



**Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council for  
Nursing and Midwifery**

***Development of a Career Pathway  
for  
District Nursing Services***

**Project Plan  
February 2019**

Updated 28 June 2021 1



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## **1.0 Introduction**

On behalf of the Chief Nursing Officer, NIPEC co-produced a *Career Framework for Specialist Nursing (2018)* to support all those nurses working in Specialist roles in Northern Ireland; the Steering Group was chaired by Heather Monteverde and involved key stakeholders throughout NI, including Specialist Nurses and relevant Service Users. As part of this work it was intended that competencies and a job description would be developed for District Nurses through identifying specific core educational requirements supported by an NMC recordable Specialist Practice Qualification. It was agreed that this should be completed within a career pathway for all key roles within the District Nursing Service The Chief Nursing Officer therefore commissioned NIPEC to undertake the development of a career pathway for District Nursing services in its 2019/2020 Business Plan.

## **2.0 Background**

Northern Ireland has embarked on an unprecedented programme of change. The *District Nursing Framework (2018)* published by the Department of Health sets out the way forward for the delivery of a world class district nursing service that will be available 24 hours a day. It is designed to support the delivery of safe and effective person centred care by district nurses and their teams in community settings, in line with the overall ambitions of *Health and Wellbeing 2026: Delivering Together (DOH 2016)*. The District Nursing framework comes with the endorsement of the World Health Organisation: the International Council for Nurses and is the planned strategic direction for district nursing service for the next eight years.

The District Nursing Service is a fundamental component of Northern Ireland's health and social care system. Staff who work in the District Nursing Teams play essential roles in enabling people to be cared for in their own homes through assessing care needs: supporting patients' independence, preventing and treating acute illnesses, managing long term conditions and providing palliative and end of life care.

District nurses play a pivotal role in integrated community teams and are able to work flexibly and in partnership with patients, carers, communities and a range of other professionals, including social care, voluntary workers and carers.

The four key principles in the District Nursing Framework will provide the basis on which the Career Pathway and its components, core competencies, education requirements

and job descriptions will be built. An outcomes based approach has been adopted for the four principles in the framework.

The principles are that Care will be:

- Person Centred;
- Efficient and Effective;
- Expert and
- Integrated and population based around General Practice.

Work has also commenced, led by the Public Health Agency, on behalf of the Department of Health, to support the implementation of the District Nursing Framework. An important element of this is the testing of a prototype *Neighbourhood District Nursing Model of Care (2017)* which provides a comprehensive 24 Hour District Nursing Service. The Neighbourhood District Nursing Team will be an integral part of the enhanced multi-disciplinary primary care team aligned to General Practitioner practices and will be tested in identified areas within the Primary Care Multi-Disciplinary Team across NI. The District Nursing Career Pathway will be informed by and inform the roles essential in the Neighbourhood District Nursing Team.

In addition UK and International models of service delivery (as below) have been reviewed to inform the approach in Northern Ireland. *The Buurtzorg Nederland (Home Care provider model)* which was founded in the Netherlands in 2006/2007 is a unique district nursing system which has garnered international acclaim for being entirely nurse-led and cost effective. Although this model is not being adopted in NI it has influenced the thinking of the prototype being tested.

Interestingly Australia has Primary Health Care Networks (PHCN'S) since 2015. Population health planning is the key priority and care can be provided by teams of nurses and other relevant practitioners who are trained to provide community care.

It is useful to note that National Health Service Health Education England has already developed a Career Framework for District Nursing roles (2015) which will be reviewed for relevance to Northern Ireland as well as the District Nursing standards, to support District Nurse education and practice, developed by The Queen's Nursing Institute (QNI) (2014) and The Queen's Nursing Institute Scotland (QNIS) (2015). Additionally the relevant DoH competencies and educational requirements developed for Specialist, Advanced and Consultant Nursing roles will also be applied as appropriate.

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### **3.0 Project Aim and Objectives**

#### **3.1 Aim**

The Project Steering Group will develop a career pathway for Nurses and Senior Nursing Assistants working in District Nursing Services.

