

Evidence Brief: Nursing Associates

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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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Workforce, Training and Education Knowledge Management Team

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

Key publications – the big picture

NHS Long Term Workforce Plan

Source: NHS England

Publication date: 30th June 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.

Nursing associates are referenced throughout the plan but some key points are below:

p. 9 Increasing training places for nursing associates (NAs) to 10,500 by 2031/32. We will work towards this by training 5,000 NAs in both 2023/24 and 2024/25, increasing to 7,000 a year by 2028/29. By 2036/37, there will be over 64,000 nursing associates working in the NHS, compared to 4,600 today.

p. 20 Train 5,000 nursing associates (NAs) and around 1,300 physician associates (PAs) in 2023/24 and 2024/25. This Plan emphasises the need to target more PA roles towards primary care and mental health services.

Using nursing associate roles in the NHS

Source: NHS Employers

Publication date: 29 June 2023

Find out how to train, fund and deploy nursing associates, as well as the benefits they can bring to your organisation.

Ongoing research: examining the introduction of the Nursing Associate role in health and social care

Source: NIHR and King's College London

We are examining the introduction of the nursing associate role and the extent to which it has achieved the policy aims of providing a new route into nursing and of reducing the skills gap between health and care assistants and registered nurses.

Patterns of employment amongst Nursing Associates: Evidence from the Electronic Staff Record

Source: NIHR and King's College London

Publication date: February 2023

Since early 2019 the NIHR Policy Research Unit in Health and Social Care Workforce has been evaluating the introduction of the nursing associate role in health and social care, using a range of methods, including surveys of Chief Nurses, Trainee Nursing Associates (TNAs) and Nursing Associates (NAs), and in-depth interviews with policy makers and practitioners (see for example, Kessler et al., 2020, Kessler et al., 2021a and b, and Kessler et al., 2022). This report adds to the work by drawing upon the Electronic Staff Record (ESR), the monthly payroll of all staff directly employed by NHS Trusts, to describe the personal and employment characteristics of all TNAs and NAs (henceforth T/NAs) employed by NHS Trusts in England over time and how they compare to other staff groups.

Video: What to expect from your nursing associate

Source: Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC)

Publication date: 2023

We've published an animation to help people understand what they can expect from their nursing associate. It explores the vital role nursing associates play within health and social care in England. It explains how these professionals are guided by our Code and standards every day to provide safe, effective and kind care for people who use services.

Evaluating the introduction of the Nursing Associate role in social care

Source: NIHR and King's College London

Publication date: April 2022

Since early 2019 researchers at the NIHR Health and Social Care Workforce Research Unit (HSCWRU) at King's College

London have been evaluating the development of the Nursing Associate (NA) role. The NA is a registered role, graded at Pay Band 4 in the National Health Service (NHS)¹ and positioned between the healthcare assistant and the Registered Nurse. It is a new role, adopted by health and social care employers since 2017 when the first 2,000 Trainee Nursing Associates (TNA) were taken on, completing their Level 5 qualification two years later. TNA cohorts have been recruited by employers in each of the subsequent years with, at the time of writing (Feb. 2022), around 4,000 registered NAs in post and 6,000 TNAs in training. Our evaluation to date has included consideration of the NA role in social care, and sought to involve stakeholders from the sector, such as Skills for Care² and Care England, ³ in its programmes of interviews. However, the take-up of the role in social care has been patchy. In examining the first three waves of 7,000 Trainee Nursing Associates (TNAs) (2017-2019), the research-based consultancy Traverse⁴ found 140 trainees, that is 2% of the total, from the social care sector, employed by just 50 social care providers. ⁵

Combatting racial discrimination against minority ethnic nurses, midwives and nursing associates

Source: NHS England

Publication Date: 2022

Abstract: This resource is designed to support nurses, midwives and nursing associates, providing advice on the action you can take if you witness or experience racism. It also supports those in leadership roles to be inclusive leaders. This resource is firmly rooted in the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) Code to challenge discriminatory behaviour and it is designed to support nurses, midwives and nursing associates, providing advice on the action you can take if you witness or experience racism. It also supports those in leadership roles to be inclusive leaders. This document provides practical examples of how, as nursing and midwifery professionals, you can recognise, and challenge

racial discrimination, harassment, and abuse. It also highlights other useful resources and training materials that will support you to care with confidence.

The introduction and development of the Nursing Associate Role: Policymaker and Practitioner Perspectives

Source: NIHR and King's College London

Publication date: September 2021

The Nursing Associate (NA) is a registered role at National Health Service (NHS) Pay Band 4, ¹ typically positioned between the care assistant and the registered nurse. It is a relatively new role, adopted by health and social care employers since 2017 when the first 2,000 Trainee Nursing Associates (TNAs) were taken on, completing their Level 5 qualification two years later. TNA cohorts have been recruited by employers in each of the subsequent years. At the time of writing (July 2021), there are around 4,000 registered NAs in post and 6,000 TNAs in training. Since Spring 2019, researchers from the NIHR Policy Research Unit in Health and Social Care Workforce, have been evaluating the NA role, concentrating on its deployment, use, management, and impact. Two surveys of Nurse Directors in NHS Trusts (2019 and 2020) have been completed, along with two NHS Trust case studies. ² A series of interviews with experts from the health and social care system has also been undertaken. In 2019, the first set of such interviews was completed. By late 2020 it was felt that a repeat set of interviews would deepen our understanding of how the NA role was settling down, particularly in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic (henceforth Covid). This report presents the findings from this second set of interviews, initially presenting the methodological approach adopted, before moving on to explore the various substantive themes to emerge from the exercise.

Video: Meet the nursing associates

Source: NHS England Workforce Training and Education

Publication date: 2021

Nursing associates work as a vital part of the wider nursing team – this important new role sits between health and care assistants and registered nurses. Nursing associates work in many different health and care settings, including hospitals, care homes, general practice and in the community.

An employer's guide to the deployment of qualified registered nursing associates in social care settings

Source: Skills for Care

Publication date: Summer 2021

The aim of this document is to support employers, commissioners, registered nursing associates, and system colleagues to:

- have a clear understanding of the role of registered nursing associate
- have a more detailed understanding of what to consider when thinking of including the role in different social care settings
- consider and encourage review or creation of a detailed workforce plan
- consider the role in light of integrated services and partnerships in a long term plan
- be introduced to key regulations and a range of suggestions to consider when implementing this role in a social care setting.

Evaluating the introduction of the Nursing Associate role in health and social care: interim report

Source: NIHR and King's College London

Publication date: September 2020

The NHS People Plan (NHS 2020)¹ highlights the growing number of routes to joining the nursing workforce. One story featured in the Plan is that of a Nursing Associate working in Leeds (p45). This report focuses on how Nursing Associates, qualifying in early 2019, are being deployed across England by NHS and social care employers. It follows on from the Traverse review of the two-year training programme undertaken by the first 2,000 Trainee Nursing Associates (TNA). In general, this report explores whether and how the national policy objectives underpinning the introduction of Nursing Associates (NA) are being met, and the extent to which the consequences of the role are sensitive to the interests of various stakeholders – NAs themselves, their colleagues and services users/patients - and different contingencies such as care setting or locality.

Introduction of Nursing Associates Year 2 Evaluation Report

Source: Health Education England and Traverse

Publication date: October 2019

The independent evaluation aimed to generate learning and evidence, which can be shared with programme stakeholders and used within the life of the programme to improve and refine the delivery, as well as an overall assessment of the first two years of the programme. The evaluation methodology focused on the first two waves of trainees who took part on the learning programme. It combined:

1. Early, mid-point and end-point online surveys completed by trainees and a mid-point online survey of line managers.
2. Three rounds of deep dive visits to test sites to speak to trainees, patients, supervisors and other local stakeholders.
3. Analysis of key programme data such as recruitment and attrition data.
4. Attending and inputting at Communities of Practice meetings that were attended by a representative nursing associate from each test site partnership.

