

Evidence Brief: Advanced clinical practice

Contents

Key publications – the big picture	2
Case Studies.....	3
The Star for workforce redesign.....	5
Statistics.....	5
National Data Programme.....	5
Published Peer Reviewed Research.....	5
Development of the role	5
Impact of the role.....	6
Education and training.....	7
Workforce	9
Primary care	10
Nursing	11
Allied Health Professions.....	11
Research.....	12
COVID-19.....	13
Competency Frameworks	13
*Help accessing articles or papers.....	14

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: April 2024

Please acknowledge this work in any resulting paper or presentation as:
Evidence Brief: Advanced clinical practice. Jo McCrossan. (April 2024). 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](#)

Key publications – the big picture

[Advanced practice](#) November 2023, NHS Employers
Having healthcare professionals at advanced level increases capacity and capability within services. By integrating into multi-professional teams, advanced practitioners provide clinical leadership and enable collaboration across the multi-disciplinary team through complex decision making and managing risk. This also gives organisations a flexible workforce to meet changing population, patient, and service delivery needs. Advanced practitioners help to improve clinical continuity and provide high-quality care for patients. They enable workforce transformation to initiate a wider range of advanced clinical care being provided by a varied range of multi-professional clinicians rather than focusing on medical doctors as the sole providers of advanced clinical care. Advanced practitioners can accelerate access to care for patients and help to improve outcomes.

[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.

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.”

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.”

[What is advanced clinical practice?](#) HEE (no date)
Advanced clinical practitioners come from a range of professional backgrounds such as nursing, pharmacy, paramedics and occupational therapy. They are healthcare professionals educated to Master’s level and have developed the skills and knowledge to allow them to take on expanded roles and scope of practice caring for patients. The NHS Long-Term Plan highlights how advanced clinical practice is central to helping transform service delivery and better meet local health needs by providing enhanced capacity, capability, productivity and efficiency within multi-professional teams. Developing advanced clinical practice roles, as well as the level of practice just below and above ACP level should be considered a key component of contemporary workforce planning, as described in the NHS Long Term Plan.

- [ACP webinar introduction and practice](#)
- [Advanced clinical practice – looking across the system](#)
- [Developing advanced practice in clinical care: analysis of physical and online workshops](#)

Evidence Brief: Advanced clinical practice

[Advanced clinical practice education in England](#) November 2018, Council of Deans

On 14 September, the Council of Deans of Health (the Council) hosted a conference, with the support of Health Education England (HEE), to bring universities/higher education institutions (HEIs) in England together with HEE and other stakeholders to discuss the future of advanced clinical practice (ACP) education in England. Most delegates had institutional responsibility in universities for advanced practice programmes. This was followed by a smaller workshop on 11 October, which gave Council members – deans and heads of school – an opportunity to discuss the topics covered at the conference. This report is a product of those events and of the Council's wider involvement in the development of advanced clinical practice in England. It includes recommendations for next steps. Advanced practice policy differs across the four nations. The Council, as a UK-wide organisation, is involved in advanced practice policy across the UK but this report relates only to ACP education in England.

[Advanced Level Nursing Practice: Introduction](#) 2018, Royal College of Nursing

With an ever increasing demand for health care and financially constrained budgets it has never been more important to have the right staff who are educated and competent, delivering the best care possible at the right time for patients. Leadership and innovation are the key to developing and delivering the right services and care and improving health and wellbeing outcomes for people. Registered nurses are increasingly extending and expanding their scope of practice beyond initial registration in all health care settings developing their skills, competence and confidence. These updated RCN competencies recognise the changing landscape of advanced level practice in nursing and other allied health professions and uses the term advanced level nursing practice to acknowledge this. It is relevant to any nurse

working at this level of practice. The educational level required for this level of practice is discussed in section 3.

[Advanced critical care practitioner infographic](#) October 2018, NHS Employers

This infographic explores the role of the advanced clinical care practitioner (ACCP). This relatively new role offers employers an opportunity to upskill nursing and physiotherapy staff to become highly-trained clinicians within critical care teams. ACCPs can bridge occupational boundaries and ensure a focus on holistic patient-centred care and can often improve communications between medical and nursing staff.

