

Evidence Brief: Respiratory Nursing

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

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- [Complete Evidence Brief list – link for External staff](#)

Key publications – the big picture

[NHS Long term Workforce Plan](#)

NHS England, 2023

The first comprehensive workforce plan for the NHS, putting staffing on a sustainable footing and improving patient care. It focuses on retaining existing talent and making the best use of new technology alongside the biggest recruitment drive in health service history.

[Respiratory Disease: understanding the future service and workforce needs](#)

Health Education England, 2022

This report includes initial recommendations that we will aim to take forward jointly and address. We will focus on respiratory workforce data and supply by scoping how best we can help develop actions to address uniformity in data system sources and any system data gaps. At the same time, we will look at workforce upskilling and training thinking about the skills and capabilities that are required as new roles and ways of working emerge specifically for 'out of hospital' care.

[Mapping a career path for Adult Respiratory Nurses](#)

British Thoracic Society, 2020

Today, the British Thoracic Society (BTS) has published the first professional development framework for adult respiratory nursing, to provide respiratory nurses with a clearer career pathway, from band 5 to consultant nurse.

[The NHS Long term Plan](#)

NHS England, 2019

In looking ahead to the Health Service's 80th birthday, this NHS Long Term Plan takes all three of these realities as its starting point. So to succeed, we must keep all that's good about our health service and its place in our national life.

[A National Five Year Plan for Lung Health](#)

Taskforce for Lung Health, 2018

A five year plan to create a society where everyone can live with healthy lungs for as long as possible and have the best chance of living well, or recovering, when lung disease develops.

[Evaluation of the current landscape of respiratory nurse specialists in the UK: planning for the future needs of patients](#)

BMJ, 2017

This survey report provides a current snapshot of the respiratory nurse specialist workforce in the UK. This workforce is an ageing population; the results from this survey can be used to inform succession planning and to ensure a viable respiratory nurse specialist workforce in future.

Case Studies

[Inspirational nurse who transformed respiratory care named RCN Scotland Nurse of the Year](#)

Publication date: 2023

Developing a partnership with Chest, Heart, and Stroke Scotland, Amy transformed respiratory care resulting in readmissions dropping from 20% to 8% - benefiting both patients and the ward team. Amy met the challenge of caring across a wide geography head on, liaising directly with GPs to ensure equality of access.

[Developing an integrated respiratory team in NHS Dumfries and Galloway](#)

Publication date: 2021

NHS Dumfries and Galloway is a remote and rural health board in south-west Scotland and our Integrated Respiratory Team (IRT) provides a region-wide service covering 2500 square miles, a population of 149 500 with 45% of the population living

remotely from the largest settlement of Dumfries. The Respiratory Managed Clinical Network developed a 'spend to save initiative' that was approved by the Integrated Joint Board in April 2018 with funding to expand the existing respiratory nurse specialist and pulmonary rehabilitation teams. We wanted to provide more same-day early supported discharges (ESDs), reduce lengths of stay, develop admission avoidance (AA) and provide better access to pulmonary rehabilitation (PR) across the region.

[A day in the life of a Paediatric Respiratory Nurse Specialist](#)

Publication date: 2021

I'm Claire, paediatric respiratory nurse specialist at the Royal Brompton Hospital. Follow me while I navigate you through a day in the life of an asthma nurse. There is no such thing as a typical day's work as every day brings something new.

The Star for workforce redesign

More resources and tools are available by searching for 'Nursing' in [the Star](#).

Statistics

[RESPIRATORY MEDICINE WORKFORCE SURVEY REPORT 2021](#)

British Thoracic Society, 2021

The BTS Respiratory Medicine Workforce Survey 2021 again showed that there are major challenges in respiratory workforce recruitment across the country.

