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**Advanced and Enhanced Practice Governance Guidance: A self assessment tool for general practice employers**

**Introduction**

2017 saw NHS England (NHSE) introduce the Advanced Practice Capability Framework\*. For some allied health professionals (AHPs) this was followed by the introduction of Roadmaps to Practice for First Contact Practitioners (FCPs, also termed enhanced practitioners). In line with these frameworks the definitions, training pathways and governance of enhanced and advanced practice have also been evolving to support the creation of a multi-professional enhanced and advanced workforce, aiming to improve patient safety; recruitment and retention of nurses and AHPs across the system. This guidance has been produced by the Advanced Practice Lead for Somerset Training Hub (STH) and the Local Medical Committee (LMC) for general practices employing nurses and AHPs in enhanced and advanced roles, as a supportive tool for implementing effective governance measures to meet regulatory and legislative requirements. The checklist is derived from the more in-depth assessment tool (the NHSE Governance Maturity Matrix for Advanced Practice\*\*), completion of which is a requirement for application for NHSE funding for advanced practice trainees.

**Drivers**

There are a number of regulatory measures and tools that general practice employers of enhanced and advanced practitioners should be aware of, including:

* Individual professional registering body standards
* Care Quality Commission (CQC) assessment criteria namely the Health and Social Care Act 2008, in particular regulations 17, 18 and 19 (good governance, staffing and fit and proper persons employed)
* Where applicable Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme (ARRS) contractual requirements and [responsibilities](https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-providers/gps/gp-mythbusters/gp-mythbuster-106-primary-care-first-contact-practitioners-fcps)
* \*[2017 Advanced Practice Competency Framework](https://www.hee.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/documents/multi-professionalframeworkforadvancedclinicalpracticeinengland.pdf)
* [NHSE requirements to meet Advanced Practice recognition (digital badge)](https://advanced-practice.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/digital-badges/)
* \*\*[NHSE Governance Maturity Matrix.](https://advanced-practice.hee.nhs.uk/news-and-events/governance-of-advanced-practice-in-health-and-care-provider-organisations/)

This checklist is designed to offer support for general practice employers to meet the governance standards expected under these regulatory and legislative requirements.

**Enhanced and Advanced Practice**

Unlike most registered professions “advanced practitioner” is not a title protected in law and until the introduction of NHSE approved higher education courses there were no standardised qualifications for the multi-professional workforce. For the purposes of this guidance and checklist the following NHSE definitions are adopted:

* **Enhanced Practitioner:** a registered healthcare professional working at an advanced clinical level but whose duties and job description do NOT include the three further pillars of advanced practice. This includes FCPs who have completed NHSE’s Roadmap to Practice.
* **Advanced Practitioner:** a registered healthcare professional with appropriate qualifications and experience working autonomously at an advanced clinical level and also undertaking duties meeting the three further pillars of advanced practice: leadership, education and research. To meet NHSE advanced practice requirements and be eligible for the [NHSE Advanced Practice Digital Badge](https://advanced-practice.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/digital-badges/), completion of an approved masters level (level 7) advanced practice course or the [e-Portfolio route](https://advanced-practice.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/eportfolio-route/) is required and advanced practice roles should include a minimum of 20% non-clinical time and be remunerated at the equivalent of Agenda for Change band 8a.

Many highly experienced nursing and allied health professional staff have qualifications and credentials undertaken prior to NHSE’s introduction of the Capability Framework and subsequent introduction of NHSE approved courses and may not automatically qualify for the NHSE digital badge. STH and the LMC would advise an individual approach should be taken in reviewing experience and qualifications or credentials of employees recruited or working under enhanced or advanced practice titles to ensure governance measures such as CQC requirements are met.

**Governance of Enhanced and Advanced Roles**

The principles of good governance apply across all enhanced and advanced practice staff whether experienced legacy or newer NHSE endorsed trainees/practitioners. This checklist and guidance should enable and support the development of good advanced practice governance as outlined by NHSE, and the STH/LMC Advanced Practice Lead is able to offer advice and support to Somerset general practices when required.

