

Supporting Quality in Pre-registration Nursing and Midwifery Education

Welcome to this third bulletin showcasing activities and outcomes arising from NHS Education for Scotland's (NES) role in the performance management of pre-registration nursing and midwifery programmes.

NHS
Education
for
Scotland

Issue No 3

Feb 2015



*Raising awareness,
encouraging involvement*



HAVE YOUR SAY ON THIS BULLETIN ►

WELCOME



The Scottish Government's commitment to nursing and midwifery education, articulated through the collaborative work on *Setting the Direction*¹, has provided an opportunity to review our areas of achievement in Pre-registration and set these in the wider context of education priorities across the career journeys of all our staff.

Our collective focus on enhancement has built consensus and supported real improvement at national level. Most notably this includes collaborative approaches to meeting regulatory requirements for programme standards and the practice learning experience, and improvement in student retention and progression.

Our pre-registration nursing and midwifery programmes in Scotland offer a variety of routes towards registration. These attract and support different student populations, all of whom bring different qualities and strengths to the profession.

Key to our improved understanding of this landscape has been the use of data to support an increased focus on the impact of different programme routes on recruitment, programme output and subsequent career pathways.

In an already busy and fairly tightly controlled curriculum, it can sometimes be difficult to show how key policy issues are addressed. Patient Safety and Quality Improvement are key pillars of our NHS Quality Strategy and, in this issue of the Bulletin, we are delighted to showcase two innovative student-centred approaches to the integration of these important professional activities within the pre-registration programme.

Finally, we have once again supported the work of the *Scottish Collaboration for the Enhancement of Pre-registration Nursing* in further developing the evidence base for programme enhancements in key areas of the curriculum, regulatory requirements or programme delivery. These collaborative research and evaluation projects, and the sharing and ownership of their outputs across institutions, provide an excellent model for advancing robust national initiatives that provide benefit for all.

We look forward to continuing to work closely with all stakeholders to build on these achievements and, in the meantime, I hope you enjoy the bulletin and associated resources.

Dr Colette Ferguson
Director of Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professions

¹Chief Nursing Officer (2014) *Setting the Direction for Nursing and midwifery Education in Scotland*, Scottish Government, Edinburgh. Access at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0044/00443655.pdf>.



HAVE YOUR SAY ON THIS BULLETIN ►

PROGRESSING THE STUDENT JOURNEY

The student journey in nursing and midwifery is marked by a number of key stages.

First there is recruitment, when students become aware of the opportunities open to them, followed by selection, when they apply for and achieve a place. Then there is the process of staying the course – retention – right through to graduation – completion.

NES and partners are working hard to ensure students and universities gain maximum benefits at each of these stages.

Nursing and midwifery student recruitment target numbers have been rising over the last few years after a series of reductions, and NES and partners will continue to look at ways to enhance recruitment and selection processes. *“The aims are to maximise efficiency and ensure we recruit the best applicants and achieve the best outcomes from newly registered staff,”* NES Associate Director of Nursing and Midwifery, Mike Sabin, says.

Interim Chief Nursing Officer Fiona McQueen welcomes the focus on recruitment and selection processes for pre-registration nursing and midwifery programmes in Scotland and recognises the need for change to meet developing needs and expectations.

“Significant time is already invested in recruitment by universities, NHS boards and often service users to ensure we select the best candidates,” she says. *“But expectations of competence, care and compassion have changed not just among service users and the public, but also within the professions.”*

“NHS Scotland’s values”, she continues, “and our focus on safe, effective and person-centred care need to be strongly reflected in our recruitment and selection processes in pre-registration programmes and across the whole nursing and midwifery career pathway.”

The picture on student retention and completion rates is one of continued improvement, with analysis of NES data over the last five years showing sustained progress across pre-registration nursing and midwifery programmes in Scotland.