The NHS Long Term Plan

Source: NHS England

Publication date: Updated August 2019

The Long Term Plan sets out action to expand the number of nursing and other undergraduate places, ensuring that well-qualified candidates are not turned away as happens now. Funding is being guaranteed for an expansion of clinical placements of up to 25% from 2019/20 and up to 50% from 2020/21. New routes into nursing and other disciplines, including apprenticeships, nursing associates, online qualification, and 'earn and learn' support, are all being backed, together with a new post-qualification employment guarantee.

Safe, sustainable and productive staffing: an improvement resources for the development of nursing associates in secondary care

Source: National Quality Board

Publication date: 2019

This improvement resource focuses specifically on the deployment of nursing associates in secondary care, which includes: acute adult and children inpatients (including emergency departments) and outpatients; mental health inpatients and outpatients; learning disability inpatient and outpatients, and community care for all these specialty areas. It aligns with Commitment 9 of Leading change, adding value – 'We will have the right staff in the right places and at the right time' (NHS England, 2016) – and should be read with NHS Improvement's Use of Resources framework.

Functional skills toolkit: Aspiring trainee nursing associate functional skills

Source: Health Education England

Publication date: 2019

The Nursing Associate role was developed post "The Shape of Caring report" which was commissioned by Health Education

England (HEE). Nursing Associates are an England only role, regulated by the Nursing and Midwifery Council and have standards of proficiency from across all four fields of nursing. The report contained a series of recommendations about the future of the nursing workforce including developing flexible routes into nurse education and valuing the role of the health care assistant.

Case Studies

Video: Trainee Nursing Associates at UHBW

Source: University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS FT

Publication date: 2023

Trainee Nursing Associate is a role that has recently been added within the NHS nursing workforce. Trainee Nursing Associates work within multi-disciplinary teams in a variety of health care settings. They deliver hands-on, person-centred care with a holistic approach to ensure outstanding patient care.

Nursing Associates

Source: Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC)

Publication date: 2022

It's been three years since the first ever nursing associates joined the NMC register. In that time, nursing associates have stood shoulder to shoulder with other health and care professionals in England to provide vital care when people needed it the most. Those who were among the first to join the register in 2019 are revalidating for the first time this year. We asked some of them to reflect on their experience as a registered professional, and to share advice for those considering training to be a nursing associate in England.

Nursing Associates

Source: Health Education England

We have a number of case studies available the page below both from an employers perspective, and from the nursing associate and trainee nursing associates perspective - click to find out more.

The Star for workforce redesign

More resources and tools are available in the **“New Roles”** 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 [National Data Warehouse \(NDL\)](#) SharePoint site to find out more about datasets and Tableau products.

Published Peer Reviewed Research

Career Planning

[Career planning for the RNA: a blueprint for success](#)

Authors: Rixon, Jo

Publication Date: 2023

Journal: British Journal of Nursing 32(16), pp. 804-805

Abstract: The article discusses the importance of career planning for registered nursing associate (RNA) in the United Kingdom to ensure that aspiring RNAs will have an informed decisions about their professional career path. Also cited are the steps in career planning like self-assessment to identify one's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT), and the inclusion of the RNAs in the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) register.

[A tale of two bridges: Factors influencing career choices of trainee nursing associates in England: A longitudinal qualitative study](#)

Author: King, Rachel Louise, Taylor, Bethany, Laker, Sara, Wood, Emily, Senek, Michaela, Tod, Angela, Ryan, Tony, Snowden, Sally and Robertson, Steven

Publication Details: Nursing open, 9, (5) pp.2486-2494. , United States:

Publication Date: 2022

Abstract: AIM: The nursing associate role has created a new second-level nursing role and provided an alternative route into registered nursing. For some, this provides a previously inaccessible opportunity for career progression. The aim of the study was to understand the factors that influence career choices of trainee nursing associates., DESIGN: A longitudinal qualitative study of trainee nursing associate motivations, experiences and career aspirations., METHODS: Semi-structured interviews with trainee nursing associates from across England, UK, in February 2020 (N = 14) and March 2021 (N = 13). Diary data were also collected. Interview and diary data were analysed thematically. Reporting has followed COREQ guidelines., RESULTS: Nursing associate training was viewed by some as a bridge into registered nursing. Role ambiguity led several to seek perceived security offered by the Registered Nurse profession. Those preferring to remain as nursing associates were keen to embed the bridging role between healthcare assistants and Registered

Nurses, valuing a positive workplace culture. Copyright © 2022 The Authors. Nursing Open published by John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

Support and career aspirations among trainee nursing associates: a longitudinal study Abstract only*

Source: Nursing Times

Publication date: November 2021

The nursing associate role is new and it is important to understand support needs and career aspirations of trainees. This article comes with a handout for a journal club discussion.

Covid-19

The impact of COVID-19 on work, training and well-being experiences of nursing associates in England: A cross-sectional survey

Author: King, Rachel, Ryan, Tony, Senek, Michaela, Wood, Emily, Taylor, Bethany, Tod, Angela, Talpur, Ashfaque and Robertson, Steve

Publication Date: 2022

Publication Details: Nursing open, 9, (3) pp.1822-1831. , United States:

Abstract: AIM: To explore how the COVID-19 pandemic affected nursing associate work, training and well-being experiences., DESIGN: Cross-sectional survey., METHODS: A survey of trainee and newly qualified nursing associates was completed in July 2020. Closed responses were analysed using descriptive statistics with inferential comparisons made between community and secondary care settings. Open questions were analysed thematically., RESULTS: Sixty-four participants responded. Over half (53.2%) experienced an increased workload with 24.2% reporting extensions in their role. One third (32.3%) were redeployed, and a quarter (24.2%) did not feel safety concerns were adequately addressed when raised. Those working in the community reported significantly more concerns about staffing (p

= .03), working overtime (p = .03), missed care (p = .02) and safety (p = .04). Despite this, many (75.8%) participants felt able to provide the same standards of care. Several spoke about enhanced teamwork, and the majority (96.8%) were not looking to leave their post. Copyright © 2021 The Authors. Nursing Open published by John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

What can general practice learn from primary care nurses' and healthcare assistants' experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic? A qualitative study

Author: Russell, Alice, de Wildt, Gilles, Grut, Minka, Greenfield, Sheila and Clarke, Joanne

Publication Date: 2022

Publication Details: BMJ open, 12, (3) pp.e055955. , England:

Abstract: OBJECTIVES: UK general practice has radically altered in response to COVID-19. The general practice nursing team has been central to these changes. To help learn from COVID-19 and maintain a sustainable nursing workforce, general practice should reflect on their support needs and perceptions of organisational strategies. This study aimed to explore primary care nurses' and healthcare assistants' experiences and perceptions of general practice, and the changes made to it, during the pandemic., DESIGN: Exploratory qualitative study using semistructured interviews. Interview data were analysed using Braun and Clarke's 'codebook' thematic analysis., SETTING: General practices in the Midlands, South East and South West England. Interviews were conducted in February and March 2021, as England began to unlock from its third national lockdown., PARTICIPANTS: Practice nurses (n=12), healthcare assistants (n=7), advanced nurse practitioners (n=4) and nursing associates (n=1) recruited using convenience and snowball sampling., RESULTS: Three themes were identified. Difficult changes describes dramatic changes made to general practice at the onset of the pandemic, creating confusion and anxiety. Dealing with change characterises how

negative emotions were intensified by fear of infection, problematic government guidance, personal protective equipment (PPE) shortages and friction with doctors; but could be mitigated through effective practice communication, peer support and individual coping strategies. An opportunity for improvement highlights certain changes (eg, the increased use of telehealth) that participants believed could be adopted long term to improve efficiency., CONCLUSION: General practice should learn from the COVID-19 pandemic to nurture the clinical role and resilience of nurses and healthcare assistants in the postpandemic 'new normal'. Robust PPE provision could enable them to undertake their patient-facing duties safely and confidently. Judicious implementation of telehealth could help preserve the practical and caring nature of nursing. Improving channels of communication and interprofessional collaboration could help realise their potential within the primary care team. Copyright © Author(s) (or their employer(s)) 2022. Re-use permitted under CC BY-NC. No commercial re-use. See rights and permissions. Published by BMJ.

