

News

At-a-glance

- consultation on new post-registration career structure
- running alongside consultation on NMC pre-registration training
- consultations run until end of February 2008.

Nursing education under review

Post-registration careers

Nurses' views are sought for contributions to *Towards a framework for post-registration nursing careers: a national consultation*, which is intended to build on the main themes emerging from a series of national and regional stakeholder events held over the last year.

Participants at these events suggested that a framework for training built around commonly followed patient and service user pathways would provide the best basis for addressing some of the existing weaknesses in nursing careers and for

clarifying career pathways. The proposed pathways are:

- children, family and public health
- mental health and psychosocial care
- first contact access and urgent care
- long-term care
- acute and critical care.

Nurses would major in one pathway but intervene in others at a level appropriate to both the situation and their degree of competence in linked themes such as holism, end of life care, health promotion, safeguarding vulnerable groups and

monitoring preventable long-term conditions.

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At-a-glance

- nurses to play key role in review of NHS
- review led by surgeon and health minister, Lord Ara Darzi
- more nurses in PCTs with poorest provision; and tough action on HCAs.

Interim report of the *Our NHS, our future* review

Nurses will play a key role in re-shaping health services to provide a universally world-class NHS focused on improving the quality of care.

The interim report of the *Our NHS, our future* review, by surgeon and health minister, Lord Darzi, was published last month. It sets out Lord Darzi's 10-year vision for developing an NHS which will provide better services for patients, that are effective, safe, personalised, and fair.

More nurses are needed to achieve this, according to Lord Darzi, who has recommended bringing in at least 100 new GP practices, including up to 900 GPs, nurses and healthcare assistants in the 25 percent of PCTs with the poorest provision.

The new practices are intended to increase capacity, provide innovative services including extended opening hours, and to improve health outcomes through early intervention.

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Web links

You can access the bulletin online at www.dh.gov.uk/cnobulletin

The electronic version lets you click on web links for direct access to more detail about each of the articles.

Have your say

This bulletin is tailor-made for nurses and midwives across the NHS. It aims to cover the main news and developments every month. Please send your views on the content and design to Susan Frade at CNO-Bulletin@dh.gsi.gov.uk

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At-a-glance

- launch of new benchmark
- patient environment in focus
- 170 responses received.

Voicepiece



Christine Beasley, Chief Nursing Officer, discusses the new consultations affecting nursing education.

This month's bulletin brings news of two new developments: the consultation on post-registration nursing careers, announced by Secretary of State Alan Johnson at this year's CNO Summit for Directors of Nursing, and the new Essence of Care benchmark on the patient care environment.

Taking forward recommendations from *Modernising nursing careers: setting the direction* (DH 2006), *Towards a framework for post-registration nursing careers: a national consultation* proposes a new framework for post-registration nursing careers. Through this consultation, we want

to gather as many views as possible on the options proposed and to find out if you think the options would work. The consultation document provides you and your organisation with the case for change, the main requirements of a new framework, a detailed explanation of the framework, some frequently asked questions and a summary of the main challenges for implementation.

I recognise that there are many uncertainties and challenges, not least the impact on community and primary care nursing, specialist practitioner roles, and children's, learning disabilities and mental health nursing. This is why we are consulting early in the process. I want to hear whether the case for change really justifies the introduction of a new

framework and whether the framework proposed here will take us in the right direction.

Many of you contributed to another consultation, the outcome of which has shaped the new Essence of Care benchmark on the patient care environment. I know this will be a welcome addition to the existing benchmarks which have become well-established as indicators of high quality care. It is very encouraging to see that well over 3,000 copies of the main Essence of Care document are downloaded each month, making it one of the most popular documents we produce. Be sure to take a look at the new benchmark and I shall look forward to seeing how it is used to improve the care of patients and service users wherever care is provided in the NHS.

Access, cleanliness and infection control are central to new guidance

The patient care environment is the subject of the 11th benchmark in the Essence of Care series, launched at the recent CNO summit.

The theme of the new benchmark is specifically designed to get to the heart of how patients really want to experience health and social care services. It covers:

- access
- cleanliness and tidiness
- precautions for controlling infection
- the ethos of wards and clinical areas
- patients' own immediate surroundings

- the leadership and competence of staff
- the availability of good quality linen and furnishings.

In keeping with the Essence of Care programme to date, the patient care environment benchmark was developed through patient, service user and health professional focus groups. A record 170 individual and organisational responses were received.

Essence of Care is a national benchmarking system launched in 2001, which measures the quality of fundamental aspects of patient care across a range of dimensions. The other 10 benchmarks are communication, continence, hygiene, nutrition, pressure ulcers, privacy and dignity, record-keeping, safety, self-care and promoting health.