- [BTS Respiratory Specialty Trainee survey report 2020](#) View the results of a survey of respiratory specialty trainees.
- [Respiratory Medicine Workforce Review Statement 2020](#) A summary of key issues facing those working in respiratory medicine in secondary care
- [Respiratory Workforce Facts and Figures 2020](#) Facts and figures about the respiratory workforce in support of our aim of Better Lung Health for all.

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

Training and workforce development

[How registered nurses are measuring respiratory rates in adult acute care health settings: An integrative review](#)

Publication date: 2023

Despite its importance, this integrative review has determined that respiratory rates are not being assessed correctly by nursing staff in the acute care environment. Evidence of using estimation, value bias or quick count and multiply techniques are emerging themes which urgently require further research.

[New Graduate Respiratory Therapists' Perceptions of Their Transition to Practice](#)

[Australia]

Publication date: 2023

The nursing profession has recognized the need to acknowledge the successes and failures of graduates' transition to practice so that these programs can be continuously improved. The challenge is in identifying aspects of the transition to practice that may improve job satisfaction, retention, professional development, and patient care for RTs. This research aimed to explore the perceptions of new graduate RTs' experiences during their first year of practice and identify barriers and facilitators to a successful transition to practice.

[Need and baseline for harmonising nursing education in respiratory care: preliminary results of a global survey](#)

Publication date: 2022

These findings support the need for a core respiratory curriculum. To advance this significant work the ICRN group plans to conduct a Delphi study to identify core curriculum requirements for respiratory nursing education at pre-registration and advanced educational levels to flexibly meet each country's specific educational requirements for recognition of respiratory nursing speciality practice.

[Guidance for home oxygen weaning in the community \(PPLOG\)](#)

Publication date: 2022

The aim of this home oxygen weaning guidance is to bring evidence-based knowledge and the experiences of Respiratory Clinical Nurse Specialists, Community Children's Nurses and Community Neonatal Nurses together, to address the unwarranted variation across community children & young people (CYP) services in relation to Long Term Oxygen Therapy (LTOT). This guidance has been created with an aim to ensure the management of CYP on home oxygen therapy is safe, effective, timely and standardised within London and other England regions especially when the oxygen process begins.

[COPD-Specific Self-Management Support Provided by Trained Educators in Everyday Practice is Associated with Improved Quality of Life, Health-Directed Behaviors, and Skill and Technique Acquisition: A Convergent Embedded Mixed-Methods Study](#)

Publication date: 2020

We conducted a convergent embedded mixed-methods study. Respiratory educators attended a 7-h, lecture-based continuing education activity on self-management support held in Québec, Canada. Four months after the continuing education activity, in their professional practice, trained educators provided self-management support to patients with COP.

[Do we need tailored training and development plans for European Union respiratory nurses?](#)

Publication date: 2020

Nurses are critical players in healthcare and should be the next profession to standardise levels of education, preparing them for an active partnership with other healthcare professionals prepared to tackle the chronic disease problem in Europe.

[What's in a name: should nursing job titles be regulated?](#)

Publication date: 2019

This article presents the landscape in respiratory nursing to illustrate the plethora of titles used in the UK.

[Research priorities for respiratory nursing: a UK-wide Delphi study](#)

Publication date: 2018

The top five research priorities were: 1) "Patient understanding of asthma control"; 2) "The clinical and cost-effectiveness of respiratory nurse interventions"; 3) "The impact of nurse-led clinics on patient care"; 4) "Inhaler technique"; and 5) two topics jointly scored: "Prevention of exacerbations" and "Symptom management".

Quality improvement and innovation

[Using quality improvement to tackle the triple aim for children and young people with asthma: improving outcomes, experience and costs](#)

Publication date: 2023

Having dedicated specialist asthma nurse input in the community and using school-based interventions can help to improve asthma care for children and young people, reducing the burden of frequent accident and emergency department admissions. Using quality improvement methods in pursuit of triple aim outcomes can help teams to work towards a shared goal.