London South Bank University celebrates nursing associates fighting COVID-19 pandemic Abstract only*

Author: Broadbridge, J.

Publication Details: British Journal of Healthcare Assistants, 15, (2) pp.102. , United Kingdom: MA Healthcare Ltd.

Publication Date: 2021

To mark National Apprenticeship Week (8–14 February 2021), London South Bank University (LSBU) celebrated the contribution made by its 200 nursing associate apprentices to fighting the COVID-19 pandemic, on the NHS frontline. LSBU is a leading training provider of nursing associate apprentices for the NHS. Around 200 of the university's nursing associates are at present enrolled on placements in 14 NHS hospitals and 12 GP practices, helping to combat the pandemic.

LSBU is one of 26 national providers of nursing associate apprenticeships.

Education and Training

Trainee nursing associates in England: A multisite qualitative study of higher education institution perspectives

Author: Robertson, Steve, King, Rachel, Taylor, Beth, Laker, Sara, Wood, Emily, Senek, Michaela, Tod, Angela and Ryan, Tony

Publication Date: 2023

Publication Details: International nursing review, , England:

Abstract: AIM: To explore the experiences of university employees on the development and implementation of the nursing associate programme., BACKGROUND: As part of wider policy initiatives to address workforce shortages, provide progression for healthcare assistants and offer alternative routes into nursing, England recently introduced the nursing associate level of practice. Little research has yet considered university perspectives on this new programme., METHODS: An exploratory qualitative study reported following COREQ criteria. Twenty-seven university staff working with trainee nursing associates in five universities across England were recruited. Data, collected via semi-structured interviews from June to September 2021, were analysed through a combined framework and thematic analysis., RESULTS: Three themes developed: 'Centrality of partnerships' considered partnerships between employers and universities and changing power dynamics. 'Adapting for support' included responding to new requirements and changing pedagogical approaches. 'Negotiating identity' highlighted the university's role in advocacy and helping trainees develop a student identity., CONCLUSIONS: Nursing associate training in England has changed the dynamics between universities and healthcare employers, shifting learners' identity more to 'employee' rather than 'student'. Universities have

adapted to support trainees in meeting academic and professional standards whilst also meeting employer expectations. While challenges remain, the ability of nurse educators to make adjustments, alongside their commitment to quality educational delivery, is helping establish this new training programme and thereby meet government policy initiatives.,
IMPLICATIONS FOR NURSING POLICY: The international movement of apprenticeship models in universities has the potential to change the status of the learner in nursing educational contexts. National policies that encourage this model should ensure that the implications and challenges this change of status brings to learners, employers and education institutions are fully considered prior to their implementation. Copyright © 2023 The Authors. International Nursing Review published by John Wiley & Sons Ltd on behalf of International Council of Nurses.

Enhancing healthcare students' clinical placement experiences

Abstract only*

Author: Pearce, Ruth, Topping, Anne and Willis, Carol

Publication Details: Nursing standard (Royal College of Nursing (Great Britain) : 1987), , England:

Publication Date: 2022

Abstract: Over the past few years, efforts to address a shortage of nurses in the UK has led to an increase in nursing student numbers. However, in one large UK healthcare trust, this increase in student numbers led to a need to improve the quality of the trust's clinical placements. To address this issue, the authors undertook a quality improvement project, in which focus groups were used to enable 53 nursing, allied health professional, midwifery and nursing associate students to have in-depth discussions about their clinical placement experiences in the trust. Three main themes emerged from the data: being part of a team; support; and being unprepared. Following the project, the trust introduced student-led clinical learning

environments to provide an innovative practice-based experience for students. Copyright © 2022 RCN Publishing Company Ltd. All rights reserved. Not to be copied, transmitted or recorded in any way, in whole or part, without prior permission of the publishers.

A local stakeholder perspective on nursing associate training

Author: Robertson, S., King, R., Taylor, B., Laker, S., Wood, E., Senek, M., Tod, A. and Ryan, T.

Publication Date: 2022b

Publication Details: British Journal of Healthcare Assistants, 16, (3) pp.126-133. , United Kingdom: MA Healthcare Ltd.

Abstract: Nursing associates have now been part of the health and social care system workforce in England for three years and research has begun to highlight the benefits and challenges as the role becomes embedded. However, there has been less of a research focus on how various stakeholders have experienced the training aspects of this new role. This paper reports findings from interviews with stakeholders from an integrated care system in the North of England conducted at two time points, one year apart. Findings focus on three themes: workforce and education planning; role ambiguity; and support. The article highlights how clarity of role, understanding of support needs and discussions around career aspirations are essential for all organisations involved in trainee nursing associate programme development and delivery. It also shows the need for good partnership working across health and education sectors to adequately support both the TNAs and those working with them.. Copyright © 2022 MA Healthcare Ltd. All rights reserved.

Tailoring an information skills programme for Trainee Nursing Associates

Author: Froste, Daniel

Publication Details: Health information and libraries journal, 37,

(1) pp.89-93. , England:

Publication Date: 2020

Abstract: This feature describes the tailored information skills programme which was delivered for the second cohort of Trainee Nursing Associates (TNAs) at Barnsley Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and presents the results of the evaluation which was undertaken. Literature searching and critical appraisal were offered to the first cohort. Feedback was collated, and sessions were refined and tailored to better meet the information needs of the second cohort of TNAs. A comparison of confidence ratings before and after the programme ascertained whether the information skills programme had a positive benefit in confidence levels of attendees. D.I. Copyright © 2020 Health Libraries Group.

[Applied numeracy assessments within the nursing associate curriculum](#) Full text available with NHS OpenAthens account*

Author: Lloyd, Andy

Publication Details: Nurse education in practice, 48, pp.102753. , Scotland:

Publication Date: 2020

The nursing associate is a new role in England, creating a bridge between unqualified health care assistants and registered nurses. Health Education England (HEE) and the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) were instrumental in designing a national curriculum for this new qualification (HEE, 2017). Pilot schemes were quickly set up, including the launch of the University of Gloucestershire's 2-year Foundation Degree Nursing Associate programme in April 2017. My work supporting Trainee Nursing Associates (TNAs) to meet the new NMC requirements has led to reflection upon issues of educational consistency and, in particular, an exploration of the evidence base for 100% applied numeracy standards. This paper sets out discussion points around consistency and validity that are broadly applicable to nurse education across the U.K.

[No need to worry about the end point assessment for nursing associates](#) Abstract only*

Author: Stonehouse, D.

Publication Details: British Journal of Healthcare Assistants, 14, (3) pp.115-117. , United Kingdom: MA Healthcare Ltd.

Publication Date: 2020

Abstract: This article discusses the end point assessment (EPA) for the nursing associate apprenticeship. The format of the EPA will depend on when the nursing associate commenced their training. Both formats will be presented, together with the two different occupational standards that apply to each. The article will finish by introducing the nursing associate to the role of end point assessor. Copyright © 2020 MA Healthcare Ltd. All rights reserved.