“Some discontinuation from learning programmes is to be expected and is considered acceptable for students and universities, but larger-scale attrition brings problems,” Mike Sabin explains. *“Universities and NHS board partners have made considerable efforts to improve the situation over a number of years, and while some variation in rates across institutions and between programmes and fields of practice is still seen, the trend data show that increasing percentages of students are now successfully completing their degree programmes.”*

Deputy Chief Nursing Officer Hugh Masters welcomes the evidence of improvement in student retention and completion. *“The strong strategic focus in Scotland over the last five years has clearly had an impact,”* he says.

“We are now more able to support our talented and committed students as they progress through their journey in university and practice and as they become new graduate professionals.”



RECRUITMENT



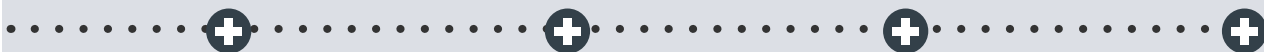
SELECTION



RETENTION



GRADUATION



HAVE YOUR SAY ON THIS BULLETIN ►

MAKING IMPROVEMENT PART OF THE CULTURE

1

Two Scottish universities are making impressive progress in embedding the concept of healthcare quality improvement (QI) in student nurse curricula.

A **'practicum'** (meaning a practical experience) has been introduced to undergraduate nursing programmes at the University of Stirling to enable students to take forward QI projects in their practice placements.

"QI is huge in health care," explains lecturer Michelle Beattie, *"but QI training has tended to focus on how executives and managers can implement change from the top down. Our philosophy is about adopting a bottom-up approach, with students being supported to create pragmatic solutions for identified problems in clinical areas."*

Michelle and her colleagues in the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health believe that the most effective way to build QI capacity and capability is to embed QI as a core undergraduate nursing skill. Students receive preparation on how to compile a QI project plan to enable them to develop proposals to improve care. Two hundred and thirty students completed their QI practicums this year across the wide geographical area the university covers, which stretches from the Western Isles to the Central Belt – potentially, that adds up to quite an impact.

The impacts include students coming up with plans as diverse as developing a form to record information on expected admissions to a busy accident & emergency department and creating a "fluid care bundle" to prompt nursing staff to monitor levels of fluid and nutrition for vulnerable older patients in hospital.

Student Olivia Hall was behind the former of these two projects, introducing her idea while on placement to the accident & emergency department in Stornoway.

"The practicum really brought the theory of QI to life and made it real," Olivia says. *"It was quite daunting to start with, trying to introduce change as a student to a team of very experienced practitioners, but it was a great way not only to improve patients' experiences, but also to be involved as part of the team in the work of the department."*

"We've been blown away by the results – the students are making real improvements to practice."



"Student nurses can see things with fresh eyes and come up with great ideas for improving aspects of care," Michelle Beattie says. *"We've been blown away by the results – the students are making real improvements to practice."*

A formal evaluation of the QI practicum is now underway.



HAVE YOUR SAY ON THIS BULLETIN ►

MAKING IMPROVEMENT PART OF THE CULTURE

2

Two Scottish universities are making impressive progress in embedding the concept of healthcare quality improvement (QI) in student nurse curricula.



“QI... It’s integral to what every nurse does, and you cannot be a professional nurse unless you do it.”

The University of Dundee has been working with the internationally acclaimed Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) in the United States for some years now.

IHI online modules have been optional for students across a range of professions, but when the new nursing programmes were approved, it was decided to make them compulsory, as John Lee, Head of Undergraduate Studies in the School of Nursing and Midwifery, explains.

“All students studying adult, children’s or mental health nursing will complete around 15 IHI online modules and related assessments over their three-year programme,” he says. “They form part of the portfolio of evidence the students have to prepare as undergraduates, and the students exit their programmes with a certificate in healthcare improvement methodology.”

Students start to complete the units in the first five weeks of their programme, meaning they are learning about QI at the same time as they are being introduced to the fundamentals underpinning nursing practice.

“We’re saying that QI is part of nursing, just like taking a patient’s temperature or performing nutritional screening,” John says. “It’s integral to what every nurse does, and you cannot be a professional nurse unless you do it.”

