

Chief Nursing Officer Directorate

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NHS Board Chief Executives
NHS Board Nurse Directors
NHS Board AHP Leads
NHS Board Practice Development Leads
NHS Board HR & Workforce Development Directors
University Deans/HOD Nursing, Midwifery & Allied Health Professions
Scotland's College Principals
Scottish Qualifications Authority
Scottish RCN/RCM/Unison Heads
Scottish Social Services Council

Dear Colleague

Health Care Support Workers (HCSWs): A Guide to HCSW Education and Role Development

Please find enclosed a copy of the newly updated NHS Education for Scotland publication 'A Guide to HCSW Education and Role Development (2010)'.

NHS Education for Scotland (NES) in partnership with Scottish Government Health Directorate consulted widely during 2008/09 to agree definitions, role parameters, education levels and potential career development pathways. This guidance has been well received by stakeholders since it was first published in June 2009. The Guide identifies the levels of learning required to be achieved by individuals joining or progressing through the HCSW workforce.

The educational requirements for the future HCSW workforce are aligned to levels within the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) as shown below:

HCSW	–	SCQF level 6
Senior HCSW	–	SCQF level 7
Assistant Practitioner	–	SCQF level 8

When identifying educational programmes to support the education and development of staff moving into HCSW posts, NHS Boards must ensure that the programmes meet the appropriate SCQF levels for the groups of staff for whom they have been commissioned. It is recognised that NHS Boards may also wish to support existing HCSWs to make the transition to these new benchmark SCQF levels.

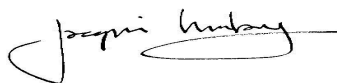
The HCSW Project team at NES aim to facilitate the sharing of best practice and exploring new educational developments by working in collaboration with NHS Boards to establish a National HCSW Learning Network, and by developing a web-based HCSW Toolkit to support the implementation of a consistent approach to the development of the HCSW workforce. The website is intended to be a “one-stop shop” for NHS staff, staff in further and higher education, managers and healthcare support workers to access information pertinent to learning and role development. The toolkit is currently being developed with a wide range of stakeholders and is due to be launched early summer 2010.

Further information and advice can be sought from the NES Healthcare Support Worker Project team hcsw@nes.scot.nhs.uk Copies of the Guide can be downloaded from the NES website at <http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/hcsw>

Yours sincerely



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