Impact

[A study investigating the perceptions of staff, patients and relatives in relation to healthcare assistants performing wound care in a hospice setting](#)

Author(s): Lynn Cornish

Source: Wounds UK 16(01)

Publication date: March 2020

This small research study follows on from a narrative review published in the previous issue of Wounds UK, which found that increasing numbers of healthcare assistants (HCAs), assistant practitioners (APs) and nursing associates are delivering aspects of wound care which historically have been within the remit of the registered nurse (Cornish and Holloway, 2019). This study aimed to ascertain the perceptions of patients, families and staff regarding the delivery of wound care by non-registered nursing staff in a hospice setting. A survey, using mixed methods (interviews, questionnaires, and observations), was undertaken to establish whether this way of working was found to be constructive. Participants were selected from two separate in-

patient units (IPUs). Our findings demonstrated that the delivery of wound care by HCAs and APs was accepted by patients and their relatives as well as trained staff in a positive way. The findings also provided evidence that competently trained non-registered staff can deliver wound care effectively and safely.

An evaluation of how trainee nursing associates (TNAs) balance being a 'worker' and a 'learner' in clinical practice: an early experience study. Part 1/2 Abstract only*

Author(s): Elaine Coghill

Source: British Journal of Healthcare Assistants 12(6)

Publication date: June 2018

In December 2015, the Government announced plans to introduce a 'nursing associate' role to bridge the gap between healthcare support workers and registered nurses (Gummer, 2015). The role, according to the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), will be to deliver hands-on care that will allow registered nurses to spend increasing time on clinical duties and take more of a lead in decisions about patient care (Merrifield, 2015). In July 2016, Health Education England said that this role was to be introduced in a two-phase process, with 1000 trainee nursing associates (TNAs) recruited in December 2016 to start in January 2017 and a second pilot phase with a further 1000 TNAs recruited to start in April 2017. In January 2017, the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) subsequently agreed to the DHSC's request to become the regulator for nursing associates and has been consulting on various aspects of its responsibilities since. The aim of the author's project was to undertake an early-experience evaluation of TNA roles across the northeast of England, focusing on how the TNAs balance being a 'worker' and a 'learner' in clinical practice, in order to inform future cohorts. The results found give rise to a number of areas for discussion, including: role clarity; placement models; mentorship and protected learning time. These are helping to inform the third phase of TNA recruitment in 2018 in the

northeast of England and will be fed back into the national evaluation.

Implementation including barriers, enablers, and good practice

Nursing associates: success story or stop-gap? Abstract only*

Author: Dean, E.

Publication Date: 2023

Publication Details: Nursing Older People, 35, (3) pp.6-8. , United Kingdom: RCN Publishing Company Ltd.

Devaluing nurses or a valuable way into the profession – opinions remain divided. As the number in post nears 8,000, we review the progress of the controversial role

The first-ever cohort of nursing associates – then a controversial new role – joined the workforce in England in January 2019, having completed their two-year training. The government claimed the role would 'bridge the gap' between healthcare assistants (HCAs) and registered nurses in England and increase the supply of nurses by providing an alternative progression route for HCAs.

Nursing associates: Enhancing the endoscopy workforce

Abstract only*

Author: Donnelly, L., Cleave, S. and Thompson, D.

Publication Date: 2022

Publication Details: Gastrointestinal Nursing, 20, pp.S12-S14. , United Kingdom: MA Healthcare Ltd.

Abstract: Endoscopy services are under considerable pressure to meet increasing demand for procedures. A large hospital foundation trust was offered the opportunity to develop its endoscopy workforce by seconding three of its endoscopy technicians to the nursing associate course. The Health Education England 'Shape of caring' review identified a gap in skills and knowledge between healthcare assistants and

registered nurses. The nursing associate plays an active role as a member of the multidisciplinary team, collaborating and communicating effectively with the registered nurse and a range of other health professionals, as well as improving care by contributing to the continuous monitoring of the patient experience in the endoscopy setting. Copyright © 2022 MA Healthcare Ltd.

Healthcare professionals' views of a new second-level nursing associate role: A qualitative study exploring early implementation in an acute setting

Author: Lucas, Grace, Brook, Judy, Thomas, Tamara, Daniel, Dionne, Ahmet, Leyla and Salmon, Debra

Publication Details: Journal of Clinical Nursing, 30, (9-10) pp.1312-1324. , England:

Publication Date: 2021

Abstract: AIM: The study aimed to establish the views of a range of stakeholders about their experiences of the newly implemented nursing associate role in England and its potential to contribute to patient care., BACKGROUND: Second-level nursing roles are increasingly used internationally within the healthcare workforce. In response to registered nurse workforce deficits, a new nursing associate role has been introduced in England to augment care provided by registered nurses and enable career progression of support workers., DESIGN: Qualitative descriptive design., METHODS: Semi-structured interviews and a focus group were conducted with a range of healthcare professionals in a large inner city acute secondary care healthcare organisation in England. Interviews were guided by the Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research and analysed using Framework Analysis. The study was reported according to COREQ guidelines., RESULTS: 33 healthcare professionals were interviewed-directors of nursing, ward managers, nursing associates and multidisciplinary team members. Participants perceived the role was broadly adaptable

to different healthcare settings and provided a positive professional development mechanism for healthcare support workers. Managers felt training commitments made implementing the role complex and costly. Participants argued the role had limitations, particularly with intravenous medicine management. Implementation was impeded by rapid pace and consequent lack of clear communication and planning., CONCLUSIONS: The nursing associate role was perceived as an inclusive pathway into nursing but with limitations when working with high-acuity patients. Further evaluation is needed to investigate how the role has embedded over time., RELEVANCE TO CLINICAL PRACTICE: The role should be seen as both a stepping stone into registered nursing positions and valued as part of the nursing workforce. Consideration must be given to how the role can be safely implemented in different settings. Findings have relevance to healthcare leaders internationally, who continue to work in a climate of economic pressure and staffing shortages. Copyright © 2021 The Authors. Journal of Clinical Nursing published by John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

Identifying and exploring resistance to the registered nursing associate role Abstract only*

Author: Cassidy, R.

Publication Details: British Journal of Health Care Management, 27, (12) , United Kingdom: MA Healthcare Ltd.

Publication Date: 2021

Ruari Cassidy discusses factors that affect cohesion and acceptance of new roles in the healthcare workplace, in the context of the registered nursing associate role.

Opportunity, support and understanding: The experience of four early trainee nursing associates Abstract only*

Author: Dainty, A. D., Barnes, D., Bellamy, E., Kyte, N. and Berry, K.

Publication Details: British Journal of Healthcare Assistants, 15,

(6) pp.284-291. , United Kingdom: MA Healthcare Ltd.

Publication Date: 2021

Abstract: Aims: This study aimed to capture the lived experience of some of the first trainee nursing associates (TNAs) during the pilot of the role in the January 2017 cohort of TNAs, based at the University of Derby. Method(s): A convenience sampling approach was used to recruit participants to this phenomenological study. In-depth, semi-structured interviews were carried out with four participants to capture the experience, as lived by the first cohort of TNAs. Transcripts were transcribed verbatim and were analysed using interpretive phenomenological analysis. Result(s): Analysis suggests that the participant experience was characterised by six themes, namely: challenges relating to NA training; developing new skills; opportunity; the importance of support; impact of the NA role; and understanding the NA role. Conclusion(s): This study adds to our understanding relating to the lived experience of some of the first TNAs taking up training for this role within healthcare, and highlights some of the factors that were most pertinent, according to the lived experience of the trainees themselves. The authors hope that the findings of this study will prove useful for those considering taking up training for the role, or indeed establishments considering implementing the role with their settings. Copyright © 2021 MA Healthcare Ltd. All rights reserved.

