this level, and the experiences of both groups are vital for understanding how better to embed advanced practice. The ability to use enhanced skills such as physical examination and comprehensive clinical history-taking enabled pharmacists in both primary and community settings to take greater responsibility for the patient journey. The community pharmacy setting posed a number of limitations for pharmacists, not least the limited ability to practise advanced skills, although changes to the pharmacy contract and education and training are likely to enhance the ability of community pharmacists to perform advanced practice.

[The ambulance service advanced practitioner's role in supporting care homes: a qualitative study of care staff experiences](#) November 2021, *Nursing & Residential Care Abstract only**

The demand from care homes on NHS services continues to rise, with little evidence of ambulance service contribution in this area. The Yorkshire Ambulance Service provides an advanced practitioner model to support care homes in Sheffield, as an alternative to calling 999. This study investigated the experiences and needs of the care home staff who use the ambulance service advanced practitioner model. The three key themes from the interviews were variations in service demand, the service user's expectations and experience, and benefits to residents. Participants reported that good community services reduced the need to call 999, empowering carers to support residents to remain in the community.

[The emerging role of the advanced practice epilepsy nurse: a comparative study between two countries](#) January 2021, *Journal of Clinical Nursing Abstract only**

The aim of the study was to compare advanced practice in epilepsy nurses in Spain and United Kingdom, identifying differences in the domains of standard advanced practice. The advanced practice role in Spain is underdeveloped compared with the United Kingdom. Differences in the settings of advanced roles in epilepsy nurses may be explained by greater community practice in the United Kingdom and differences in organisational and health systems.

[The changing context of advanced practice nursing within the UK community care setting](#) 2021, *British Journal of Community Nursing*

The identity and scope of the nursing role has evolved over the years, from following doctors' orders and delivering task-oriented care to acting as degree-educated, autonomous and evidence-based clinical practitioners. The evolution of the APN is supported by the RCN's credentialing programme, new and emerging frameworks and existing collaborative frameworks such as advanced level practice MDT frameworks by HEE, as well as the promotion of APN roles in government strategies and policies. Advanced practice frameworks now have clinical competencies that are linked within CPD educational programmes at master's level, making clarity and uniformity much more established moving forward. With these strategies and support in place, the APN identity will consolidate, and the role will become central to the delivery of holistic, patient-focused and high-quality care in the primary care setting, and to the achievement of healthcare-related organisational targets, such as reducing hospital admissions, length of stay and, most importantly, safe patient care.

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[Integrated older people care and advanced practice nursing: an evidence-based review](#) September 2020, *International Nursing Review Abstract only**

Advanced practice nurses employ an array of strategies and approaches in caring for older people. Although their role varies from mostly substitute (US) to supplemental (Thailand), nurses in both countries contribute towards integrated person-centred care. Preparing advanced practice nurses to work in the community is a prerequisite for meeting ageing population health needs in a sustainable manner. Education, professional development and leadership training opportunities should focus on capacity building in: a) strengthening mutual accountability, b) reorienting the work environment through innovative care models and c) coordinating services through partnerships to achieve universal health and ensure healthy ageing.

[Advanced practice nurses in primary care in Switzerland: an analysis of interprofessional collaboration](#) January 2020, *BMC Nursing*

This study has deepened the understanding of interprofessional collaboration in the context of newly evolving roles for APNs, nurses, and medical practice assistants in Switzerland. It emerged from our analysis that role clarification is crucial for efficient interprofessional collaboration within new models of care in the Swiss PC context. The experience from our sample practices can inform international health policymakers and practitioners about the importance of the six domains of IPC presented in this article when implementing new models of care. Moreover, the Swiss experience with a care model that combines APN and MPAs or nurses is unique and shows that interprofessional collaboration can be enhanced through such a combination of health professionals. This practical experience with new models of care involving APNs and MPAs may also influence the regulation of the scopes of practice of these health professionals in Switzerland.