Case Studies

Several [case studies are available on HEE's Advanced Clinical Practice](#) page.

[Case studies – reshaping the workforce to deliver the care patients need](#) May 2016, Nuffield Trust in association with NHS Employers

See case study 5 on p. 28 – “Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust: advanced clinical practitioners”

<https://healtheducationengland.sharepoint.com/:b:/r/sites/APWC/Shared%20Documents/Regional%20Faculties/Midlands/Update%20Bulletins/Sept%202023/1.%20Case%20Study%20-%20%20Charles%20Spencer.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=7m1vty> – can anyone else open this link? Because I can't

Evidence Brief: Advanced clinical practice

[The Centre for Advancing Practice](#) n. d., Health Education England

A number of case studies are available:

- [Advanced Clinical Practitioner in Radiology](#)
- [Acute Medicine \(Pharmacist\)](#)
- [Cancer Care \(Nurse\)](#)
- [Cancer Care \(Speech and Language Therapist\)](#)
- [GI medicine \(Sonographer \(Diagnostic Radiographer\)\)](#)
- [Emergency Medicine \(Paramedic\)](#)
- [Urgent Care \(Nurse\)](#) [video]
- [Community \(Nurse\)](#)
- [Community \(Paramedic\)](#)
- [Learning Disability and Autism \(Physiotherapist\)](#) [video]
- [Mental Health \(Occupational Therapist\)](#) [video]
- [Paediatric Ophthalmology \(Orthoptist\)](#)
- [Primary Care \(Occupational Therapist\)](#)
- [Primary Care \(Paramedic\)](#)
- [Burns \(Nurse\)](#)
- [Maternity and Perinatal Services \(Midwife\)](#)
- [Emergency Medicine \(Nurse\)](#)
- [Pre-hospital emergency care \(Nurse\)](#)
- [Cardiovascular Disease \(Occupational Therapist\)](#)
- [Research \(Physiotherapist\)](#)
- [Consultant Practice \(Frailty\)](#)
- [Primary Care \(Paramedic\)](#)
- [Emergency Medicine \(Paramedic\)](#)
- [Advanced Clinical Practitioner in Learning Disabilities and Autism](#)
- [Advanced Clinical Practitioner in Acute Medicine](#)
- [Advanced Clinical Practitioner in Acute Medicine \(Lead ACP\)](#)
- [Advanced Midwife Practitioner](#)
- [Advanced Nurse Practitioner in Primary care](#)
- [Multi-professional Consultant-Level Practitioner \(Consultant Midwife\)](#)

- [Homelessness Advanced Mental Health Practitioner](#)
- [Learning Disabilities Nurse](#)
- [Advanced Clinical Practitioner \(Community Health and Care\)](#)
- [An Advanced Practitioner's role in a GP practice](#) [video]
- [Advanced Practice in Primary Care – An organisational perspective](#) [video]
- [Advanced Practice in Mental Health](#) [video]
- [An Advanced Practitioner's role in a forensic mental health service](#) [video]
- [Advanced Clinical Practitioner and Trainee Approved Clinician working in a forensic secure service](#)
- [Mental Health Nurse and NMP](#)
- [Advanced Practitioner and Clinical Lead \(Mental Health\)](#)
- [Advanced Practitioner in Learning Disability](#) [video]
- [Trainee Advanced Practitioner in Learning Disability Services](#)
- [Advanced Practice in a Surgical MDT](#)
- [Advanced Nurse Practitioner working in the Department of Older Persons' Services](#)
- [Advanced Clinical Practitioner within an Urgent Community Response service](#)
- [Trainee Advanced Practitioner in an Emergency Department](#)
- [Trainee Advanced Practitioner working in the Emergency Department with a specialist focus on soft tissue injuries](#)
- [Trainee Advanced Practitioner in Ophthalmology Services](#)
- [Trainee Advanced Practitioner and Nutrition Vascular Access Specialist Nurse](#)
- [Trainee Advanced Practitioner in Community Urgent Care](#)
- [Trainee Advanced Practitioner in Radiology](#)
- [Primary Care Practitioner](#)
- [Trainee Advanced Clinical Practitioner and Occupational Therapist in Primary Care](#)
- [Trainee Advanced Nurse Practitioner](#)
- [Senior Physiotherapist and Trainee ACP](#)

- [Eternal Nutrition Service Lead and Advanced Clinical Practitioner](#)
- [Dietetic Advanced Practitioner working in Gastroenterology](#)

The Star for workforce redesign

More resources and tools are available in the **Upskilling** section of [the Star](#) or by searching “**Advanced Clinical Practice**”

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 [National Data Warehouse \(NDL\)](#) SharePoint site to find out more about datasets and Tableau products.