[Improving Communication to Neonatal Resuscitation Team Members During High-Risk Births](#)

[United States]

Publication date: 2023

Two labor and delivery units and a third labor-delivery-recovery-postpartum unit within a health care system in the southeastern United States. Participants: Nurses, nurse practitioners, respiratory therapists, and physicians who are part of the neonatal resuscitation team. Implementing a communication tool for use in high-risk births may improve communication to neonatal resuscitation team members, enhance preparation for neonatal care, and increase team members' satisfaction with interprofessional communication.

[Impact of nursing care on lung functional residual capacity in acute respiratory distress syndrome patients](#)

Publication date: 2022

The lung impedance distribution technique during nursing care appears feasible in the majority of patients with ARDS. Some daily nursing care in ARDS patients (including bed-bathing and mouth care) resulted in a prolonged decrease in lung functional

residual capacity and therefore could be associated with pulmonary de-recruitment.

[Nursing surveillance of respiratory adverse events among hospitalized adults: A systematic review to guide evidence-based practice](#)

Publication date: 2022

Nursing surveillance (NS) involves the purposeful, ongoing acquisition, interpretation, and synthesis of patient data for clinical decision-making. Surveillance is used to identify patients with early signs of distress and prevent adverse events.

[An audit of the British Thoracic Society asthma discharge care bundle in a teaching hospital](#)

Publication date: 2021

The results of the audit indicated that the hospital has complied with the ADCB. In total, 85% of patients had their inhaler technique checked, but 62% of them were not provided with any written inhaler use instructions. The respiratory clinical nurse specialists were more compliant with most of the bundle statements than the medical team.

[The preferences of people with asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease for self-management support: A qualitative descriptive study](#)

Publication date: 2021

A respiratory nurse specialist was valued as being a care coordinator who could support routine management as well as managing exacerbations, having specialist knowledge and knowing the patient over time.

[Performance of Automated Point-of-Care Respiratory Rate Counting versus Manual Counting in Children under Five Admitted with Severe Febrile Illness to Kisantu Hospital, DR Congo](#)

[Belgium and DR Congo]

Publication date: 2021

In conclusion, in the present setting the automated RR counter performed insufficiently to facilitate the early recognition of danger signs in children with severe febrile illness, given wide limits of agreement and a too low positive percent agreement.

[Performance of automated versus nurse-measured respiratory rate measurements in hospitalised malnourished children](#)

[Canada]

Publication date: 2021

The study was funded by Mining4Life Chair in Mineral Nutrition through the SickKids Foundation, ALIMA and PATH.

[Use of a Multidisciplinary Mechanical Ventilation Weaning Protocol to Improve Patient Outcomes and Empower Staff in a Medical Intensive Care Unit](#)

Publication date: 2021

Patients in the RN- and RT-driven mechanical ventilation weaning protocol group had significantly lower duration of mechanical ventilation (74 vs 152 hours; $P = .002$) and ICU length of stay (6.7 vs 10.2 days; $P = .031$). There was no significant difference in reintubation rates between groups. Staff surveys indicate that both RN and RTs were satisfied with the process change.

[From Progressive Asthma to Intensive Care Unit Respiratory Failure: Approaches Nursing Approach to Patient Care](#)

[China]

Publication date: 2021

Respiratory nurse practitioners play a vital part in ICU management, the treatment of patients with asthma, providing training on inhaler use, preparing asthma action plans and assisting in ER management of patients with asthma.

[Novel quality improvement method to reduce cost while improving the quality of patient care: retrospective observational study](#)

Publication date: 2020

The respiratory ward collected two sets of capacity measures: one for day shift and the other for night shift. The senior charge nurse developed a form that nurses carried with them during a shift to fill out to capture time spent on specific tasks. Initially, one nurse did this every shift, each day. After several weeks, the senior nurse averaged the data from several nurses' observations once per month.