[Whole systems approach: Advanced clinical practitioner development and identity in primary care](#) July 2019, *Journal of Health Organisation and Management*

The purpose of this paper is to ascertain primary care advanced clinical practitioners' (ACP) perceptions and experiences of what factors influence the development and identity of ACP roles, and how development of ACP roles that align with Health Education England's capability framework for advanced clinical practice can be facilitated in primary care. Five themes emerged from the data – the need for: a standardised role definition and inclusive localised registration; access to/availability of quality accredited educational programmes relevant to primary care and professional development opportunities at the appropriate level; access to/availability of support and supervision for ACPs and trainee ACPs; a supportive organisational infrastructure and culture; and a clear career pathway.

[Role of advanced practitioners in primary care: a literature review: NT'](#) July 2019, *Nursing Times Abstract only**

Pressures on primary care services are making it more difficult for patients to access to GP consultations. This literature review explored the role of advanced clinical practitioners in primary care to determine whether they could support over-stretched general practice teams. It found that these practitioners have been shown to improve patient satisfaction, alleviate pressure on GPs and provide high-quality care when they work as part of the team. It concluded that advanced clinical practitioners have an important role to play in supporting and enhancing primary care service provision.

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[Skill-mix change in general practice: a qualitative comparison of three 'new' non-medical roles in English primary care January 2018, British Journal of General Practice Abstract only*](#)

Advanced practitioners, physicians associates, and practice pharmacists have the potential to contribute to the delivery of primary medical care, but attention to role definition, professional boundaries, training needs, and management of expectations is needed.

[Driving the role of the advanced practitioner in primary care January 2017, Practice Nursing Abstract only*](#)

The role of the advanced practitioner has been highlighted by a number of bodies to enhance nursing skills, place nurses at the forefront of primary care, and alleviate some of the pressure caused by a shortage of GPs. Here the author describes the results of introducing an advanced nurse practitioner into a surgery, where patients were extremely dissatisfied with the time it was taking to get an appointment with a GP. She outlines the benefits, the potential challenges and the cultural changes necessary to make the system work, as well as reporting back on patient satisfaction with the role of the advanced nurse practitioner.

Education and training

[APN nurses' core competencies for general clinical health assessment in primary health care. A scoping review January 2024, Scandinavian Journal of Caring Sciences](#)

The objective of this review was to identify, examine and conceptually map the available literature on APN nurses' core competencies for performing general clinical assessments in primary health care. We found three conceptual maps that illustrate that 'collaborative, leadership and management skills', 'person-centred nursing care skills' and 'academic and educational skills' are the core competencies on which APN

nurses draw when performing general clinical health assessments in the primary care sector. Thus, in order to be able to undertake a general clinical assessment in primary health care, we found that APN nurses must draw on collaborative, leadership and management skills to meet the service users' needs and deliver high-quality and person-centred care. We found that these skills are needed to deal with, for example, family members, the GP and other members of the multidisciplinary team surrounding the service user in primary health care. Also competencies not directly related to health care are required for APN nurses to fulfil their role.

[Community children's nursing: developing a bespoke model of post-registration education October 2022, Nursing Children and Young People Abstract only*](#)

Community children's nurses provide a vital service between the hospital and home environment, supporting children, young people and families with their health needs. In the UK, the number of educational pathways providing a specialist practitioner qualification in community children's nursing has declined significantly in recent years. This has left many community children's nursing services with little or no access to educational programmes, despite the rising demand. The four UK governments, together with regulatory bodies such as the Nursing and Midwifery Council, have embarked on ambitious transformation of post-registration career frameworks and standards, the long-term impact of which is uncertain. This article discusses an approach that one community children's nursing service in Scotland took to address these challenges by liaising with a local university and accessing a bespoke advanced practice programme.

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[Contribution of supervision to the development of advanced practitioners: a qualitative study of pharmacy learners' and supervisors' views April 2022, BMJ Open](#)

Key elements for effective supervision included supporting learners to identify their learning needs (educational supervision), guiding learners in everyday work activities (clinical supervision), and combination of regular prearranged face-to-face meetings and ad hoc contact when needed (clinical supervision), along with ongoing support as learners progressed through a learning pathway (educational supervision). Clinical supervisors supported learners in developing proficiency and confidence in translating and applying the knowledge and skills they were gaining into practice. Learners benefited from having clinical supervisors in the workplace with good understanding and experience of working in the setting, as well as receiving clinical supervision from different types of healthcare professionals. Educational supervisors supported learners to identify their learning needs and the requirements of the learning pathway, and then as an ongoing available source of support as they progressed through a pathway. Educational supervisors also filled in some of the gaps where there was a lack of local clinical supervision and in settings like community pharmacy where pharmacist learners did not have access to any clinical supervision.