Published Peer Reviewed Research

Development of the role

[The Advanced Clinical Practitioner \(ACP\) in UK healthcare: Dichotomies in a new ‘multi-professional’ profession June 2023, SSM - Qualitative Research in Health](#)

This paper has extended the theoretical category of post professionalism to include a much larger and more diverse

profession than has been demonstrated empirically hitherto, and in the English NHS. It is possible that ACP is an early sign of a different future for professions, where the classical ‘protective’ model of professionalism is increasingly not supported by the state, but this does not mean that professions will disappear. ACP’s contested, liminal status as a profession may become more common. In a wider context, we agree with Noordegraaf that ACP is a contemporary response to wider societal changes. ACP is only possible because the power of (notably) medicine and the other professions has been diminished. Similarly, it is a response to an ageing population and financial crises in late capitalism.

[Uptake of advanced clinical practice roles in the health service in England: Perspectives at the micro level December 2022, SSM - Qualitative Research in Health](#)

This qualitative, multi-site study, the first to explore the motivational factors at the micro level influencing advanced practice role uptake, from the perspective of a range of health professionals, identified that early role adopters were predominantly motivated by intrinsic factors. These motivational factors reflected participants’ desires for advancement, both personal and for their profession, and improved efficiency of patient care. Insights from our study suggest several primary and secondary motivators at the micro level for role uptake, brought together in a proposed new theoretical framework. Individuals seemed to have put themselves forward on a self-selection and self-driven basis to pursue advanced clinical practice, with limited organisational encouragement despite supportive national policies. There is the potential for health care organisations at the meso level of health systems to support national growth of advanced practice roles by giving attention to the motivations of diverse health professionals at the micro level.

Evidence Brief: Advanced clinical practice

[The development of advanced clinical practice roles in the UK January 2021, British Journal of Nursing](#)

Increasing life expectancy, complexity and disease burden, the European Working Time Directive and a subsequent shortage of medical personnel have often been cited as drivers for the implementation of advanced practice roles (Boulanger, 2008; Evans et al, 2020a; Torrens et al, 2020). However, caution is advised when rationalising their introduction and development to that of the medical substitution paradigm. Advanced practice roles complement existing medical models and are not designed to replace them. Since their inception, there has been great diversity in ACP roles and also some controversy surrounding them. Nevertheless, a colossal effort from professional bodies such as the Council of Deans of Health (CoDoH), the Association of Advanced Practice Educators (AAPE UK) and the royal colleges as well as HEE has led to a huge investment in workforce development in this area of service delivery, in order to meet patients' needs in the future. Development in this area has also included the introduction of a multiprofessional definition of advanced clinical practice, the first of its kind, to provide clarity for employers, service leads, education providers, health professionals and ACPs themselves (HEE, 2017).

Impact of the role

[Characterising the outcomes, impacts and implementation challenges of advanced clinical practice roles in the UK: a scoping review October 2023, BMJ Open](#)

This is the first attempt to comprehensively map the evidence on advanced clinical practice roles across all sectors, professions and settings in the UK, highlighting clear implications for national health workforce policy development. The review covers ACP roles in all health professions, hence, has a broad relevance and applicability. The use of an internationally recognised framework (PEPPA-Plus) to map the outcomes, impacts and

implementation challenges of advanced practice roles boosts the international relevance of the findings. This was an extremely wide ranging and comprehensive review that was underpinned by a careful, comprehensive and systematic search strategy. Ongoing ambiguity and variability of advanced clinical practice roles and titles within the UK means that some relevant studies may nonetheless have been missed or misclassified.