First year as a newly qualified nursing associate Abstract only*

Author: Ward, M.

Publication Date: 2021

Publication Details: British Journal of Healthcare Assistants, 15, (5) pp.246-249. , United Kingdom: MA Healthcare Ltd.

Hi my name is Maggie and I am a nursing associate! I have been qualified a year now, and if you come with me now, I will tell you a little about my role. I work at the Manchester Royal Infirmary, part of Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust (MFT), and am part of the fantastic team that works on Ward 30, older

people's care, care of the elderly, although we are not restricted to a certain age bracket and can receive any age range of patient on our ward. Although I am not a nurse, we work very similarly to a nurse; there could be great debate about this statement and I don't mean to cause any, but I will tell you some of what I do in a working day and then you can maybe make your own mind up.

Motivations, experiences and aspirations of trainee nursing associates in England: A qualitative study

Author: King, R., Ryan, T., Wood, E., Tod, A. and Robertson, S.

Publication Details: BMC Health Services Research, 20, (1)

pp.802. , United Kingdom: BioMed Central Ltd (, United

Kingdom. E-mail: info@biomedcentral.com).

Publication Date: 2020

Abstract: Background: The nursing associate role was developed in England in response to the 'Shape of Caring' review. It has been implemented to fulfil two aims; to bridge the gap between registered nurses and healthcare assistants, and to provide an alternative route into registered nursing in light of workforce shortages. Other high income countries deploy second level nurses within their healthcare systems, however the UK has a turbulent history with such roles. The previous state enrolled nurse was phased out in the 1990s, and more recently the assistant practitioner (AP) role has faced wide variation in titles, scope and pay. Little is known about those who have embarked on the new nursing associate training course and their experiences of the role. Method(s): An exploratory qualitative study was undertaken using focus groups of trainee nursing associates to generate in-depth discussion about their motivations, experiences of training, and career aspirations. Three focus groups (n = 15) took place in December 2018 using a purposive sample of trainee nursing associates registered at a University in the North of England. Two researchers facilitated each group discussion at a time and place convenient for

participants. The discussions were audio recorded, transcribed and data was analysed thematically. Result(s): This study found that trainee nursing associates are motivated by affordable, local, career development. During training they face challenges relating to clinical support, academic workload and uncertainty about future career opportunities. They experience role ambiguity both individually and across the wider organisation. Trainee nursing associates rely on broad support networks to build their occupational identity. Conclusion(s): The barriers and facilitators of trainee nursing associate personal development have implications for policy and practice relating to recruitment and retention. The results increase our understanding of this emerging role, and have informed the development of a larger longitudinal cohort study. Further research is required to evaluate the impact of this new role. Copyright © 2020 The Author(s).

In praise of nursing associates

Author: Leighton, Wendy

Publication Details: British journal of nursing (Mark Allen Publishing), 29, (1) pp.6. , England:

Publication Date: 2020

I have a confession—I am in favour of the nursing associate role. I can say this with some knowledge and experience, having been fully immersed in the development of the role as part of a first-wave test site, supporting our 'legacy' cohort to graduation and Nursing and Midwifery Council registration in January 2019. I recognise the experience of those involved in the first cohort was special—coping with a new role, a new curriculum, a regulator, in-year changes and press attention. These were motivated and experienced healthcare staff who were suddenly both in the spotlight and being valued in a different way—heavy stuff!

CYP nursing associate pilot Abstract only*

Author(s): Sally Roberston

Source: Archives of Disease in Childhood

Publication date: November 2019

Background The government announced the introduction of a new role in England, Summer 2016, a role to bridge the gap between Health Care Support Worker (HCSW) and a Registered Nurse (RN), the Nursing Associate (NA) Role. We built partnerships with 6 other NHS trusts and one academic provider to shape the Children and Young Person (CYP) NA role. We wrote a bid to Health Education England stating we could support 25 trainees across the partnership, GOSH was the Lead Employer working with other Trusts in their capacity as either employers or placement providers and with our Academic Provider of choice. All Quality Assured (QA) by Health Education England The only CYP Pilot, a 2 year programme, which commenced January 2017. Pilot: Challenges Achievements New role/Programme/Generic role instead of QA sign off December 2018 just Branch specific and not just CYP. Scope of Practice defined/Job description Defining the Scope of Practice NMC regulated/NMC Standards Requirement to gain NMC regulation due to Excellent Partnership working medicine management. Qualified/Registered NA uniforms Short times scales and deadlines More and more information available Uniforms Continuing to all learn together Information not available when required All Learning together Foundation Degree/Numeracy and Literacy No one with previous knowledge to refer to All Trainees passed Jan 2019 and registered with NMC, including five GOSH Nursing Associates. Our qualified Nursing Associates wish to buddy future trainees Next steps: Continued education to embed the role within the trust, further education, and further recruitment and to ensure the role is understood across the trust. Be able to articulate the difference between a (RN) and a (NA), an RN leads and plans the care for patients, the NAs would always

have a nurse to refer to and they deliver the planned care. A review of preceptorship and revalidation is also required.

Supporting student nurses/trainee nurse associates during insight visits to a paediatric rheumatology service: The development of a student workbook

Author(s): Salvesani et al.

Source: Rheumatology 58(Supplement 4)

Publication date: October 2019

Background: As clinical nurse specialists (CNS), we must be able to support student nurses (SN) and trainee nursing associates (TNA) to help them to develop their professional competencies. We achieve this by offering insight visits to SN/TNA during their placement on our day care unit. SN/TNAs are invited to attend the rheumatology service MDT meeting and then observe the nurse-led clinic. We must ensure there is support and oversight of practice supervision to ensure safe and effective learning. We reviewed the insight visits and asked the SN/TNA to complete a questionnaire. Method(s): The feedback was analysed and a common theme emerged that they would have liked some pre-visit literature to read prior to attending so they could research rheumatological conditions. When explored; this was due to limited knowledge of conditions. A workbook was developed to focus the SN/TNA on the most common conditions; juvenile idiopathic arthritis (JIA) and uveitis. The workbook was adapted from an education workbook for a new clinical nurse specialist to paediatric rheumatology. It offered a structured and methodical approach to the introduction of JIA and uveitis. It guided them to consider the medical definition of the condition, explore the epidemiology and aetiology of the disease, how a diagnosis is made by the use of investigations, disease classification and the subsequent various treatments available. It concludes by prompting the SN/TNA to consider the various roles within a multidisciplinary team (MDT). The workbook also directs to appropriate websites for information gathering. The

workbook is then discussed with the SN/TNA at the end of the visit to ensure they developed better knowledge of rheumatological conditions and the role of the CNS within the service. Result(s): The service continues to ask for feedback from all SN/TNA on insight visits and the feedback on the pre-visit workbook is very positive; "The workbook was definitely helpful because I was able to research about the conditions before coming to the insight visit"-Student Nurse A. The workbook begins the foundation of knowledge which the SN/TNA's then build upon during the insight visit Conclusion(s): The paediatric rheumatology service has successfully developed an effective workbook which facilitates SN/TNA's learning during insight visits to the service. The feedback forms are evidence that the CNS are appropriately supporting SN/TNA's. The development of this tool has aided the structure of insights visits and essentially improved the quality and learning outcomes for the SN/ TNA's.