Links and info

- [More information on Essence of Care](#)

Nursing education under review

Continued from page 1

You can respond to the consultation online via the Chief Nursing Officer's website or by downloading and printing out Section 4 of the document and returning it by post to the address at the end of the questionnaire. The consultation will close on 15 February 2008.

The consultation is currently confined to England but the other UK health departments have been involved at all stages and await the outcomes with interest.

Pre-registration training

A new consultation is asking whether the current pre-registration training for nurses is suitable for meeting future healthcare needs.

The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) is looking at ways nurses are educated and leading the *Review of pre-registration nursing education* as part of *Modernising Nursing Careers*.

The consultation, running until February 2008, explores key principles, including whether new registrants should be generalists or specialists, whether they should be graduates, and whether more time should be spent learning in the community. It also asks how new registrants can consolidate their practice.

NMC Chief Executive Officer and Registrar, Sarah Thewlis, said: "The aim of this important project is

to establish how we can ensure nurse training is safe, effective and fit for purpose in a changing healthcare environment marked by an ageing population, advances in technology and changes to the way in which services are provided."

A range of stakeholders from each UK country and nursing branch helped frame the consultation. The NMC is now seeking views from commissioners, purchasers, providers, professional organisations and trade unions, students and service users. An independent researcher is conducting the consultation and will report on findings.

Links and info

- Access the post-registration consultation
- Read more on the review of pre-registration nursing education

At-a-glance

- £170 million for psychological therapies
- better support for people with mental health problems
- primary care nurses trained to deliver therapies.

Funding boost for mental health therapies

Mental health nurses will play a pivotal role in projects funded by a £170 million investment in psychological therapies.

The Department of Health funding will provide better support for people with mental health problems such as anxiety and depression.

Psychological therapies have proved to be as effective as drugs in tackling common mental health problems and are often more effective in the longer term. NICE guidelines on treatment for depression and anxiety recommend

psychological therapies, such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT).

Nurse consultant in primary care mental health at Tees Esk & Wear Valleys NHS Trust, David Ekers, said: "This new funding is excellent news for people with mental health problems and for nurses, many of whom are excellent CBT therapists.

"The funding will increase training in differing levels of CBT, such as guided self-help and depression case management, helping to increase capacity and improve service accessibility. It also leaves specialist staff free to focus on patients with more complex problems while other staff deliver the less intensive interventions."

What is cognitive behavioural therapy?

Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) is a psychological treatment for mental health conditions. It considers the relationship between

what you think (cognitive) and what you do (behavioural), and makes changes according to specified problems. Treatment is collaborative,

time-limited and involves "homework" activities. It usually lasts for 12-20 sessions and lends itself to delivery through guided self-help.

Links and info

- View more information

At-a-glance

- new report forecasts obesity epidemic
- nurses to play key role
- prevention and management are both important.

Nurses valued in obesity campaign

Preventing an obesity epidemic demands a concerted response from all professional healthcare groups as well as the general public, says a new Foresight report from the Government Office for Science.

Nurses and midwives have a valuable role to play in encouraging children, families and communities to eat healthier food and be more physically active. There are already a number of examples of good practice led by nurses, but there is still more to be done.

Professional Officer for Public Health and Primary Care at the Department of Health, Liz Plastow, said: "It's clear that nurses have a crucial role to play in preventing both children and their families from being overweight or obese, although they have an equally important part

to play in supporting those identified with a weight problem to manage their condition. This may be undertaken through direct contact or by signposting people to support services."

Links and info

- View findings from the Foresight report and information on other Department of Health obesity initiatives
- Sticky Fingers project
- CHaMPs campaign
- Buffalo project

Sticky Fingers

The Sticky Fingers project in Southampton, piloted by a school nurse in 2003/04, aimed to encourage children to drink more water, increase their physical activity and eat breakfast as part of a healthy balanced diet. Evaluation of the project showed that it met all its original aims and obese children lost weight. It has now been rolled out to 15 schools in the area.

ChaMPs

The ChaMPs (Cheshire and Merseyside PCTs) Public Health Network Snack Right campaign targets families with children aged two to four years living in the most deprived areas of Merseyside and Cheshire. Fifteen events have been run across the area and healthy eating leaflets have been dropped to 113,000 households. The campaign is due to be evaluated at the end of the year.

Buffalo project

The Buffalo project in Burnley, Lancashire, is a healthy lifestyle programme for primary school children and it aims to increase physical activity and help children to develop an interest in good food and cooking. The pilot phase has achieved promising results.