Second-year student nurse Kirsten McDonald has found the units revelatory for her understanding of what nursing is about, so much so that she worked through all of them in her first year. “I had until the end of third year to finish the units,” she says, “but I enjoyed them so much I didn’t want to stop.”

Kirsten’s enthusiasm is such that she is now the lead nursing student on the IHI Chapter in Dundee University, a multidisciplinary student group focused on all things QI. She helps to organise conferences and events and generally advocates for QI approaches.

“QI is all about the patient and how doing simple things better can make a big difference to the patient experience,” Kirsten explains. “It teaches us that patients notice when the simple things aren’t right – things like not listening to what they want or answering their questions, or even failing to introduce ourselves when we approach them. QI makes you more aware of these factors and suggests how you can change your practice. And if we can get that part of practice right, the rest will fall into place.”



HAVE YOUR SAY ON THIS BULLETIN ►

ENHANCING DATA, INCREASING UNDERSTANDING

A sustainable data-sharing agreement has been secured between NES, the Scottish Government, the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and the Government's Information Services Division to support the 2015/16 performance management process.

Scotland's unique national nursing and midwifery student dataset has long had great relevance to national workforce and educational planning, but the agreement will enhance the data used to inform analysis of student recruitment and retention across universities.

"Linking with the HESA data will support equality and diversity analysis around protected characteristics – the issues identified in law for which people must not face discrimination – and links to geographical and Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) data," explains Peter Ward, NES' Nursing & Midwifery Data Manager.

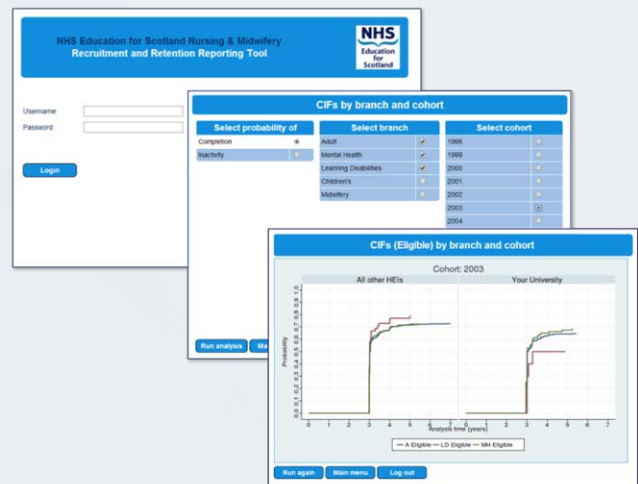


Figure 1. New NES online tool

"Links with the Scottish Workforce Information Standard System (SWISS) data will support analysis of forward transition into employment in NHSScotland, allowing very clear and consistent national reporting. This provides great potential for the development of specific local analysis."

NES has also recently developed a new online tool (see Figure 1) that allows university staff to log in securely and run specific analyses using data from the main NES dataset. The tool provides a detailed breakdown of the institution's student cohorts and allows comparison against progression and completion data from similar programmes across Scotland.

"We hope this new tool, which is available for testing and feedback, will further support universities to monitor and review their student progression and completion and provide robust data for internal planning and communications," Peter says.

For further information, contact Peter Ward at:
peter.ward@nes.scot.nhs.uk



HAVE YOUR SAY ON THIS BULLETIN ►

SCEPRN ACTIVE THROUGHOUT 2014

The Scottish Collaboration for the Enhancement of Pre-registration Nursing (SCEPRN) group, representing all the universities in Scotland that offer pre-registration nursing education, has commissioned a number of NES-funded reports during 2014 that focus on essential features of undergraduate student programmes.