We are here to help you Abstract only*

Author(s): Laura Smith

Source: British Journal of Nursing 28(14)

Publication date: July 2019

The author conveys her concerns about the nursing associate role launched by Health Education England. Topics mentioned include pre-registration standards produced by the Nursing and Midwifery Council, the lack of awareness around and the hostility towards the nursing associate role, and the significance of nursing associates to registered nurses.

Leadership

The leadership role and development for the registered nursing associate Full text available with a free BJN account

Author: Rixon, Jo

Publication Date: 2023

Publication Details: British journal of nursing (Mark Allen Publishing), 32, (10) pp.484-485. , England

A significant factor affecting what happens within the workplace is culture. 'It's the way we do things round here' is often how people will describe organisational culture. [Warrick \(2017\)](#) likened culture to precious treasures, saying that culture can be an organisation's greatest treasure (asset) and, therefore, it needs to be cared for and nurtured. The role of a leader and their impact on the organisation's culture is one that is widely acknowledged; if leaders do not attend to their greatest treasure, it can become vulnerable and become the organisation's greatest weakness. Effective work relationships, and therefore teamwork, are essential to establish an organisational culture where all staff feel valued and where the provision of effective, high-quality and safe person-centred care is the norm. Understanding the roles and responsibilities of all those within the team is a key factor in enabling effective teamwork and therefore a positive workplace culture. Failure to understand the roles of all those within the team can potentially lead to tension, misconceptions and poor communication, which ultimately negatively impact on both staff experience and the quality of patient care.

Does a nursing associate programme team work and leadership module make a difference to student nursing associate self-reported leadership skills? A mixed-methods study

Author: Williamson, G., Maund, B. and Knowles, S.

Publication Details: Open Nursing Journal, 15, (1) pp.143-148. , United Arab Emirates: Bentham Science Publishers.

Publication Date: 2021

Abstract: Background: Leadership is an essential element in the skills of healthcare professionals at all levels. This is true for Registered Nurses as well as Nursing Associates, who are registered professionals with a two-year foundation degree programme as role preparation. Objective(s): This paper reports

a study examining potential gains that might accrue from leadership and team-working module in year two of the Nursing Associate Foundation Degree programme at one university in the South West of England. Method(s): We conducted a mixed-methods study in the summer of 2020, with a pre-and post-module survey using the Student Leadership Inventory - Self, and a virtual focus group on the video conferencing software Zoom TM. Result(s): The survey results showed a statistically significant difference between Student Nurse Associates' scores before and after the module, with a moderate effect size. The virtual focus group confirmed benefits that included growing personal confidence amongst those that attended and that they could identify leadership styles and team dynamics in practice. Conclusion(s): As effective leadership is associated with patient safety and quality of care, we conclude that not only has this module been effective, but also that such preparation for practice can have important real-world impacts beyond the classroom. Copyright © 2021 Williamson et al.

Nursing associate leadership programme overview Abstract only*

Author(s): Health Education England and the Florence Nightingale Foundation

Source: British Journal of Healthcare Assistants

Publication date: October 2019

The article reports that the Health Education England (HEE) has partnered with the Florence Nightingale Foundation (FNF) to offer this leadership development opportunity for registered nursing associates (NAs). It mentions the leadership programme funded by Health Education England that provide benefits in leadership style, understanding of the impact of self on others and improved confidence in speaking.

Mental Health

What is the role of a nursing associate in mental health? Abstract only*

Publication Date: 2021

Journal: Mental Health Practice 24(5), pp. 5

Abstract: The editor reflects on the role of nursing associate in mental health in England. He cites the shortage of nursing staff and future expansion of National Health Services (NHS) as factors to the acceptance and training of NAs in the mental health workforce. He considers the opportunity to test roles and places in NHS trusts to evaluate and find evidence of the best way to use NAs in mental health services.

Primary Care and Community

Primary care trainee nursing associates in England: a qualitative study of higher education institution perspectives

Author(s): Robertson et al.

Source: Primary Health Care Research & Development 24 e3

Publication date: 2023

Aim: To explore higher education institution (HEI) perspectives on the development and implementation of trainee nursing associates (NAs) in the primary care workforce in England.

Background: Current shortages of primary health care staff have led to innovative skill mix approaches in attempts to maintain safe and effective care. In England, a new level of nursing practice, NAs, was introduced and joined the workforce in 2019. This role was envisaged as a way of bridging the skills gap between health care assistants and registered nurses and as an alternative route into registered nursing. However, there is limited evidence on programme development and implementation of trainee NAs within primary care settings and HEI perspectives on this. Methods: This paper draws from a larger qualitative study of HEI perspectives on the trainee NA

programme. Twenty-seven staff involved in training NAs, from five HEIs across England, were interviewed from June to September 2021. The interview schedule specifically included questions relating to primary care. Data relating to primary care were extracted and analysed using a combined framework and thematic analysis approach. Findings: Three themes were developed: 'Understanding the trainee role and requirements', 'Trainee support in primary care' and 'Skills and scope of practice'. It is apparent that a more limited understanding of the NA programme requirements can lead to difficulties in accessing the right support for trainees in primary care. This can create challenges for trainees in gaining the required competencies and uncertainty in understanding what constitutes a safe scope of practice within the role for both employers and trainees. It might be anticipated that as this new programme becomes more embedded in primary care, a greater understanding will develop, support will improve and the nature and scope of this new level of practice will become clearer.

Training and development experiences of nursing associate trainees based in primary care across England: a qualitative study

Author: King, Rachel, Laker, Sara, Alden, Sarah, Ryan, Tony, Wood, Emily, Tod, Angela, Senek, Michaela, Taylor, Bethany and Robertson, Steven

Publication Date: 2023

Publication Details: Primary health care research & development, 24, pp.e32. , England:

Abstract: BACKGROUND: The nursing associate role was first deployed in England in 2019 to fill a perceived skills gap in the nursing workforce between healthcare assistants and registered nurses and to offer an alternative route into registered nursing. Initially, trainee nursing associates were predominantly based in hospital settings; however, more recently, there has been an increase in trainees based in primary care settings. Early

research has focussed on experiences of the role across a range of settings, particularly secondary care; therefore, little is known about the experiences and unique support needs of trainees based in primary care., AIM: To explore the experiences and career development opportunities for trainee nursing associates based in primary care., METHODS: This study used a qualitative exploratory design. Semi-structured interviews were undertaken with 11 trainee nursing associates based in primary care from across England. Data were collected between October and November 2021, transcribed and analysed thematically., FINDINGS: Four key themes relating to primary care trainee experiences of training and development were identified. Firstly, nursing associate training provided a 'valuable opportunity for career progression'. Trainees were frustrated by the 'emphasis on secondary care' in both academic content and placement portfolio requirements. They also experienced 'inconsistency in support' from their managers and assessors and noted a number of 'constraints to their learning opportunities', including the opportunity to progress to become registered nurses., CONCLUSION: This study raises important issues for trainee nursing associates, which may influence the recruitment and retention of the nursing associate workforce in primary care. Educators should consider adjustments to how the curriculum is delivered, including primary care skills and relevant assessments. Employers need to recognise the resource requirements for the programme, in relation to time and support, to avoid undue stress for trainees. Protected learning time should enable trainees to meet the required proficiencies.

From GP receptionist to nursing associate in primary care: some perspectives Abstract only*

Authors: Ashby, Lauren;Breed, Lauren and Rodgers, Morgan

Publication Date: 2023

Journal: British Journal of Healthcare Assistants 17(8), pp. 309-310

Abstract: The article is a personal reflection on a nursing associate's journey from being a school graduate with no interest in going to university to pursuing a foundation degree in nursing.