**Enhanced and Advanced Practice Governance Checklist**

**RAG rating:**

**red -** little or no evidence - action required; **amber -** some evidence or work in progress; **green -** fully embedded and evidenced

| **Checklist item** | **Current Status (RAG rating)** | **Available Evidence** | **Action Required** | **Timeframe** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Governance** |
| All appropriate employees are correctly identified as trainees, enhanced or advanced practitioners through up to date staff records. | **eg - GREEN** | 1. **eg - Electronic records**
2. **Individual personnel files containing job descriptions, person specifications and copies of up to date certificates**
3. **appraisal documentation**
 | **eg - ensure included as part of enhanced and advanced practice policy** | **eg - at next policy review - August 24** |
| There are clear reporting and accountability lines for trainees, enhanced and advanced practitioners |  |  |  |  |
| The practice/PCN has an agreed enhanced and advanced practice policy in place [*an example template is available through the Somerset Training Hub Teamnet library*]. |  |  |  |  |
| The practice/PCN has an enhanced or advanced practice lead attending relevant meetings and able to influence decision making at a strategic level. |  |  |  |  |
| The enhanced/advanced practice lead or appropriate other representative is aware of and linked in with wider enhanced and advanced practice system leads (PCN, wider health community, Somerset Training Hub, Local Medical Committee, ICB and ICS advanced practice leads, Faculties of Enhanced and Advanced Practice etc) in order to influence change. |  |  |  |  |
| Enhanced and advanced practice roles are well communicated and clear to all colleagues throughout the practice/PCN. |  |  |  |  |
| **Leadership** |
| There are opportunities for advanced practitioners to take on leadership roles within the practice/PCN, this could be from individual projects to team leadership; clinical, education, workforce or governance groups; or in the wider health community through secondments, PCN projects or fellowships. | **eg - RED** | **eg - currently the practice has no advanced practitioners in position** | **eg - as trainee advanced practitioners take on roles these opportunities will be made available as per the practice advanced practice policy** | **September 2025** |
| **Workforce**  |
| Workforce plans are visible and clear and include: * consideration of succession planning
* identifying and developing promising members of the existing workforce
* how enhanced and advanced practitioners sit in the delivery of key long-term plans
 | **eg - AMBER** | **eg - it has been noted that several clinicians are approaching retirement age in the next 5-10 years and the practice has identified the need for a workforce plan to ensure continuity. Meeting minutes are available and a draft plan is being developed** | **eg - complete workforce plan and implement within specified timeframe** | **eg - plan due for completion Dec 24 for immediate implementation** |
| Workforce plans and recruitment processes are inclusive and not disadvantageous or discouraging those from under-represented groups from being attracted to or applying for enhanced or advanced roles. |  |  |  |  |
| Internal and external recruitment processes ensure enhanced and advanced practitioners meet national, regional, local and organisational competence and capability frameworks as appropriate. |  |  |  |  |
| Job descriptions are reflective of the enhanced or advanced Roles using appropriate terminology and criteria including: * reflection of expected level of clinical scope of practice meeting accepted local, regional and national competence and capability frameworks
* appropriate level of education or equivalent required (eg level 6-7 for enhanced practitioners and level 7 for advanced practitioners, or equivalent)
* for advanced practitioners inclusion of expectations working under the four pillars of advanced practice (clinical, education, leadership and research)
 |  |  |  |  |
| There is organisational clarity of where enhanced and advanced practitioners sit within the patient pathway and are embedded in organisational teams. |  |  |  |  |
| **Business Strategy** |
| Enhanced and advanced practice roles are underpinned by business cases reflecting where appropriate:* the organisational needs that enhanced and advanced practitioners will contribute to addressing, and how
* mechanisms for evaluating the impact of enhanced and advanced practitioner roles to inform workforce development
* the need for ongoing investment in the enhanced and advanced Practice workforce looking beyond a single cohort or trainee where possible
* career progression and future roles for enhanced and advanced practitioners
 |  |  |  |  |
| Funding projections include consideration of the full cost of training and supervising enhanced and advanced practitioners, identifying making use of available regional NHS England funding programmes coordinated through Somerset Training Hub (where possible). |  |  |  |  |
| Advanced practice trainees benefitting from NHS England funding have appropriate substantive posts, remunerated at the required Agenda for Change 8a level (following successful completion of their approved course) identified and planned for. |  |  |  |  |
| **Training** |
| There is awareness of variation in different training pathways for enhanced and advanced practice and the organisation is able to identify employees' existing training and future development needs based on regulatory requirements and developmental needs. |  |  |  |  |
| There is a clear and consistent training framework or strategy in place for enhanced and advanced practice training and development (for advanced practice reflecting the four pillars). |  |  |  |  |
| There are agreed organisational competencies and capabilities for specific enhanced and advanced practice roles with relevance to national credentials and area-specific capability frameworks (where these exist). |  |  |  |  |
| Processes are in place to monitor individual progress of staff completing enhanced and advanced practice programmes or training. |  |  |  |  |
| The practice/PCN considers funded options available for development of enhanced and advanced practice through NHS England including first contact practitioner courses, apprenticeships, advanced practice modular courses and the e-Portfolio. |  |  |  |  |
| All advanced Practice trainees are enrolled on appropriate NHS England accredited higher education courses. |  |  |  |  |
| Where required, work-based assessments are carried out by capable and trained assessors who are familiar with the enhanced or advanced practice role, in partnership with a higher education institute when appropriate. |  |  |  |  |
| Annual review processes for trainee enhanced or advanced practitioners reflect progression along a defined route towards an agreed end point of capability, credentials or NHSE recognition. |  |  |  |  |
| **Clinical** |
| Enhanced and advanced practitioners are supported and encouraged to maintain their required:* professional clinical registration
* professional portfolio of practice, mapped against appropriate capability frameworks for their area of competency
 |  |  |  |  |
| Employer governance, policy, guidance, protocol and systems use appropriate language inclusive of a multi-professional workforce and not limited to an individual or specialty (ie clinician rather than doctor). |  |  |  |  |
| Policies are consistent and guidance and systems are in place to support Enhanced and advanced practitioners in the delivery of their agreed scope of practice. |  |  |  |  |
| Patients, carers and/or members of the public/stakeholders interacting with the practice/PCN understand what an enhanced or advanced practitioner is and the role they provide within the organisation. |  |  |  |  |
| **Supervision** |
| The NHSE Supervision Framework (2020/2022) has been implemented within the Practice/PCN. |  |  |  |  |
| All enhanced and advanced practitioners have a named education supervisor (and for advanced practitioners - as appropriate - associate supervisors across the four pillars of practice). |  |  |  |  |
| There are processes in place to identify the organisation’s annual supervision need versus capacity currently and in the future. |  |  |  |  |
| The organisation is utilising suitably trained and experienced advanced practitioners in the provision of supervision. |  |  |  |  |
| The organisation’s supervisors of trainees and established practitioners are themselves suitably trained and supported. |  |  |  |  |
| There is a defined process in place to support the supervisor when supporting a practitioner or trainee practitioner in difficulty. |  |  |  |  |
| **Continuing Professional Development (CPD)**  |
| There is a formal and appropriate appraisal process inclusive of manager and supervisor in place, to identify enhanced and advanced practitioner development needs (for advanced practitioners reflective of the four pillars of practice). |  |  |  |  |
| Multi-professional CPD is included in all enhanced and advanced practitioners structured job and development plans, on parity with medical colleagues. |  |  |  |  |
| Is it recognised that all enhanced and advanced practitioners require ongoing CPD (for advanced practitioners across the four pillars of practice) and they are equitably allocated time, funding and access to this. |  |  |  |  |
| There is clarity between what is considered core development to service delivery and CPD. |  |  |  |  |
| The organisation records and uses CPD activity to promote future development plans and business cases. |  |  |  |  |