[Nationwide evaluation of the advanced clinical practitioner role in England: a cross-sectional survey July 2023, BMJ Open \(OpenAthens log in required*\)](#)

This paper reports the results of a national survey conducted by Ipsos MORI in 2019, to inform the development and improvement of policies relating to ACP. Ipsos MORI is a social research institute that works closely with national governments, local public services and the not-for-profit sector to ensure that research makes a difference for decision makers and communities. This work was commissioned by HEE to survey the advancing practice workforce and key stakeholders. The aim of the survey was to provide information on the role of the advanced practitioner and to inform future work developing and improving advancing practice within the NHS in England. This survey will also provide a baseline to evaluate these future developments of the role of advanced practitioners. Specific objectives were as follows:

- To better understand the patterns of governance, education, clinical practice, accreditation and work-based learning in ACP roles.
- To explore the challenges affecting advanced-level practice implementation by sector, specialty and profession in England.
- To assess the outcomes and impacts of advanced-level practice roles by sector, specialty and profession in England.

Evidence Brief: Advanced clinical practice

- To identify the key gaps in governance, education, clinical practice, accreditation and work-based learning.
- To identify the most urgent areas for future investigation or provision.

[Scoping of advanced clinical practitioner role implementation using national job advertisements: Document analysis March 2023, Journal of Advanced Nursing](#)

It is evident that the ACP role is still not clearly defined or understood, Murphy and Mortimore (2020) described it as an 'umbrella term' covering those in specialist roles and the generalist ACP. Wallymahmed and Pearson (2022) concur, suggesting both roles operate in an advanced sphere the ACP is better suited to generalist practice. The debate is exacerbated by the multiprofessional framework (HEE, 2017) which describes the capabilities expected by anyone in an advanced role. However, a lack of awareness of these capabilities and unique differences derived from clinical practice results in ambiguity and uncertainty as to what the advanced role entails and confusion with specialist posts (Cooper et al., 2019). Despite this, there is now acceptance that the ACP (role) is operating as an AP (level) not within an individual professional arena (Fothergill et al., 2022). This may take some time to be embedded in practice, particularly before advanced 'uniprofessional' roles are universally recognized with the same standing. This requires accepted parity of education, responsibility and reward, and in particular assurance that the 4 pillars are embedded in relevant Master's programmes and roles.

[Exploring the role of advanced clinical practitioners \(ACPs\) and their contribution to health services in England: A qualitative exploratory study February 2023, Nurse Education in Practice](#)

This study outlines the contribution that ACPs can make to health services, contributing factors and key barriers and facilitators to implementing this role. The work showed the

positive contribution ACPs can make to service redesign, workforce development and patient outcomes, whilst accepting there is much work to do to ensure protected status and parity across all professions and clinical contexts.

[Qualitative study of perceptions of senior health service staff as to factors influencing the development of Advanced Clinical Practice roles in mental health services October 2021, Journal of Psychiatric & Mental Health Nursing](#)

The paper uniquely provides specific information as to factors perceived by senior staff as affecting the implementation of ACP roles in mental health services. A wide range of mental health services were perceived as potentially benefiting from ACPs. Establishing role clarity for MHN ACPs is perceived as being as essential to successful introduction of the role, as has been found for other specialities.

Education and training

[A narrative review of the training structure, role, and safety profile of advanced critical care practitioners in adult intensive services in the United Kingdom January 2023, Australian Critical Care](#)

ACCPs have evolved from an ad hoc and local training structure, to a UK-wide competency standard and training developed within the Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine. This formed in concert with the advanced clinical practitioner concept. As advanced practice is very much multiprofessional in the UK, a single regulator for multiple base professions is likely neither feasible nor realistic. Over the last 5 years, the UK picture of advanced practice has slowly standardised; an ACCP securely fits under the advanced clinical practitioner umbrella. The ACCP workforce has moved from a handful of early adopters, regional hubs, to a position across most critical care units now have or are developing a team of practitioners. The evidence base for the

safety profile of ACCPs is evolving and shows parity in outcomes in the areas currently investigated. The ACCP role provides a vision of a multiprofessional workforce for the future of staffing of critical care services that is diverse and inclusive, not with the intention of competing with our medical colleagues.