Staff experiences of the nursing associate role in a community setting Abstract only*

Item Type: Journal Article

Authors: Hedayioglu, Julie;Yearsley, Shirley;Nash, Glynn and Waldock, Krysia

Publication Date: 2023

Journal: Nursing Standard 38(9), pp. 28-34

Abstract: Why you should read this article: • To recognise the potential benefits and challenges related to the nursing associate role • To learn about the experiences of the nursing associate role among clinical staff • To consider how the implementation of the nursing associate role could be improved in practice The nursing associate role was introduced as a 'bridge' between healthcare assistants and nurses to support patient care. However, the role has involved many challenges in terms of its implementation in established nursing teams. This article details a service evaluation that explored the experiences of the nursing associate role among clinical staff in one community NHS trust using an online questionnaire and in-depth interviews. Three themes were identified from the data: nursing associate training and support; the nursing associate role in development; and nursing associate role recognition and prospects. Overall, the findings showed that trainee nursing associates enjoyed the academic aspects of their training, but support was variable. Additionally, the nursing associate role was viewed as being 'in development' and, while wider recognition of nursing associates is required, the nursing associate role offers a unique career opportunity.

Development of the nursing associate role in community and primary care settings across England

Author: Robertson, S., King, R., Taylor, B., Laker, S., Wood, E., Senek, M., Tod, A. and Ryan, T.

Publication Date: 2022

Publication Details: Primary Health Care, 32, (4) , United Kingdom: RCN Publishing Company Ltd.

Abstract: Nursing associates have been part of the health and social care workforce in England since 2017 and are starting to contribute to managing workforce challenges. However, little is known about the nursing associate role in community and primary care settings. This article provides an overview of what is known about the nursing associate role in community and primary care settings and introduces some emerging findings from recent research. The article identifies some of the benefits that nursing associates can bring to community and primary care nursing teams and some of the challenges involved in training and embedding nursing associates in these sectors of the health and social care workforce. Copyright © RCN Publishing Company Limited 2022

Regulation, registration, and revalidation

The registered nursing associate: an overview Abstract only*

Author: Peate, Ian

Publication Date: 2023

Publication Details: British journal of nursing (Mark Allen Publishing), 32, (6) pp.292-296. , England:

Abstract: Registered nursing associates have obtained a nursing associate foundation degree that has been endorsed by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) through an approved educational institution. This usually involves 2 years of higher-level study, enabling the registered nursing associate to undertake more complex and significant tasks than a healthcare assistant would, but without the scope of a registered nurse. It is

not the intention to replace the registered nurse with a registered nursing associate. The role is used and regulated in England, with the aim of addressing a skills gap between healthcare assistants/support workers and registered nurses - it can also provide a progression route into graduate-level nursing. This article, the first in a series, provides an overview of the registered nursing associate role.

Delivering evidence-based care for the registered nursing associate Full text available with a free BJN account

Author: Rixon, Jo

Source: British journal of nursing (Mark Allen Publishing), 32, (12) pp.600. , England:

Publication Date: 2023

The registered nursing associate (RNA) works alongside the registered nurse and other health professionals to provide patient care, support and education in a range of settings. The role of the RNA is to deliver direct care, with minimal supervision, using knowledge and skills that are current and clinically credible. To deliver high-quality, effective and safe care, the RNA needs to establish the evidence, combining this knowledge with practice at a local level to support decision-making. According to [Muir Gray \(1997\)](#), the delivery of evidence-based care is not simply about using the evidence, it also requires engagement with the patient:

Supporting learners as a registered nursing associate

Author: Rixon, J.

Publication Date: 2023

Publication Details: British Journal of Nursing, 32, (14) pp.692. , United Kingdom: MA Healthcare Ltd.

The registered nursing associate (RNA) plays a vital role in supporting and supervising learners from a range of health professions. An RNA is qualified to provide patient-centred care while working alongside registered nurses, other health

professionals and learners. The academic qualification undertaken alongside the clinical work-based learning ensures that an RNA has the knowledge, skills, and experience to support and guide learners as they progress through their education and training. Much of the learning achieved by individuals, teams and departments within health care occurs through engagement with daily practice. Learning by doing, also known as experiential learning, is a pedagogical approach that emphasises the importance of hands-on, practical experience in the learning process (Kolb, 2015). It is a powerful way to learn since it engages learners in actively doing, experiencing, and reflecting on their learning.

Regulation and the scope of practice of the RNA role Abstract only*

Author: Smith, Laura

Publication Date: 2023

Publication Details: British journal of nursing (Mark Allen Publishing), 32, (8) pp.368-370. , England:

Abstract: The nursing associate role was introduced in in 2017, and is now registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Council. This article looks at the importance of understanding the registered nursing associate (RNA) scope of practice. In some areas, the roles of the RNA and registered nurse have become interchangeable with detriment to patient safety. The author explores the differences between the role of a registered nurse and an RNA, the training completed by RNAs and ways in which they can free the time of the registered nurse to provide more complex nursing care. As a registrant, nursing associates are accountable for their own practice and responsible for accepting tasks, as well as delegating tasks. Again, it is important that RNAs themselves and members of the multidisciplinary team understand what this means in practice and for maintaining patient safety.

The habit of reflection Abstract only*

Source: British Journal of Healthcare Assistants 13(8)

Publication date: August 2019

In this article, the author talks about the need of supplying to the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) five written reflective accounts by registered nurses (RNs) or nursing associates (NAs) during revalidation exercise and work of Chinese politician Confucius related to political morality.

Reflection and you Abstract only*

Author(s): David Stonehouse

Source: British Journal of Healthcare Assistants 13(4)

Publication date: April 2019

This article explores the important activity of reflection and reflective practice. Support workers and nursing associates, as well as all healthcare professionals, have a responsibility to reflect upon their own practice, identifying not only areas of good practice but also where improvements can be made. The article starts by defining what reflection and reflective practice are. The requirement to reflect is clearly laid down within the recently amended Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) code for nursing associates (NMC, 2018) and is implied within the Code of Conduct for Healthcare Support Workers and Adult Social Care Workers in England (Skills for Care and Skills for Health, 2013). Relevant sections of these two codes will be highlighted. The article will then move on to highlight two reflective models, the Gibbs (1988) Reflective Cycle, and Driscoll's (2007) Model of Structured Reflection, both of which are commonly used today. Clinical supervision will be discussed and the importance of recording reflections will be emphasised.

Self-regulation and the nursing associate Abstract only*

Author(s): Ian Peate

Source: British Journal of Healthcare Assistants

Publication date: February 2018

The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) is seeking views on the fee that nursing associates in England should pay when they are regulated by the NMC. The consultation period ends Monday 26 February 2018.

Scope and purpose of the role

Nursing associates 6 years on: A review of the literature

Author(s): Thurgate and Griggs

Source: Journal of Clinical Nursing 32(17-18)

Publication date: May 2023

Aim: This paper reviews the empirical research evidence relating to the nursing associate (NA) role since its implementation in England in 2017. Background: The NA role arose from the findings of the Raising the Bar: Shape of Caring Review (Willis, 2015). The roles' aim is to bridge the gap between healthcare assistant and registered nurse as part of the nursing team, working with people of all ages in a variety of health and social care settings. NAs must successfully complete a trainee programme (usually a Foundation Degree) which, for many, has been completed as an apprentice while remaining in their place of work. Methods: A literature search was performed using the British Nursing Index and CINAHL Plus, along with Google Scholar. Exact key words were 'Nursing Associates' and papers were refined to primary research only. Data restrictions were applied from 2017 to the end of September 2022. Each paper was critically appraised to assess the robustness and validity of the search processes and then thematic analysis was undertaken using Braun and Clarke's (Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3, 2006 and 77) six stages of analysis. Results: Nineteen papers were identified; six key themes emerged: lack of support from others; career development; organisational readiness; resilience in the face of adversity; cost; and worker and learner identity. Conclusion: The NA role is allowing career

progression for those who would have historically been prevented from accessing the nursing workforce because of entry qualifications and financial limitations. There is a need for organisational readiness to ensure trainee nursing associates (TNA) are supported during their training, that they have equal opportunities to learn, and they are given the status and recognition as a learner. Organisations need to raise awareness among staff to allow the nursing team to understand the NA role. Relevance to clinical practice: This literature review has relevance for those who employ Nursing Associates or who are considering introducing the role. No patient or public consultation: Due to being a literature review no patient or public consultation took place; however, local employers identified the need for a review of the literature pertaining to the Nursing Associate role.