At-a-glance

- 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) settlement sees extra investment in NHS
- this will fund measures outlined in *Our NHS, our future*: including more nurses in primary care
- plan for green paper on adult social care and support system reform.

Extra investment to deliver a world-class NHS

Extra investment in the NHS will fund the measures outlined in Lord Darzi's report to provide a world-class health service that is fair, personalised, effective, safe and locally accountable.

The NHS budget will increase by four percent as a result of the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) which takes total NHS funding from £35 billion in 1997/98 to £110 billion in 2010/11.

More nurses, tougher action on healthcare associated infections, and

additional resources to tackle childhood obesity are just some of the measures outlined in *Our NHS, our future* that will be funded by the extra investment in the NHS.

The settlement will also see an increase in spending on adult social care, as well as plans to reform care and

support services. These reforms will ensure that more choice and control is given to those who need care, and that state funding is targeted effectively. The reform strategy will begin with widespread consultation and will lead to the publication of a green paper.

Links and info

- More information about the CSR

Interim report of the *Our NHS, our future* review

Continued from page 1

Lord Darzi also asked community nurses, alongside other health professionals, to sit on an advisory board which will develop a future strategy on primary and community care.

Tackling healthcare associated infections (HCAIs) is another key area for improvement according to Lord Darzi. Recognising the importance

of empowering nurses in tackling HCAIs, Lord Darzi has asked the Chief Nursing Officer, Chris Beasley, to develop a plan and guidance which will increase powers for nurses, for example, allowing matrons to order additional cleaning for wards.

To take forward the next stage of the review at a local level, 72 doctors, nurses and

health professionals have agreed to become clinical champions in SHAs across England. They will bring together over 1,000 colleagues to look at eight key health issues that can affect people at different stages in life. These range from maternity and children's healthcare, through to long-term, mental health and end-of-life care.

Links and info

- [Download interim report](#)

At-a-glance

- project set up to look at ways services move care into the community
- aims to improve access and convenience for patients
- evaluation reports show that shifting care is possible, and popular with patients.

Care Closer to Home

Nurses have a vital role to play in designing services to provide more care closer to home, according to the evaluation of a project designed to improve access and convenience for patients.

The Care Closer to Home demonstration project was set up to look at how care is being delivered in innovative ways to make it more convenient for patients. The Department of Health has been working with the royal colleges and specialty associations,

in 30 demonstration sites across six specialty areas, to explore how new pathways and models of care can provide quality services closer to home.

Evaluation reports from each of the six specialty subgroups were published in October, making a number

of recommendations for the further development of specialist services in the community. The measures include appointing local champions for service change and promoting integrated working between professionals in primary and secondary care.

Nurse-led Care Closer to Home case study

Guy's and St Thomas' Emergency Gynaecology Unit (EGU) offers 24-hour open access to emergency care.

The EGU has reduced waiting times and improved accessibility to a dedicated team of nurses and doctors who specialise in emergency gynaecology.

Predominantly nurse-led – more than 80 percent of patients are managed by

nurses – the unit is one of 30 demonstration sites for Care Closer to Home.

Nurse Consultant for Gynaecology, Debby Holloway, said: "Care Closer to Home is good news for both patients and nurses.

"Our unit provides 24-hour open access care in order to best meet the needs of our patients; it allows women to get prompt treatment

when they need it, in a convenient location on the doorstep of the local community.

"For nurses, being involved in Care Closer to Home is a really good opportunity to extend their professional role. There are a number of nurse-led Care Closer to Home demonstration sites, highlighting the scope for nurses in this area."

Links and info

- [More information](#)

At-a-glance

- Healthcare Commission's annual assessment of NHS trusts
- rates trusts on quality of services and financial management
- this year's assessment shows an overall improvement.

NHS trusts are improving says annual health check

There is an overall improvement in services and use of resources in NHS trusts across England, according to the annual performance ratings published by the Healthcare Commission last month.

The independent watchdog released the results of the 2006/07 annual health check of NHS trusts, the most comprehensive assessment of NHS performance. In its second year, the annual health check now gives people the chance to compare performance.

All 394 trusts get an overall rating – on a four-point scale

ranging from 'excellent' to 'weak' – on both quality of services and use of resources (financial management). The results show clear improvement overall, with more trusts scoring 'excellent', as well as fewer scoring 'fair' and 'weak'.

Areas where there was significant improvement include reducing cancer waits, and the number of

cancelled operations.

However, the report also revealed areas where there's more work to be done, including improving hygiene standards, and achieving the 'convenience and choice target' where patients have a choice of at least four providers.