[Perceptions of competency in advanced clinical practice July 2021, British Journal of Nursing \(Abstract only*\)](#)

There is disparity in the definitions of 'trainee' and 'qualified' ACP in clinical practice as well as disparity and ambiguity regarding being able to work in a supernumerary capacity during training and master's level study. There is a lack of agreement over the benchmark for qualified ACP status and the road to getting there.

[A rapid review of educational preparedness of advanced clinical practitioners December 2019, Journal of Advanced Nursing \(OpenAthens log in required*\)](#)

As the needs for different models of health care evolve with the expansion of advanced practice, appropriate education and clinical supervision are important aspects in the delivery of programmes that allow individuals to be competent and confident practitioners providing safe and effective health care. There is a paucity of papers on educational preparedness of advanced clinical practitioners. Our findings demonstrate a lack of preparedness and the need for a clinically focussed consolidation period with good role models and mentors following completion of a Master's programme. Employers and higher education institutions need to ensure a protected period of time is available for newly qualified advanced clinical practitioners to allow consolidation of clinical practice.

[Assessment of advanced clinical practitioners December 2020, Journal of Interprofessional Care](#)

To continue growing the advanced clinical practitioner (ACP) role nationally, and similar roles internationally, there must be widely

held trust in the level of practice and the roles worked in service by ACPs. This requires infrastructure to support ACPs through their training and ensure they are fit to qualify. This short report focuses on an evaluation of assessment processes in the acute sector in a county in England, to understand their feasibility and suitability. The qualitative research design was attendance at assessment panels and 17 semi-structured interviews with assessors and ACP trainees, from nursing, physiotherapy, paramedicine and operating department practice backgrounds based at two hospitals. Key themes identified through thematic analysis were the different approaches to assessment and the support required to engage effectively with assessment. One hospital had a well understood process, including ACPs with a clear identity. The other hospital had a credible assessment process that continues to be developed. The insights from this study enabled lessons to be drawn for those responsible for workforce development who are key to the future development of the ACP role and to ensure high standards of interprofessional care.

[Establishing an advanced care academy and its role in advanced practitioner development October 2019, Nursing Management \(Abstract only*\)](#)

Advanced clinical practice (ACP) roles evolved to fill gaps in healthcare provision and improve consistency in standards of care. Historically, variance in service specific requirements, combined with inconsistent approaches to role governance and education, resulted in a multitude of ACP roles and remits. Definitions of roles and titles vary, but there is agreement on academic level and role competency assessment. Irrespective of these definitions, staff and services need support to operationalise guidance. In Scotland, development of advanced practice roles is supported through regional NHS Advanced Practice Academies. One Scottish Board has initiated a local board level advanced care academy to fulfil the three key

components of advanced practitioner development: master's level theoretical knowledge, effective supervision and robust clinical competency assessment in practice. This development model, known as the 'triangle of capability', has allowed rapid progress with the advanced practice agenda, which is a central component of sustainable healthcare provision.

Workforce

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

The ACP role is now integrated across many specialties both nationally and internationally, however challenges continue to persist in training, impacting on transition into the role. At a collective level, there remains a lack of structure and clarity around the ACP role, and individually ACPs appear to experience issues with supervision and support. This study has highlighted that the journey to advanced level practice is often turbulent, and changes are required to further embed the ACP training and role into the workplace. Ensuring ACPs have appropriate continuous support, allocated sufficient time to learn and practice, and wider recognition of the ACP role through accreditation would aid the training experience and a successful role transition.

[Assessing the benefits of advanced clinical practice for key stakeholders](#) March 2024, *British Journal of Nursing* (*OpenAthens log in required**)

There are several barriers to the implementation of advanced clinical practice and therefore the realisation of its benefits for key stakeholders. Areas requiring attention include training, support from others for role expansion and organisational issues.