[Development of an innovative curriculum-to-career transition program for nurse practitioners in primary care May 2021, Nursing Outlook Abstract only*](#)

Unlike physicians, there are no current requirements or funding for the post-graduation training of advanced practice nurses. Given the complexity of health care, more post graduate training programs are needed to meet growing demand. A taskforce was convened to research gaps in preparation for real-world practice, as well as effective models of curricular and clinical support to promote positive patient outcomes. Supportive structures for

advance practice nurses are dependent upon understanding the barriers, facilitators and structural support required to implement such a program. Starting a curriculum-to-career program the semester prior to graduation is a relatively untested model for advanced practitioners to receive enhanced mentored education and support to increase resiliency, reduce early burnout and burden on the health setting.

Experiences and perceptions

[Perceptions of general practitioners towards the services provided by advanced practice nurses: a cross-sectional survey in France December 2023, BMC Health Services Research Abstract only*](#)

The primary care system in France is currently undergoing significant transformations and the integration of APNs holds promise. GPs who answered the survey in this study had an overall unfavorable perception of the APN profession, except for those who were accustomed to collaborating within multidisciplinary teams. Although other studies have shown that their point of view is not shared by other physicians, our findings show the persistence of an active subgroup of physicians who do not consider APNs as helpful or useful to patients or to the healthcare system. These results may allow GPs to have a better understanding about the advantages of collaborating with APNs. Further studies need to be conducted to show whether the integration of APNs into healthcare networks improves quality of care which could also be communicated to all stakeholders, especially GPs, in order to ensure a greater cooperation between traditional and newer healthcare settings.

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[Physicians' and advanced practice providers' perceptions of the impact of embedded clinical pharmacists on the work environment in ambulatory care clinics February 2023, American Journal of Health-System Pharmacy Abstract only*](#)

This was an exploratory mixed methods study consisting of semistructured interviews and a subsequent survey. Participants included attending and resident physicians, and advanced practice providers (APPs) practicing in clinics with an embedded clinical pharmacist. In the interviews, participants stated the clinical pharmacist contributed positively in terms of work environment, workload, work-related stress, and burnout. The major themes identified were sharing patient care responsibilities, saving provider time, and being a knowledgeable resource. Survey responses were consistent with interview statements; however, the positive impact differed between nonusers and moderate to high utilizers of clinical pharmacy services. The main barrier to collaborating with clinical pharmacists was their limited availability.

[Daily practices of advanced practice nurses within a multi-professional primary care practice in Switzerland: a qualitative analysis January 2023, BMC Primary Care](#)

This study extended the understanding of APNs' everyday practices in Switzerland's primary medical health care system. Our findings indicate that everyday core activities include providing extended clinical practice and serving as an on-site specialist for patients, their relatives and other care professionals. Surrounding this level, net activities create the web of interactions that hold the core activities together. At the outermost level, the cohesive activities help not only to develop and anchor these roles but also to develop the Swiss primary care system. Working within this care model, these results suggest that APNs can contribute substantially to successful co-management of patients with chronic diseases in primary care systems. They also suggest that the evaluation of such care

models should move beyond assessing APN outcomes alone and look comprehensively at the effects of care models where co-management in interdisciplinary teams is practiced.

[The introduction of advanced practice physiotherapy within Dutch primary care is a quest for possibilities, added value, and mutual trust: a qualitative study amongst advanced practice physiotherapists and general practitioners April 2022, BMC Health Services Research](#)

Despite the increased deployment and added value of Advanced Practitioner Physiotherapy (APP) in musculoskeletal care internationally, APP is not yet widely accepted within Dutch primary care. This may be due to specific constraints in the implementation of APP within the Dutch healthcare system. This study aimed to explore the experiences and perceptions of Advanced Practitioner Physiotherapists (APPs) and General Practitioners (GPs) with respect to implementing APP within Dutch primary care. The study demonstrates that implementing an APP model of care is challenging, in part, because the deployment of APP does not sufficiently align with the core values of GPs, while GPs appear reluctant to hand over control of elements of patient care to APPs. APPs do not appear to have ownership over the implementation, given their strong dependence on the practice, values and needs of GPs.