#### **3.2 Objectives**

The objectives of the Project are to identify core education requirements through

- developing and agreeing core competencies
- identifying and agreeing core education and learning requirements
- developing core job descriptions
- developing a microsite on NIPEC's main website hosting all the resources and seek permission for it to be available to access on the NI nursing and midwifery careers website
- submit the completed career pathway for District Nursing Services to the Chief Nursing Officer for approval.

It is intended that all of the above will support the key clinical nursing and Senior Nursing Assistant roles in the Community teams.

#### **3.3 Scope of the Project**

The main project outputs will be developed, during the first phase of the project, over a twelve month period commencing in February 2019. It is intended that phase two will see the development of the website and will be completed in four months.

#### **4.0 Methodology**

NIPEC has established a Steering Group, chaired by Gabby Tinsley, Community Divisional Nurse, Belfast HSC Trust, and comprises Senior Nurses from the following organisations: HSC Trusts, Public Health Agency, Clinical Education Centre, DoH, Royal College of Nursing, Trade Unions, Queen's University Belfast, Ulster University. Also included on the Steering Group will be representation from Directors of HR Forum and NIPEC Council.

A Writing Group will also include District Nurses and Service User/Carers will be set up to develop core competencies for the specific clinical roles in District Nursing Teams, associated education requirements and job descriptions. The outputs developed will be tested with colleagues in Service and with Education Providers before being finalised and signed off by the Steering Group. The final outputs will be submitted to the Chief Nursing Officer for approval.

## **5.0 Resources**

- 5.1 NIPEC will provide professional project management and administrative support to support the Steering Group meetings.
- 5.2 Any additional support required will be discussed and agreed by NIPEC's business team.

## **6.0 Dissemination and Implementation**

- 6.1 Communication and consultation processes will be ongoing throughout the project using various mechanisms including the NIPEC website and news bulletin, along with utilisation of key stakeholders' communication mechanisms. This will reflect the progress of the project and encourage individuals' to contribute to and participate in the project at various stages.
- 6.2 On completion of the project, the project will be summarised in a Final Report which will be available on NIPEC's website.

## **7.0 Equality and Governance Screening**

As required by Section 75, Schedule 9, of the Northern Ireland Act, 1998, any equality implications of this project have been considered. In addition, consideration has been given to the terms of the Human Rights Act 1998. As a result of these considerations a screening of the project has been undertaken and can be viewed at <http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/2166.htm>.

Using the Equality Commission's screening criteria; no significant equality implications have been identified. This project will therefore not be subject to an equality impact assessment. The Steering Group members have agreed that any engagement needed with patients/clients can be completed through the District Nursing Framework Implementation Group. The Guidance, however, should be screened before implementation in each of the HSC Trusts.

In addition, to ensure NIPEC and its stakeholders are meeting its legal obligations and responsibilities under various *Corporate* Governance areas,

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the project plan, its aims and objectives and outcomes have been examined and screened for any issues relating to the following areas:

- Risk Management
- Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA)
- Personal Public Involvement (PPI)

A summary of these considerations and any action required is documented in Appendix Two.

## **8.0 Evaluation**

- 8.1 Ongoing evaluation of the management of the project will be conducted through NIPEC and will ultimately feed into the progress and outcomes of the project. This evaluation will address the achievements of the objectives outlined in the project plan and the project management process.

