



Primary Care and Community Services Multi-Professional Career Framework

Draft for Review 30 September 2024

NOT FOR WIDER DISTRIBUTION

Other Logos as identified/required



Acknowledgements

To be added later

Foreword

To be added later

Statements of support

To be added later

Equality and Health Inequalities Statement

Promoting equality and addressing health inequalities are at the heart of our values. Throughout the development of the policies and processes cited in this document, we have:

- Given due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity, and to foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic (as cited under the Equality Act 2010) and those who do not share it.
- Given regard to the need to reduce inequalities between patients in access to and outcomes from healthcare services and to ensure services are provided in an integrated way where this might reduce health inequalities.

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Introduction and Background

The [NHS Long Term Plan \(2019\)](#) set the direction for the NHS by focusing on delivering joined-up, personalised, preventive care, and expanding primary and community services. More recently in 2022, integrated care systems were created to deliver joined-up support to better meet the needs of the population, different parts of the NHS (including hospitals, primary care and community and mental health services) and for health and social care work in a much more joined-up way.

These approaches require a workforce that is fit for the future and requires skilled staff working in out of hospital services collaborating in multi-professional teams. The Community Services Transformation program identified that newly qualified professionals believed careers outside of hospital settings were less likely to provide training, development, and progression opportunities. This led to the inclusion of this primary care and community services career and capabilities framework into the [NHS Long Term Workforce Plan \(2023\)](#) to define the career steps to level up career progression in community-based services.

A career framework provides a platform that allows individuals to understand the richness a career in primary and community care could offer, and to plan and build their career experiences enabling them to demonstrate their capability and to understand the direction of travel their personal development needs to go in.

For employers, the demand to attract and retain a sustainable pipeline of workforce supply, particularly in an era of workforce shortage, means they must do all they can to develop and promote a compelling employee value proposition, a career framework such as this helps with such activity.

This framework is one of the first of its kind for the clinical professional workforce (not including medical roles), including the clinical support workforce, to outline the available health and care career entry points, the type of roles available, and progression that is achievable outside of hospital services.

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Who is this Framework for?

The Framework will be of particular interest to a range of individuals, groups and organisations.

People and communities

The Framework can be used by patients/service users, carers and the public to help them understand the wide ranging variety of roles delivering care within primary care and community services. It will also be useful for people involved in activities such as patient or lay representatives, including patient/service user participation groups, those holding positions with organisational boards, or other roles such as co-production of services, education, or system development.

Employers

The Framework enables employers and managers to identify and grow the staff they need, using the Framework as a benchmark for growth and transformation. It enables further workforce development activities to be undertaken, (such as role design and new models of care or ways of working).

This Framework underpins and supports the need for continuing professional development to ensure practice is effective, remains up-to-date and supports the process of quality assurance to ensure effectiveness.

In addition, the Framework will support the awareness for employers of the significant change required in services to support the educational development of practitioners and learners going forward.

Finally, the Framework enables employers to showcase the appeal of working in their respective care environments, and that there are many ways for employees to grow and develop their careers.

Education and training providers

The Framework can help inform those who design, deliver and quality assure educator training and development opportunities to focus on the indicative learning identified within the framework that needs to be developed in order to support workforce development aligned to service need.

Current and future workforce

The Framework sets out clear expectations about the opportunities to enter and develop long-term careers in primary and community care settings. It acts as a guide to individuals to understand and benchmark their present career point and what immediate potential they have to work within primary and community care; as well as what steps they may consider taking to develop their careers in the long-term.

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Structure of the Framework

The primary care and community services multi-professional framework is aligned to the Skills for Health Career Framework for Health¹ Levels which range from Level 1 entry level to Level 9 Director level practice. This framework is the recognised standard and used widely in workforce documentation. It is noted that naming conventions have evolved but numerated levels remain consistent.

It is recognised that different professional groups may enter pay scales at different grades or progress in different ways. The Career Framework levels of practice are independent of the NHS pay bands which describe how staff will work and how much they will be paid. People may be working towards next stages or different roles and professionally registered staff may start at different bands which does not reflect level of practice requiring the differentiation from specified job titles and grade or pay scales.

In objectively articulating the career levels, the career framework does not mandate the amount of remuneration, terms and conditions that maybe associated with roles/jobs.

Career Frameworks allow people to identify their career framework level and existing skills and capabilities they would need to develop to move to another role.

The primary care and community services multi-professional career framework identifies **six** levels of practice based on the Career Framework for Health.

The career framework can help support the sustainability and growth of the workforce and facilitate the movement of staff to work within primary care and community services, as well as providing a career structure for development and progression for staff working in this area.

The framework illustrates how it can be possible to progress within each level of practice, demonstrating opportunities for lateral as well as vertical career progression across varied settings and practice environments.

It provides a useful insight into what characteristics are required to work at each career framework level and gives examples of the knowledge and skills required as well as 'how' an individual would need to behave and act to be working at each level.