**Further Information and Useful Links:**

* [Welcome - Advanced Practice (hee.nhs.uk)](https://advanced-practice.hee.nhs.uk/)
* [Regional Faculty for Advancing Practice – South West - Advanced Practice (hee.nhs.uk)](https://advanced-practice.hee.nhs.uk/regional-faculty-for-advancing-practice-south-west/)
* [HEE SW Advancing Practice Faculty Handbook 2022-23](https://advanced-practice.hee.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/28/2022/12/HEE-SW-Advancing-Practice-Faculty-Handbook-2023-24-Final-1.pdf)
* [ARRS FAQs - Advanced Practice (hee.nhs.uk)](https://advanced-practice.hee.nhs.uk/arrs-faqs/)
* [ePortfolio (supported) Route - Advanced Practice (hee.nhs.uk)](https://advanced-practice.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/eportfolio-route/)
* [Advanced practice review - The Nursing and Midwifery Council (nmc.org.uk)](https://www.nmc.org.uk/about-us/our-role/advanced-practice-review/)
* [Advanced practice standards | Royal College of Nursing (rcn.org.uk)](https://www.rcn.org.uk/Professional-Development/Advanced-Practice-Standards)
* [The role of governance in advanced practice | NHS Employers](https://www.nhsemployers.org/articles/role-governance-advanced-practice)

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