[General practice nurses' experiences of participation in an advanced nursing practice education programme September 2021, British Journal of Nursing Abstract only*](#)

In the UK, transformation of the nursing workforce, including development of the role of the advanced nurse practitioner within general practice, is essential to meet healthcare demands. This article presents the results of a small, qualitative study conducted among students at one university in Scotland, describing their experiences of participation in advanced practice education. Data were collected through semi-structured

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interviews to generate in-depth descriptions and to identify the facilitators and barriers to learning. The study identified that a shared responsibility for patient care creates opportunities for learning. The facilitators to learning were identified as foundation level education in history taking and clinical examination, finance, having a supportive network and mentorship. Barriers included pressure of work and a lack of clarity about roles and training needs. Given the key role that these nurses will have in future healthcare models, there is a requirement for a national education standard. It is recommended that the Nursing and Midwifery Council leads on defining advanced nurse practitioner in general practice programme learning outcomes. The overall aim of such courses is to enhance the experience for future nurses to encourage recruitment and transform the nursing workforce.

[They Are Partners in Care: A Qualitative Exploration of Physicians' Perceptions of Primary Care Advanced Practice Nurses](#) April 2021, *Journal of Nursing Scholarship Abstract only**

Physicians viewed primary care APNs as competent healthcare professionals. They viewed APNs as specialists in their fields, with the potential for expanding their services into the community. However, there remains gaps in physicians' understanding of the primary care APNs' nonclinical roles. The findings from this study indicate a need for nursing schools and nurse leaders to increase awareness of the complete APN role among physicians. APNs' roles in educating healthcare professionals and delivering care to the community can be further developed.

[Patient view of the advanced practitioner \(AP\) role in primary care: A realist-informed synthesis](#) March 2021, *Musculoskeletal Care*

Approximately 30% of general practitioner consultations are due to musculoskeletal disorders (MSKDs). Physiotherapists are

trained to assess, diagnose and treat a range of MSKDs, and could provide the first point of contact for primary care patients. There is limited evidence on whether this role is acceptable to patients; however, previous research has explored advanced practitioner (AP) roles in primary care, which could inform this new initiative.

Eight theory areas were identified that potentially impacted on patient acceptability of the role: patient's prior experience of condition management; patient's expectations of condition management; communication; continuity of the individual practitioner; practitioner's scope of practice; accessibility; professional hierarchy and promoting the role. Nineteen hypotheses on the AP role were developed around these theory areas. Role acceptability was influenced significantly by context and may change as the role develops, for instance, as waiting times change.

[Experiences of advanced clinical practitioners in training and their supervisors in primary care using a hub and spoke model](#) August 2020, *Practice Nursing Abstract only**

Advanced clinical practitioners are in demand in primary care. This study looked at the experiences of participants in a hub and spoke training model using a qualitative approach. Three main themes emerged from the study: support; supervision; and vision. The hub and spoke format of training is a useful alternative to traditional methods in developing practitioners who work in a bespoke yet broad practice environment, such as primary care.

[A qualitative study to explore the experiences of first contact physiotherapy practitioners in the NHS and their experiences of their first contact role](#) 2020, *Musculoskeletal Science & Practice*

First Contact Practitioner (FCP) roles have been developed for health professionals with advanced practice skills to take on

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many of the musculoskeletal responsibilities currently carried out by general practitioners. FCP roles are new and still developing. Currently there is little research that has investigated the experiences of FCPs. This knowledge could help stakeholders and other clinicians gain an understanding into what makes a successful FCP role. The aim of this research was to explore the experiences of FCP working in North West England to gain insight into the first point of contact service, and their experiences of this developing full time FCP role. Five themes were identified: 1. 'It's the level of clinical complexity that you're dealing with', 2. FCP role - rewards and challenges, 3. Own wellbeing, 4. Professional development and education, 5. Realities of working in practice governed by business.