[Are advanced clinical practice roles in England's National Health Service a remedy for workforce problems? A qualitative study of senior staff perspectives](#) August 2021, *Journal of Health Services Research & Policy* (*OpenAthens log in required**)

Small numbers of advanced clinical practice roles were reported, often in single services. Four main influences were identified in the development of advanced clinical practice roles: staff shortages (particularly of doctors in training grades) combined with rising patient demand, the desire to retain individual experienced staff, external commissioners or purchasers of services looking to shape services in line with national policy, and commissioner-funded new roles in new ambulatory care services and primary care. Three factors were reported as enabling the roles: finance for substantive posts, evidence of value of the posts, and structural support within the organization. Three factors were perceived as inhibiting developing the roles: confusion and lack of knowledge amongst clinicians and managers, the availability of finance for the roles, and a nervousness (sometimes resistance) to introducing the new roles.

[Workforce experience of the implementation of an advanced clinical practice framework in England: a mixed methods evaluation](#) December 2020, *Human Resources for Health*

There seems to be a dichotomy developing in terms of implementation of the HEE framework by employers between advanced clinical practice as a level of practice of the registered professional and advanced clinical practitioner as a novel omniprofessional role framed in the medical model as opposed to advancement of professional practice. This is unsurprising. 26% of respondents were rostered onto medical rotas and the views articulated of experienced practitioners becoming novice practitioners (trainees) in the medical model is likely to reflect the current deficit in the medical workforce and contribute to the workload as described by the participants. With other similar

roles in the employment market such as physician associates there is a question about the sustainability of such an approach.

ACPs revealed that in some cases, employers expected advanced practice training to be carried out at the same time as their original job. This is not a new issue. Woods [9] noted that the most frequently identified inhibiting factor for ANPs was the expectation to develop in the ANP role “whilst being counted in the nursing numbers”. This difficulty has been identified in the past, yet in implementing advanced clinical practice it is evident that efforts have not been made to address the issue of added workload whilst developing the role. Role transitions, in particular the transition to nurse practitioner has been described as an ‘overwhelming’ process that is defined by straddling two identities and ‘transition shock’ is common [28,29,30]. This can result in a struggle to form an identity and feeling like an imposter [28].

[How does role transition affect the experience of trainee Advanced Clinical Practitioners: Qualitative evidence synthesis August 2017, Journal of Advanced Nursing \(Abstract only*\)](#)

Advanced Clinical Practitioners have been developed to address current and future gaps in the medical workforce. Insight into problems associated with Advanced Clinical Practitioner transition may help present and future trainees adapt to their changing and demanding health environment.

Six analytical themes were identified that addressed the key issues of transition discussed in the 11 articles and which were directly related to the proposed research project: experience of change, orientation to role, mentorship, clinical skills, clinical supervision and Masters’ level education.

Primary care

[“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.

[Taking advanced clinical practice to the streets: an evaluation of the benefits and challenges in homeless health care November 2021, British Journal of Nursing \(Abstract only*\)](#)

Homelessness in the UK continues to rise. People who are homeless are more likely to have poor health and die early, and face multiple barriers to accessing health care. Ten years have passed since the Marmot review recommended action on these disparities. In the context of significant health inequalities, advanced clinical practitioners (ACPs) offer a different approach to homeless health care, providing complete episodes of care in complex situations and leading in integrating multiple agencies, service development and strategic advocacy. ACPs can use their expertise in this specialty to deliver education that raises awareness and reduces prejudice. Their research skills can

identify gaps and expand the evidence base to improve practice at local and national levels. However, ACPs must promote their own roles, work closely with people with lived experience and be supported by their employers to embrace all four pillars of advanced clinical practice for the full benefits to be realised.

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

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.

Nursing

[Advanced clinical practice and nurse-led clinics: a time to progress April 2018, British Journal of Nursing \(Abstract only*\)](#)

This article discusses the evolving role of advanced clinical practitioners in outpatient clinics and investigates required competency and governance and how this translates into patient care. Until recently, there has been little clear guidance in terms of how to cultivate and develop staff to the level of practice required for autonomous management of the patient pathway. This has been variable, dependent on the employing organisation and the enthusiasm for advanced practice at a senior level. The current frameworks and competency documents available are identified and how the competent practitioner can provide safe, effective care. The authors use their own practice within gynaecology as an example.