The key issue of identifying good practice in fitness to practice (FtP) processes was explored in a report published in March. Researchers from the University of Edinburgh and the University of the West of Scotland reviewed guidance and research evidence about FtP and interviewed key personnel for FtP processes in nine universities in Scotland providing nurse undergraduate education. While much good practice was found, the researchers also identified some areas of challenge and recommended collaborative working around this complex area. The report can be accessed at: www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/media/2731991/identifying_good_practice_in_fitness_to_practise_processes.pdf

User and carer involvement in student nurse practice assessments has been recognised as an important issue for some years now, but until recently little work had been done to explore students' views on its impacts. That has now been addressed in a report prepared by researchers from the University of Edinburgh and Glasgow Caledonian University.

The research built on NES work in this area since 2010 and involved focus groups and semi-structured interviews with 51 nursing students in years 2, 3 and 4 of adult and mental health nursing and midwifery programmes. The students strongly believed that service users and carers should have a voice in assessing their practice skills, but that this should fall short of a formal part of assessment. The report can be found at: www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/media/2732035/nursing_students_perspectives_of_user_carer_involvement.pdf

Researchers from the University of Stirling, Edinburgh Napier University and the University of the West of Scotland looked at how students can be assessed in non-nurse practice learning environments, such as social care settings. The research formed the second part of a national project on "Due Regard" and evaluated a pilot of the effectiveness and validity of a practice learning environment Equivalency Tool that aims to ensure consistency of student assessment methods across different practice environments. The full report can be accessed at: www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/media/2731988/assessing_the_validity_of_a_national_assessors_equivalency_tool.pdf

SCEPRN Chair John Lee feels these kinds of projects are vital in supporting Scotland's universities in delivering high-quality programmes and experiences for their students. "SCEPRN is made up of people who are responsible for delivering on issues such as these on a day-in, day-out basis," he says. "The work taken forward in these projects will help all of us to have greater insight into, and therefore greater influence on, matters that have an important impact on student experiences."

A brief information leaflet describing SCEPRN and its activities is currently being prepared and will soon be widely available.



HAVE YOUR SAY ON THIS BULLETIN ►

SURVEY FIVE-YEAR DATA REVEALED

NES has now been administering the annual Nursing and Midwifery Pre-registration Education Survey for five years.

Jane Cantrell, NES Programme Director, has produced some trend data over this period which show that mentors, charge nurses, team leaders and care home managers rate newly qualified nurses and midwives highly for their professional attitude and behaviour, caring and compassionate approach, and motivation.

“Student nurses and midwives give top ranking to their education programmes for providing holistic care, practising ethically and managing healthcare acquired infection,” Jane reports. *“The trend data also show that mentors value their role, and 93% have reported that they participate in regular updates.”*



The 2015 surveys can be accessed using the links below:

Student: <http://tinyurl.com/nesstudent>

Mentor/charge nurse: <http://tinyurl.com/mentor-cn>

To find out about the 2015 Nursing and Midwifery Pre-registration Survey, contact:

N&MPerformanceManagement@nes.scot.nhs.uk

or Jane Cantrell at: jane.cantrell@nes.scot.nhs.uk

CONTACTS

Mike Sabin
Associate Director, NMAHP
NHS Education for Scotland
mike.sabin@nes.scot.nhs.uk

Jane Cantrell
Programme Director, NMAHP
NHS Education for Scotland
jane.cantrell@nes.scot.nhs.uk

Susanne Forrest
Programme Director, NMAHP
NHS Education for Scotland
susanne.forrest@nes.scot.nhs.uk

Pam Courtney
Project Officer, NMAHP
NHS Education for Scotland
pam.courtney@nes.scot.nhs.uk

NHS Education for Scotland
Westport 102
West Port
Edinburgh EH3 9DN
Tel: 0131 656 3200
www.nes.scot.nhs.uk



Published February 2015

© NHS Education for Scotland 2015. You can copy or reproduce the information in this document for use within NHSScotland and for non-commercial educational purposes. Use of this document for commercial purposes is permitted only with the written permission of NES.

Images are provided courtesy of the NHSScotland Photo Library:
www.nhsscotlandphotolibrary.org.

NESD0400 | Designed and typeset by the NES Design Service.



HAVE YOUR SAY ON THIS BULLETIN ►