[Exploring the relationship between nursing identity and advanced nursing practice: An ethnographic study December 2019, Journal of Clinical Nursing Abstract only*](#)

Advanced nursing practice continues to develop internationally. Previous studies suggest advanced practice may lack support within nursing, which may lead to underutilisation, retention and patient safety issues. However, the relationship between the wider nursing profession and advanced practice is poorly understood and the theory that professional identity creates cultural barriers to advanced practice has received little empirical attention. As advanced practice expands throughout primary and secondary care, and across allied health professions, the impact of professional identity and relationships on health care will likely increase and the importance of strong advanced practice identity will become increasingly relevant.

[Advanced practice nurses' and general practitioners' first experiences with introducing the advanced practice nurse role to Swiss primary care: a qualitative study November 2019, BMC Family Practice](#)

Our aim was to explore the experiences of APNs and GPs

involved in introducing the APN role to Swiss primary care. The analysis resulted in five main themes: The participants considered themselves pioneers developing a new model in primary care, seeking to shape and improve future health care ((1) pioneering spirit). Both nurses and doctors agreed on the additional value of the APN role, a role seen as having more time for and a different approach to patient care, bringing higher quality of care and flexibility to the practice ((2) added value from the APN role). Participants also emphasized the importance of asking for advice when unsure about diagnostic steps or appropriate treatment ((3) awareness of limited knowledge and skills). The main barriers identified included the impression that Swiss doctors have little knowledge about nurses in advanced roles ((4) GP's lack of knowledge regarding the APN role), and that further regulations will be important to foster role clarity and accountability ((5) political and legal obstacles in introducing the APN role).

[Professional Satisfaction of Advanced Practice Providers in Primary Care Specialties September 2019, Journal of Healthcare Management Abstract only*](#)

This prospective study focuses on professional satisfaction among advanced practice providers (APPs) in primary care. We aimed to determine whether incorporating specialty care clinics within primary care practices increases professional satisfaction. We administered the validated Misener Nurse Practitioner Job Satisfaction Scale and a self-developed demographic questionnaire to all primary care APPs before and one year after implementation of a gynecology practice within the primary care setting. APPs practicing in a dual-role specialty practice reported higher overall professional satisfaction; professional growth; intrapractice partnership/collegiality; professional, social, and community interaction; and benefits than their primary care-only counterparts. We concluded that professional satisfaction among APPs may contribute to staff retention.

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[Burnout Among Physicians, Advanced Practice Clinicians and Staff in Smaller Primary Care Practices October 2018, Journal of General Internal Medicine](#)

Burnout is prevalent among physicians, APCs, and staff in smaller primary care practices. Members of solo practices less commonly report burnout, while members of health system-owned practices and Federally Qualified Health Centers more commonly report burnout, suggesting that practice level autonomy may be a critical determinant of burnout.

[The role and experiences of advanced nurse practitioners working in out of hours urgent care services in a primary care setting May 2018, Nursing Management Abstract only*](#)

This article evaluates the role and experiences of ANPs working in an OOH urgent primary care service and identifies important factors that affect their roles. Positive factors enable job satisfaction, but challenges associated with knowledge base, perceptions, role definitions and isolation must be considered for quality and governance purposes. The article describes how supportive systems must be in place to enable mentorship, supervision programmes and development of this group of advanced practitioners.

[A day in the life of a paramedic advanced clinical practitioner in primary care September 2017, Journal of Paramedic Practice](#)

This 'day-in-the-life' article is the author's first-person account of his experiences as a paramedic working in an inner-city GP practice, while training to be an advanced clinical practitioner. The author aims to illustrate the range and complexity of the role of paramedics based in primary care, and how this role is developing beyond the traditional scope of paramedic practice. The article presents actual patient encounters, which reflect a typical working day in primary care. Through this approach, the author hopes to demonstrate how paramedics can complement and extend the skills of an established primary care team.

Furthermore, studying advanced clinical practice at postgraduate level provides new and extended clinical skills and knowledge, allowing paramedics to work with greater autonomy.

[A systematic review of experiences of advanced practice nursing in general practice January 2017, BMC Nursing](#)

We set out to describe experiences of advanced practice nursing in general practice. We discovered that general practitioners and patients continue to have concerns around responsibility, trust and accountability. Additionally, advanced practice nurses struggle to negotiate and clarify scopes of practice while general practitioners have trouble justifying the costs associated with advanced practice nursing roles. Therefore, much work remains to establish and maintain the legitimacy of advanced practice nursing in general practice.