[Perspectives: Reflections on a debate: When does Advanced Clinical Practice stop being nursing? February 2018, Journal of Research in Nursing](#)

With 45% of Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) registrants now working outside the NHS, public understanding may be even more difficult to address. Lara felt that there was scope for a campaign that highlighted and demonstrated what nurses, especially ACPs, do. This could be undertaken through narratives, stories and case studies showing what different types of nurses did. The confusion about who does what and who uses which titles was aptly illustrated in a recent study by Leary et al. (2017), which showed that Advanced Practice titles were being utilised by a wide variety of healthcare staff. Analysing the variation in job titles in the UK confirmed 595 different job titles in use in 17,960 specialist posts, with 323 people in those posts holding specialist titles not registered with the NMC. The research confirms the potential for concerns about public safety and highlights that misleading messages may be conveyed to patients, who trust that they are being treated by a competent and credible nursing practitioner. The release of the multi-professional framework for Advanced Practice is accompanied by the recommendation for trusts to ensure that staff working at the Advanced Practice level are properly supported in their role, which includes both autonomous practice and clinical decision making.

Allied Health Professions

[Accreditation of advanced clinical practice of musculoskeletal physiotherapy in England: a qualitative two-phase study to inform implementation March 2021, Physiotherapy](#)

This study identifies the importance of musculoskeletal ACP specific to the physiotherapy profession owing to this speciality already being well established nationally and internationally for physiotherapists. Fit-for-purpose innovative educational

opportunities for musculoskeletal physiotherapists are required at Masters level to support preparation for ACP roles. The MACP could be a good vehicle for accreditation of ACP in musculoskeletal physiotherapy owing to its long-established national/international governance framework. Project methodology/findings could be generalised beyond the physiotherapy profession (e.g. to orthopaedic practitioners) and beyond the musculoskeletal speciality in situations where established frameworks, standards and quality processes exist.

[The Role and Development of Advanced Clinical Practice Within Allied Health Professions: A Mixed Method Study November 2020, Journal of Multidisciplinary Healthcare](#)

ACP roles within the allied health professions can help address the challenges faced across healthcare services globally. This project resulted in a comprehensive profile of AHP ACPs across London, illuminating the nature of their roles and how they are already delivering on new models of care. Furthermore, the ACPs could identify the potential for new models of care that could utilize these roles more effectively. However, there needs to be a consistent infrastructure, standardization and governance for ACP roles across sectors, along with career pathways, funding, sustainability and educational provision.

[Advanced clinical practitioners in emergency care: past, present and future September 2018, British Journal of Hospital Medicine](#)

Advanced practice has developed in the UK in many specialties and the new advanced practice framework from Health Education England (2017) allows a cross-discipline understanding of the principles and key aspects of advanced practice. However, this framework is naturally generic and does not focus on what a practitioner is capable of within a specific clinical area, but more on the core capabilities. This article outlines the development of a UK-wide curriculum and

credentialing process for emergency care advanced clinical practitioners and reports on progress to date.

Research

[Research as part of the advanced clinical practitioner role April 2022, British Journal of Nursing](#)

Part of the role of the advanced clinical practitioner (ACP) is to improve patient care through research, but many ACPs lack confidence in this area. The clinical academic route may be a way of increasing ACPs' knowledge of research and making research an established part of the role once trained. Clinical academics work in a clinical role while leading research in a related field. A Clinical Doctoral Research Fellowship has allowed a nurse in one trust to study to become a clinical academic ACP, involving a clinical rotation and research training.

[The role of advanced clinical practitioners in clinical research March 2023, British Journal of Nursing \(OpenAthens log in required*\)](#)

Advanced clinical practitioners (ACPs) contribute immensely to patient care, so there is consequently a need to develop and create a sustainable environment for advanced clinical practice in clinical research. To achieve this it is necessary to evaluate the current challenges to enable stakeholders and policymakers to take the appropriate measures in safeguarding the future of advanced clinical practice in clinical research. The ACP workforce presents an opportunity to enhance access to clinical research. This article looks at the role of ACPs in clinical research and significant developmental milestones. The challenges of ACPs in clinical research are discussed, with an analysis of the needed interventions within the UK context. Strategies aimed at increasing the utilisation of the larger ACP workforce in clinical research are proposed.