[Recommendations for improving follow-up care for patients with mesothelioma: a qualitative study comprising documentary analysis, interviews and consultation meetings](#)

Publication date: 2020

This study has developed recommendations which identify the need for patients with pleural mesothelioma to access consistent, specialist, streamlined mesothelioma care, centred around specialist mesothelioma nurses and respiratory consultants, with input from the wider multidisciplinary team.

COVID-19

[Redeployment to critical care during the COVID-19 pandemic: A phenomenological study](#)

Publication date: 2023

Familiarity was a key element of people feeling comfortable and the confidence core staff had in colleagues who had come to help. Support and preparation helped but staff were anxious about their own work and concerned about the open-ended nature of redeployment.

[Factors influencing fatigue in UK nurses working in respiratory clinical areas during the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic:](#)

[An online survey](#)

Publication date: 2022

A high proportion of nurses working in respiratory clinical areas have been identified as experiencing fatigue in addition to continued levels of anxiety, depression over winter 2020. Interventions need to be implemented to help provide mental health support and improve workplace conditions to minimise PTSD and burnout.

[Priorities for research during the Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 \(COVID-19\) pandemic and beyond: a survey of nurses, midwives and health visitors in the United Kingdom](#)

Publication date: 2021

Four higher-order themes emerged, (1) New and unknown frontiers; (2) Care and treatment solutions; (3) Healthcare leadership and inclusive workforce; and (4) Emotional and mental health impact.

[Acceptability, Usability, and Performance of Lateral Flow Immunoassay Tests for Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 Antibodies: REACT-2 Study of Self-Testing in Nonhealthcare Key Workers](#)

Publication date: 2021

A greater proportion of this nonhealthcare key worker cohort showed evidence of previous infection with SARS-CoV-2 than the general population at 6.0% (95% CI, 5.8-6.1) after the first wave in England. The high acceptability and usability reported by participants and similar performance of self-test and nurse-performed LFIA indicate that the self-test LFIA is fit for purpose for home testing in occupational and community prevalence studies.

[Mental health of respiratory nurses working during the Covid-19 crisis](#)

Publication date: 2021

Regression analysis showed that younger nurses with less experience had higher levels of anxiety and depression and had lower resilience. Participants highlighted concerns about the working environment, PPE, the quality-of-care individuals were able to deliver, and impacts on mental health to nurses and their families.

[Levels of resilience, anxiety and depression in nurses working in respiratory clinical areas during the COVID pandemic](#)

Publication date: 2020

This cohort experienced significant levels of anxiety and depression, with moderate to high levels of resilience. Support mechanisms and interventions need to be put in place to support all nurses during pandemic outbreaks, particularly younger or less experienced staff.

[Implications for COVID-19: A systematic review of nurses' experiences of working in acute care hospital settings during a respiratory pandemic](#)

Publication date: 2020

This systematic review emphasises that nurses' require Governments, policy makers and nursing groups to actively engage in supporting nurses, both during and following a pandemic or epidemic. Without this, nurses are likely to experience substantial psychological issues that can lead to burnout and loss from the nursing workforce.

[An international survey: the role of specialist nurses in adult respiratory extracorporeal membrane oxygenation](#)

Publication date: 2017

A specialist nurse with perfusion backup is the staffing arrangement implemented by most centres and likely reflects the most efficient use of the professional competences available.

Workforce perspectives and experiences

[Interstitial lung disease and specialist palliative care access: a healthcare professionals survey](#)

Publication date: 2022

A survey study of healthcare professionals, including respiratory physicians, interstitial lung disease nurse specialists, respiratory nurse specialists and palliative care physicians, was conducted using a questionnaire, entailing 17 questions. Most respondents felt that enhancing access to specialist palliative care services would benefit patients. However, palliative care and respiratory care should not be considered as mutually exclusive and multidisciplinary approach is recommended.

[Renaming COPD exacerbations: the UK respiratory nursing perspective](#)

Publication date: 2021

Respiratory nurses in the UK report that the term 'exacerbation' is not fit for purpose for patients, and alternatives should be sought.