Impact

[Integration of an advanced practice nurse into a primary care practice: a qualitative analysis of experiences with changes in general practitioner professional roles in a Swiss multiprofessional primary care practice July 2022, Swiss Medical Weekly](#)

Our analysis revealed that GPs experienced interprofessional synergies when working collaboratively with APNs. These were rooted in trust and relied on abilities in teaching, supervision and delegation to achieve maximum impact. Capitalising on the integration of APNs into primary care, this new care model can be adapted to diverse individual settings. We conclude this article by highlighting the potential of working collaboratively with APNs, who play increasingly important roles in the primary care of polymorbid patients with complex needs.

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[Advanced Clinical Practitioners in Primary Care in the UK: A Qualitative Study of Workforce Transformation June 2020, International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health](#)

This study was an in-depth formative evaluation of ACP role implementation in diverse practice settings across one region of the UK. It showed a high degree of acceptance of the ACP role and emphasized the important contribution ACPs were making to meet patient care needs in the context of high workforce pressures and high service demand in primary care. Although limited to a UK setting, the study findings resonate with issues identified in the international literature. The full realization of the ACP role potential is impeded by variability in ACP capabilities and limited visibility of the ACP contribution within non-clinical domains of practice. Moreover, there is a need for greater focus on workplace support and continuing professional development to support wellbeing in this occupational group, as well as to optimize the ACP workforce. ACP roles in primary care need to move beyond a perception of filling the gaps in existing provision to enabling wider service transformation.

[Scoping the application of primary care advanced clinical practice roles in England 2020, International Journal of Health Governance](#)

Despite the introduction of HEE's ACP capability framework, there is inconsistency and confusion about the ACP role. Results indicated a need for standardisation of role definition, and educational and practice requirements. Results also suggested that some ACPs are not working to their full potential, while some staff who are employed as 'gap-fillers' to provide routine clinical services perceive themselves as ACPs despite not working at ACP level.

Challenges and facilitators

[Barriers and facilitators to the implementation of the advanced nurse practitioner role in primary care settings: A scoping review April 2020, International Journal of Nursing Studies](#)

Workload and workforce issues in primary care are key drivers for the growing international trend to expand nursing roles. Advanced nurse practitioners are increasingly being appointed to take on activities and roles traditionally carried out by doctors. Successful implementation of any new role within multidisciplinary teams is complex and time-consuming, therefore it is important to understand the factors that may hinder or support implementation of the advanced nurse practitioner role in primary care settings. Building collaborative relationships with other healthcare professionals and negotiating the role are critical to the success of the implementation of the advanced nurse practitioner role. Team consensus about the role and how it integrates into the wider team is also essential.

[Factors influencing the implementation of advanced midwife practitioners in healthcare settings: A qualitative study November 2018, Midwifery Abstract only*](#)

Budgetary constraints on a governmental and healthcare organizational level were mentioned as main barriers for role implementation. The current fee-for-service financing model of healthcare professionals was also seen as an impediment. Obstetricians considered the implementation of advanced midwife practitioner roles as a possible financial and professional threat. Documenting the added value of advanced midwife practitioner roles was regarded a prerequisite for gaining support to implement such roles. Healthcare managers' and midwives' attitudes towards these roles were considered essential. Participants warned against automatically transferring the concept of advanced practice nursing to midwifery. Although participants seldom discussed population healthcare needs as a

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driver for implementation, healthcare organizations' heightened focus on quality improvement and client safety was seen as an opportunity for implementation. University hospitals were perceived as pioneers regarding advanced midwife practitioner roles.

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Competency Frameworks

[Advanced Clinical Practice \(Nurses\) working in General Practice/ Primary Care in England 2020, Skills for Health](#)

Primary care and general practice are ever evolving to meet the increasing and more complex needs of local communities / populations. This will require new ways of working and the development of multi-professional general practice and primary care teams. This framework provides a standard and greater clarity on the capabilities for nurses working at the advanced clinical practice level within general practice.

[Multi-professional framework for advanced clinical practice in England 2017, NHS](#)

This framework builds upon the definition of advanced clinical practice in England. This was developed and agreed by all stakeholders. It is designed to enable a consistent understanding of advanced clinical practice, building on work carried out previously across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

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