The registered nursing associate: an overview

Author(s): Ian Peate

Source: British Journal of Nursing 32(6)

Publication date: March 2023

Registered nursing associates have obtained a nursing associate foundation degree that has been endorsed by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) through an approved educational institution. This usually involves 2 years of higher-level study, enabling the registered nursing associate to undertake more complex and significant tasks than a healthcare assistant would, but without the scope of a registered nurse. It is not the intention to replace the registered nurse with a registered nursing associate. The role is used and regulated in England, with the aim of addressing a skills gap between healthcare assistants/support workers and registered nurses – it can also provide a progression route into graduate-level nursing. This article, the first in a series, provides an overview of the registered nursing associate role.

Informal carers: series content and definitions Abstract only*

Author: Barber, C.

Publication Date: 2023

Publication Details: British Journal of Healthcare Assistants, 17, (7) pp.257-261. , United Kingdom: MA Healthcare Ltd.

Abstract: This series will explore the definition, meaning and roles of informal caring and informal carers, statistics and lived experiences regarding informal caring, the law and Government strategies regarding informal caring and the role of the nurse, nursing associate and healthcare assistant in supporting the informal carer. This first article will establish the purpose behind this series, what the series will cover and the definition and meaning of informal caring and the informal carer. Copyright © 2023 MA Healthcare Ltd.

Trainee nursing associates' understanding of their clinical role: A review of the literature Abstract only*

Author: Fewings, H., Chambers, T., Firth, D. and Combe, K.

Publication Details: British Journal of Healthcare Assistants, 16, (10) pp.476-483. , United Kingdom: MA Healthcare Ltd.

Publication Date: 2022

In 2015, the UK Government announced plans to create a new kind of healthcare support role—the nursing associate (NA). The original expectation was that 1000 people would begin training from 2016. The introduction of the NA aimed to provide a different route into nursing careers and provide a role that 'bridged the gap between healthcare assistants (HCAs) and registered nurses (RNs)' (Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), 2018:2).

The nursing associate in aesthetic practice

Authors: King, Sharon

Journal: Journal of Aesthetic Nursing 10(7), pp. 314-315

Publication Date: 2021

Over the past few weeks, I have read with interest several posts and questions unfolding on aesthetic forums from practitioners who have been approached to prescribe for nursing associates who wish to, or already do, work in aesthetic practice. I decided to dig a little deeper and examine the role of the nursing associate and where they might fit into this already diverse and underregulated sector.

A trainee nursing associate working in the eating disorders day service Abstract only*

Author: Burns, N.

Publication Details: British Journal of Healthcare Assistants, 15, (4) pp.180-185. , United Kingdom: MA Healthcare Ltd.

Publication Date: 2021

This essay will consider the role of the trainee nursing associate (TNA) in providing care to a patient admitted to the eating disorders (ED) day service. It will outline the way in which the TNA applied evidence-based practice to promote and improve both the physical and mental health of the patient. References to relevant public health promotion responsibilities of the TNA will be included. Communication strategies used to ensure effective collaboration with the patient, their family, and the wider multidisciplinary team (MDT) will also be discussed.

Under scrutiny: the role of the nursing associate Abstract only*

Author(s): Helena Frankova

Source: Nursing & Residential Care 22(2)

Publication date: February 2020

From January 2019, nursing associates have been able to apply for registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Council. Just over a year on, Helena Frankova examines the role and what the Care Quality Commission will evaluate during an inspection.

Changing faces within the perioperative workforce: New, advanced and extended roles Abstract only*

Author(s): Jenny Abraham

Source: Journal of Perioperative Practice 30(10)

Publication date: February 2020

The operating department like many other areas within healthcare is diversifying its workforce. Several new, advanced and extended roles have been integrated within the team. This article briefly outlines historical and current developments which have influenced the operating department workforce. It focuses on the following: Surgical Care Practitioner, Physician Associate, Anaesthesia Associates formerly known as Physician Assistant in Anaesthesia, Surgical First Assistant, Assistant Theatre Practitioner and Nursing Associates, highlighting the professional regulators, education and training, qualification and Continuing Professional Development requirements.

Role of nursing associates in addressing the needs of people with dementia in hospital

Author(s): Smith and Gill

Source: Nursing older people

Publication date: January 2020

It is estimated that people with dementia comprise about one quarter of all inpatients in acute hospital wards, although this could be an underestimate. Healthcare assistants often lack the training and skills, and nurses often lack the time, to provide optimal care for these patients. As a result, the needs of hospital inpatients with dementia are often unmet, they may have suboptimal outcomes compared with inpatients who do not have dementia, and they may experience significantly reduced well-being and quality of life. Nursing associates have a hands-on role in patient care, and their training should equip them with the skills required to overcome communication barriers and identify patients' needs. This article explores the potential role of nursing associates in addressing the needs of inpatients with dementia.

Support workers and nursing associates as coaches Abstract only*

Author(s): David Stonehouse

Source: British Journal of Healthcare Assistants 13(1)

Publication date; January 2019

This article examines the important role that support workers and nursing associates play in being a coach for other less experienced team members. There is a difference between being a coach and being a mentor and this will be explored. The requirement to be a coach is laid down in both the Code of Conduct for Healthcare Support Workers and Adult Social Care Workers in England (Skills for Care and Skills for Health, 2013) and for nursing associates in the recently amended Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) (2018) code. Relevant sections of these two codes will be highlighted. The article will then move on to discuss the importance of planning in advance, so that the best support and development can be attained. Reflection at the end by both the coach and learner is key.

Workforce Transformation

Using workforce transformation to embed the nursing associate role Abstract only*

Item Type: Journal Article

Authors: Cox, Sue

Journal: Nursing Times 117(9), pp. 32-34

Publication Date: 2021

Abstract: The nursing associate role was created to bridge the gap between healthcare support workers and registered nurses, and formalised by the Nursing and Midwifery Council in 2018. Embedding the role into the clinical setting requires a comprehensive understanding of the scope of practice and benefits to the nursing workforce. This article discusses the use of workforce redesign and tabletop simulation to engage and develop local understanding and ownership in inpatient wards.

This approach fostered the senior nursing support needed to embed the nursing associate role in a financially viable model, and gave nurses a much greater understanding of the role and how it would fit in their clinical teams.

Competency Frameworks

NMC Standards

Source: Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC)

Publication date: April 2023

Standards of proficiency for registered nursing associates

Our standards of proficiency set out the knowledge and skills that a nursing associate needs to meet.

Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education

Part 1 of our standards for education and training

Standards for student supervision and assessment

Part 2 of our standards for education and training

Standards for pre-registration nursing associate programmes

Part 3 of our standards for education and training

Standards relating to return to practice

We've published new return to practice standards

Nursing Associate Curriculum Framework

Author(s): Health Education England

Publication date: February 2017

This curriculum framework document sets out what knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and behaviours a trainee nursing associate will have developed on successfully completing a nursing associate1 qualification at academic Level 5.

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