COVID-19

[The changing role of Advanced Clinical Practitioners working with older people during the COVID- 19 pandemic: A qualitative research study](#) June 2022, International Journal of Nursing Studies

Advanced Clinical Practitioners successfully transferred their advanced practice skills into areas of clinical need during the pandemic. Their autonomous and generic, high level of expertise equipped them for management and leadership positions where speed of change, and the dissolution of traditional professional boundaries, were prioritised. Barriers to progress included a lack of knowledge of the Advanced Clinical Practitioner role and friction between Advanced Clinical Practitioners and physicians.

Competency Frameworks

[Multi-professional Practice-based Research Capabilities Framework](#) 2024, NHS England

The purpose of the Multi-professional Practice-based Research Capabilities Framework is to:

1. facilitate transformation of health and care service delivery.
2. enhance outcomes and experiences of individuals and communities.
3. support health and care professionals to engage in, and with, research.

The Framework elaborates incremental research capability development as one of the pillars across four levels of practice. The focus is specifically on practice-based health and care professionals. The intended audience does not extend to

colleagues in medicine and dentistry, for whom well-established guidance and structures already exist.

The Framework aims to highlight and promote active involvement in, and with, research as an integral component of practice for all health and care professionals. This is the case regardless of the setting in which they work – whether primary, secondary or tertiary care, in the community, social care or elsewhere. The Framework outlines a common set of core capabilities for the diverse disciplines outside medicine and dentistry.

[Multi-professional consultant-level practice capability and impact framework: self-assessment tool](#) June 2023, NHS England

What is consultant practice?

- Expertise in four domains necessary for enabling quality care from micro, to meso and macro levels of the system
- The key skill set for systems leadership and systems transformation aided by clinical credibility in own professional field
- Clinical academic role as an embedded researcher

We have co-developed the NHS England Consultant Practitioner Capability and Impact Framework. Its creation builds on 20 years of clinical development and related research across different professions. A process of co-creation with practitioners, aspiring practitioners, professional organisations and related workforce stakeholders across the UK has continued the refinement. Aligned to the capabilities is an impact framework to present examples of impact in relation to each domain. An important step in clearly outlining this level of practice.

Evidence Brief: Advanced clinical practice

[Advanced Clinical Practice in Midwifery: Capability Framework November 2022, The Centre for Advancing Practice/Health Education England](#)

Roles requiring Advanced Clinical Practice capabilities should have a clear purpose and objective and defined sphere with adequate planned support for the role. In planning workforce managers and clinicians should work together to ensure the supply and succession planning of appropriately skilled individuals. Where some individual practitioners are working to a higher level, other practitioners may require support to increase their levels of skills and knowledge. Discussions with local HEIs should support the workforce planning and ensure education is accessible to enable individuals to progress to advanced practice through clear pathways Advice on education and career planning should also be available to practitioners who have a desire to develop. Development of this kind may support retention of staff in organisations. Where new roles are implemented, evaluation that includes impact on service user experience and care outcomes will provide valuable evidence of the benefits or otherwise of the roles in care pathways.

[Workplace Supervision for Advanced Clinical Practice: An integrated multi-professional approach for practitioner development 2020, The Centre for Advancing Practice/Health Education England](#)

The provision and delivery of high-quality workplace supervision for practitioners developing in advanced clinical practice¹ is crucial for both professional and patient safety. It requires an integrated approach in which the developing advanced clinical practitioner (sometimes referred to as a trainee), is supported by multi-professional supervisors.

The developing advanced clinical practitioner/ trainee should have a nominated 'Coordinating Education Supervisor' who supports the practitioner during the period of development and

access to a variety of 'Associate Workplace Supervisors' who are matched to specified aspects of practitioner development across all the pillars of advanced clinical practice, (Clinical, Research, Leadership and Management or Education).

This guidance for workplace supervision of advanced clinical practice development will be useful for supervisors, employers, those driving workforce development and educators. There are seven fundamental considerations, set out in the diagram opposite, which underpin workplace supervision and ensure that both patient and professional safety are maintained during the practitioner's advanced clinical practice development.

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

The framework offers opportunities for mid-career development of new skills such as prevention, shared decision making, and self-care. The framework includes:

- a national definition of the role
- what the requirements for entry are
- guidance and principles that advanced practitioners should adhere to in their professional practice
- a clear career pathway into and within the profession.

*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