## Membership of Project Steering Group

Name	Role	Organisation/ Group Represented
Gabby Tinsley (Chair)	Community Divisional Nurse: Adult, Community & Older Peoples Service (Retired from Jul 2019 )	BHSCT
Gillian McAleer	Service Manager, Community Health Nursing	BHSCT
Roisin McSwiggan from Mar 2020	Community Divisional Nurse: Adult, Community & Older Peoples Service	BHSCT
Ashley Ramsay	Area Manager	NHSCT
Veronica Cleland	Operational Manager – Nurse Lead	SEHSCT
Colleen McCabe until Feb 2021 Grace Sloane & Cathrine Reid from Mar 2021	Intermediate Care & District Nursing Team Manager, Newry	SHSCT
Claire Cartin until Mar 2021 Paula Devlin from April 2021	Primary Care and Community Co-ordinator	WHsCT
Pamela Craig Dawn Ferguson from Mar 2020	NHSC Trust Nursing Workforce Lead SHSC Trust Nursing Workforce Lead	HSC Trust Workforce Leads
Liz Doran		Service User
Rose McHugh	Nurse Consultant	Public Health Agency
Fiona Devlin		Royal College of Nursing
Marion Ritchie until December 2020 Anne Speed from Jan 2021		Unison
Maura McKenna	Trade Union Co-ordinator	Regional Trade Union Forum
Deirdre	Senior Education Manager	Clinical

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Cunningham until Oct 2020 Sharon Maginn from Feb 2021		Education Centre
Mary Frances McManus	Nursing Officer	Department of Health
Michael Riddell	Human Resources Business Partner	Directors of HR Forum
Dr Deborah Coleman until Mar 2021 Debbie Duncan & Catherine Monaghan from April 2021	Lecturer (Education), School of Nursing & Midwifery	Queen's University Belfast
Hilary Thompson Janice Reid from Jan 2020 to Sept 2020	Lecturers in Nursing	Ulster University
Alison Baxendale	Council Member	NIPEC Council
Cathy McCusker (Project Lead)	Senior Professional Officer	NIPEC

Outcome of Screening Assessment

Screening Assessment	Comments
<b>Risk Management questions</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have any risks been identified? If no - no further action is required. If yes then,</li> <li>• What is the potential impact of these?</li> <li>• How can these be mitigated or have alternatives options been identified which would have a lower risk outcome?</li> <li>• Where negative impacts are unavoidable, has clarity been given to the business need that justifies them?</li> </ul>	<p>9 October 2019</p> <p>Discussed potential for a possible negative financial impact for HSC Trusts in the development of some of the elements within the career pathway. It is believed that this risk does not apply to all roles within the career pathway and like the Specialist Nursing Framework will not change individuals existing terms and conditions.</p>
<b>Privacy Impact Assessment questions</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will the project/initiative use personal information and/or pose genuine risks to the privacy of the individual?</li>   <li>• Will the project/initiative result in a change of law, the use of new and intrusive technology or the use of private or sensitive information, originally collected for a limited purpose, to be reused in a new and unexpected way?</li> </ul>	<p>The website will promote careers in District Nursing but only with the individuals consent and will be submitted by the individual</p> <p>No</p>
<b>Personal and Public Involvement questions</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will the project/initiative require input from patients/clients? If no - no further action is required. If yes - please apply NIPEC's Personal and Public Involvement Policy.</li> </ul>	<p>This project is running in parallel to the District Nursing Framework Implementation Team and Neighbourhood District Nursing Teams which will have input from patients &amp; service users. The outputs of this project will be shared through these groups and therefore direct involvement with patients and service users is not required for this project.</p>

## References

Department of Health & NIPEC (2018) *Career Framework for Specialist Nursing Roles*

Department of Health (2018) *A District Nursing Framework 2018-2026: 24 Hour District Nursing Care No Matter Where You Live*. Belfast: DoH

Department of Health NI (2016) *Health and Wellbeing 2026: Delivering Together*

PHA: *Neighbourhood District Nursing Model of Care (2017)*

RCN: *The Buurtzorg Nederland (home care provider) model (2016)*

Health Education England NHS (2015) *District Nursing and General Practice Nursing Service: Education and Career Framework*

The Queen's Nursing Institute (QNI) NHS England (2014) *Developing a National District Nursing Workforce Planning Network*

The Queen's Nursing Institute (QNIS) (2015) *Voluntary Standards for District Nurse Education and Practice*



For further Information, please contact

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This document can be downloaded from the NIPEC website  
[www.nipec.hscni.net](http://www.nipec.hscni.net)

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