[Bearing witness to the challenges of breathlessness](#)

Publication date: 2021

This paper seeks to identify bearing witness to suffering and vulnerability as components of emotional labour in the context of the CRNS role. It highlights the need for research to explore the experience of CRNSs and insights into supporting people with long-term breathlessness. It is more likely that well-supported staff can provide sustained, supportive care to patients living with breathlessness.

[Evaluation of the Perceived Barriers and Facilitators to Timely Extubation of Critically Ill Adults: An Interprofessional Survey](#)

Publication date: 2021

The relative importance of these contributing factors varied by profession, with nurses and RTs often perceiving them as being more influential to the MV liberation process than MDs and NPs. Nurses and RTs had similar responses to many of the survey questions, including systems issues (deferring to daylight team, including physician staffing) and clinician comfort level (bedside provider not comfortable or attending preferences).

[Respiratory Nurses Have Positive Attitudes But Lack Confidence in Advance Care Planning for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease: Online Survey](#)

[New Zealand and Australia]

Publication date: 2021

The 112 participating respiratory nurses had substantial knowledge and positive attitudes regarding ACP in COPD; however, they lacked confidence and clarity regarding their role. Despite advances in end-of-life care provision for chronic disease, well-established barriers remained (inadequate training, fear of distressing patients, and time), and discussion triggers were still linked to acute deterioration, diagnosis of severe disease, and patient initiation. Better articulating the role of the respiratory nurse in ACP and building capacity and confidence within this workforce may improve ACP access for people living with COPD.

[Nursing perspectives and strategies in patients with respiratory insufficiency](#)

[Norway]

Publication date: 2020

Participants' perspectives fell into two main themes: "nurse competence" and "the art of balancing." "Nurse competence" incorporated the sub-themes "observations and assessments,"

“to make decisions,” and “collaboration.” The theme ‘the art of balancing’ incorporated the sub-themes “nursing interventions,” “patients feeling safe,” and “patient participation.”

[Qualitative study of practices and challenges when making a diagnosis of asthma in primary care](#)

Publication date: 2019

We explored diagnostic approaches and challenges faced by general practitioners (GPs) and practice nurses when making a diagnosis of asthma. Fifteen healthcare professionals (10 GPs and 5 nurses) of both sexes, different ages and varying years of experience who worked in NHS Lothian, Scotland were interviewed using in-depth, semi-structured qualitative interviews. To improve diagnostic decision-making, participants suggested regular educational opportunities and better diagnostic tools. In the future, standardising the clinical assessment made by healthcare practitioners should be supported by improved access to diagnostic services for additional investigation(s) and clarification of diagnostic uncertainty.

[Irish Respiratory Clinical Nurse Specialists' Experiences of Their Role: A Qualitative Exploration](#)

Publication date: 2018

Three themes were identified within the findings: "multidimensional role," "interacting and collaborating," and "advancing the role."

Competency Frameworks

[A professional development framework for respiratory nursing](#)

British Thoracic Society, 2020

The document has been developed deliberately to address generic respiratory nurse competencies for adult nursing, and

reflects the four pillars of practice of a Nurse Specialist (2) and MultiProfessional Framework for Advanced Clinical Practice(3)

[The Respiratory Service Framework](#)

Primary Care Respiratory Society

The Respiratory Service Framework (RSF) seeks to demonstrate what excellence is – and how it may be delivered at a population level and across the patient pathway. It will help those seeking to design a patient focussed respiratory service working across all sectors of out of hospital care. It is applicable to those delivering care at PCN or ICS level.

[Fit to care](#)

Primary Care Respiratory Society

As a busy healthcare professional, your own professional development can be the last thing on your mind when you are trying to deliver high quality care to your patients as well as dealing with all the everyday matters of working in primary and community care. However, it is the responsibility of every healthcare professional to ensure that they are trained appropriately to be able to deliver the management and care they are required to perform.

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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](#).

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