Links and info

- [More information](#)

At-a-glance

- 5,000 additional matrons by May 2008 to help drive down infection and improve hospital cleanliness
- trusts urged to define matron roles
- nurses encouraged to take more active role in cleaning programmes.

Five thousand matrons for acute care

From May 2008 the NHS can expect to see 5,000 matrons in acute care environments, Health Secretary, Alan Johnson, and Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, have announced.

The move comes as part of the ongoing drive to improve hospital cleanliness and infection control and was set out in a letter sent by CNO, Chris Beasley, and the Director General of NHS Finance, Performance and Operations, David Flory.

The letter builds on *A Matron's Charter: An Action Plan for Cleaner Hospitals* (2004).

To ensure that the additional matrons make a noticeable difference, trusts are encouraged to focus matrons' roles on:

- providing a clean environment for care
- ensuring best practice in infection control
- improving clinical care standards
- treating patients with dignity and respect.

Other key actions highlighted in the letter include:

- reporting on cleanliness
- enhancing the nursing role in cleaning
- deep cleaning the NHS
- performance monitoring.

Links and info

- [View the letter](#)

At-a-glance

- new continence exemplar
- best practice guide on treating continence problems in children
- Illustrates key themes from the NSF for Children, Young People and Maternity Services.

Child continence: a best practice guide

Nurses caring for children with continence problems can now access a best practice guide in the form of a continence exemplar published in October.

The continence exemplar from the Department of Health is the latest in a series of patient pathways, illustrating key themes in the National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services.

The exemplar describes

a patient journey and the considerations that apply to each stage. However, it also acknowledges that not every affected child will follow the same journey or have the same type or severity of condition as the one illustrated. The

exemplar is intended to stimulate professional discussion and raise awareness of relevant issues, rather than act as definitive guidance.

Links and info

- [Access the best practice guidance](#)

CNO honours new generation of Queen's Nurses

The Chief Nursing Officer has presented specially designed badges to the first nurses for forty years to be awarded the title of Queen's Nurse. The nationally recognised accolade was awarded to 19 community nurses at an event hosted by the Queen's Nursing Institute in October.

● [View further information](#)

New NHS bursary scheme awards

Pre-registration healthcare students who are adopting a child or have a partner that has given birth are now able to take a break from training and still continue to receive their NHS bursary payments.

● [More about NHS bursary scheme](#)

Questions to ask – new leaflet for patients

Nurses are asked to promote a new leaflet which contains recommended questions for patients to ask during appointments. The leaflet, published by the Department of Health, will be delivered to GP surgeries and pharmacies. The leaflet is also available to download.

● [More information](#)

New funding for innovative projects

Seven innovative research proposals to a new health research programme have received Department of Health funding of up to £100,000 per project. The Research for Innovation,

Speculations and Creativity (RISC) was set up to support new and radical ideas that may not get funding through more traditional routes.

● [More information on the RISC Programme](#)

● [More information on the Government's health research strategy](#)

Better cancer care

Patients with cancer will benefit from proposals to improve access, expand screening, and reduce waits for treatment. The proposals will be set out in a new Cancer Reform Strategy, due to be published by the end of the year.

● [Read more](#)

Changes to NHS pension scheme

The new NHS pension scheme, which will be implemented from April next year, will see the pension age rise to 65 for new staff. Existing staff, and those joining the NHS pension scheme up to 31 March 2008, will keep their normal pension age of 60.

● [Read more](#)

Multi-million pound boost to protect staff

Nurses working alone will benefit from a new fund to tackle violence and abuse against NHS staff. The £97 million fund will be divided between hospitals, with around a third being spent on 30,000 safety alarms for lone workers. The remaining money will be spent on a range of other measures to protect staff.

● [Read more](#)

NICE guidance on maternity care

New clear and consistent guidance on maternal care during labour has been issued by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) and the National Collaborating Centre for Women's and Children's Health. The guideline supports normal vaginal birth as well as setting out what to do if labour does not progress normally.

● [Access guidance](#)

Updated guidance for NHS Stop Smoking Services

Nurses managing or delivering NHS Stop Smoking Services are urged to note the updated service and monitoring guidance published last month. It provides detailed guidance and instructions on changes to data collection and reporting requirements for 2008/09 and an overview of the key issues and recommendations for commissioners and practitioners.

● [Access the guidance](#)

Latest health statistics

New smoking statistics

There has been an overall decrease in smoking according to the latest statistics published by the Information Centre. Other findings include significant support for the smoking ban, and a rising number of people who have never smoked.

● [Statistics on Smoking, England 2007](#)

Immunisation statistics

Uptake of MMR vaccine has increased across every

region in England, according to recent Information Centre statistics.

● [NHS Immunisation Statistics, England: 2006-07](#)

Staff earning statistics

New statistics showing estimates of staff earnings have been published by the Information Centre.

The figures include annual basic pay and total earnings for NHS staff groups (excluding GPs and high street dentists).

● [NHS staff earnings estimate \(April to June, 2007\)](#)

Improving care of older people

NHS trusts must do more to provide dignity in care to older people, according to a new report by the Healthcare Commission. The national report, published in September, identifies four key areas for improvement, including strong leadership and involving older people in their own care. The commission also warns of further checks on hospitals, including unannounced visits.

● [Read more and access the report](#)

World's biggest staff survey

Nurses are encouraged to make their voices heard by taking part in the world's largest staff survey. The Healthcare Commission survey, which began last month and runs until December, will question between 600 and 850 staff at each NHS trust. The information will then be used to inform changes in working conditions and practices.

● [Read more on Surveys of NHS staff](#)

Nutrition Action Plan

The Department of Health published the plan at the end of October. The aim is to ensure that health and social care staff are supported in the provision of good nutritional care and given clear information about how to treat malnutrition. The plan sets out key priorities for action:

- raising awareness of the link between nutrition and good health
- the fact that malnutrition can be treated
- ensuring that guidance is available across all sectors
- encouraging nutritional screening for all people using health and social care services
- providing better training for NHS

staff on the important role of nutrition in good health care

- clarifying standards and strengthening inspection and regulation.
- [The Nutrition Action Plan](#)

Changes to Disability Living Allowance

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) payments can no longer be combined with other benefits as the DLA payment system has been changed by the Department for Work and Pensions. From April this year all adults receiving Attendance Allowance or DLA will be paid by the Disability Carers Service only.

- [More information](#)

Government response to health visitor review

The Government has published its formal response to *Facing the Future: a review of the role of health visitors*. Welcoming the report and its clear strategy for the profession's future, the Government said many of the recommendations set out were in line with its own priorities focusing on intervention and prevention. As the response was published at the time of this issue going to print, we will be featuring its key aspects in more depth in the next bulletin.

- [View the response](#)

Diary

Effective Ward Manager conference

10 December, London.

Keynote speakers include Ali Handscomb, Director, European Nursing Leadership Foundation, who will outline the key attributes of an excellent ward manager including

qualities, skills and responsibilities. The conference is RCN accredited.

- www.healthcare-events.co.uk

18 Weeks Patient Pathway conference

11 December, Manchester.

Keynote speakers include Phillipa

Robinson, 18 Weeks National Implementation Director at the Department of Health, and Neil Betteridge, Patient and Public Champion for the 18 Weeks Delivery Programme and Chief Executive of Arthritis Care.

- www.healthcare-events.co.uk

Latest publications

Make sure you're not missing out on new tools and guidance. Here is a round-up of recent publications from the Department of Health (DH) and beyond. DH publications are available from www.dh.gov.uk/publications

● [New guide to 'switch on' nurses](#)

A guide, written by nurses for nurses, tells busy nurses what they need to know to use the NHS Care Records Service. To promote cleanliness in the workplace, the booklet (previously known as 'switch on cards') has been printed on special anti-infection paper. The guide, *The NHS Care Record Service: A guide for the nursing community* is now available to order, free of charge, by selecting 'NHS Care Records Service' then 'Guidelines' from the menu found at <http://www.information.connectingforhealth.nhs.uk>

- [View a PDF of the booklet](#)

● [Updated guidance on the Hospital Travel Costs Scheme \(HTCS\)](#)

Expanded guidance, highlighting key issues around eligibility and the types of journeys that patients should be reimbursed for making, has been released by the Department of Health. All nursing staff, especially those working in outpatient and specialist clinics, are encouraged to provide patients with information on the scheme and advise anyone who is eligible to reclaim their

travel costs. For information on how to obtain a poster and explanatory leaflet, please email dh@prolog.uk.com

- [View the updated guidance](#)
- [View more information about HTCS](#)

● [Advanced nursing roles: survival of the fittest](#)

Drawing on recent studies from the UK, *Policy+* considers whether some advanced roles, such as clinical nurse specialists, nurse practitioners, and the broader roles of consultant nurse and community matron, are more likely to flourish and survive than others.

- [Read the article](#)

● [New DH health 2006/07 statistics released](#)

The Department of Health has published the following statistics:

Inpatient and Outpatient Waiting Times to 31 August

- [Access statistics](#)
- [Access statistics](#)