The six practice levels are:

- Support Work Level Practice
- Associate Level/Assistant Practitioner Level Practice
- Registered Practitioner Level Practice
- Enhanced Level Practice

¹ The Career Framework for Health is a mechanism for describing jobs in terms of the level at which the job is required to function, i.e. level of responsibility, decision making, critical analysis skills combined with the activities undertaken in the job, which can be mapped to [National Occupational Standards](#)

- Advanced Level Practice
- Consultant Level Practice

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The Primary Care and Community Services Multi-Professional Career Framework

Career Framework Level	Level Descriptor	Indicative Requirements to work at this level	Example Indicative Roles
Support Work Level Practice	<p>People at this level require knowledge of facts, principles, processes, and general concepts in a field of work.</p> <p>They may carry out a wider range of duties and will have some responsibility, with guidance and supervision available when needed.</p> <p>They provide high quality, compassionate healthcare, following standards, policies or protocols and always acting within the limits of their capability.</p> <p>They use knowledge and understanding to take decisions within their area(s) of responsibility.</p> <p>They are responsible for their work and for reviewing the effectiveness of actions.</p>	<p>Care Certificate</p> <p>Appropriate Apprenticeship</p>	<p>Health Care Assistant</p> <p>Peer Support Worker</p> <p>Rehabilitation Assistant</p> <p>Phlebotomist</p> <p>Radiography assistant and imaging support worker</p>
Associate/ Assistant Practitioner Level Practice	<p>People at this level require factual and theoretical knowledge in broad contexts within a field of work.</p> <p>They work independently, and with others, under the leadership and direction of a registered practitioner within defined parameters, to deliver care in line with an agreed plan/protocol.</p> <p>They will have a breadth of knowledge and a flexible, portable skill set to serve local health populations, taking account of the perspectives</p>	<p>Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) registration as a Nursing Associate following completion of an</p>	<p>Nursing Associate</p> <p>Mammography Associate</p> <p>Assistant Practitioner Falls Prevention</p>

Career Framework Level	Level Descriptor	Indicative Requirements to work at this level	Example Indicative Roles
	<p>and pathways of individuals, their families and/or carers providing holistic and personalised care to individuals, supporting the assessment, planning, delivery and evaluation of care.</p> <p>Work is guided by standard operating procedures, protocols, or systems of work, but the worker makes judgements, plans activities, contributes to service development, and demonstrates self-development.</p>	<p>approved NMC Programme</p> <p><i>(Registration is not a requirement for roles outside of the Nursing Associate role)</i></p> <p>Completion of an appropriate Foundation Degree Programme</p> <p>Appropriate Apprenticeship and requisite qualification</p>	<p>Social Prescribing Link Worker</p> <p>Assistant Ambulance Practitioner</p>
Registered Practitioner Level Practice	<p>People at this level will have a comprehensive, specialised, factual, and theoretical knowledge within a field of work and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge.</p> <p>They use knowledge to solve problems creatively, make judgements which require analysis and interpretation, and actively contribute to service and self-development.</p>	<p>Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) registration/ HCPC registration</p> <p>First degree or equivalent</p>	<p>General Practice Nurse</p> <p>Registered Nurse - Adult</p>

Career Framework Level	Level Descriptor	Indicative Requirements to work at this level	Example Indicative Roles
	<p>They play a vital role in providing, leading, coordinating and evaluating care that is compassionate, evidence based, and personalised.</p> <p>They are accountable for their own actions and those who they delegate to and must be able to work autonomously, or as an equal partner with a range of other professionals, including those within the independent sector, voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations, social care, education and justice.</p> <p>They provide care for people who could have complex and concurrent mental, physical, social, cognitive, and behavioural care needs, and support people to manage their own care, where appropriate.</p> <p>They may have responsibility for supervision of staff or training.</p> <p><i>This level may participate in rotations or work across a number of specialisms to consolidate pre-registration learning and build capabilities prior to choosing to specialise further.</i></p>		<p>Registered Nurse – Children</p> <p>Registered Nurse- Mental Health</p> <p>Registered Nurse- Learning Disability</p> <p>Art Therapist</p> <p>Dietitian</p> <p>Paramedic</p> <p>Speech & Language Therapist</p> <p>Physiotherapist</p> <p>Occupational Therapist</p>
Enhanced Level Practice	<p>People at this level require a critical understanding of detailed theoretical and practical knowledge, which can be generalist with a special interest and/or have management and leadership responsibilities.</p>	<p>Enhanced Clinical Practitioner Apprenticeship</p> <p>Appropriate Modules, learning</p>	<p>First Contact Practitioner MSK</p> <p>Telehealth Nurse Advisor</p>

Career Framework Level	Level Descriptor	Indicative Requirements to work at this level	Example Indicative Roles
	<p>They may have specialist knowledge, skills and capabilities.</p> <p>They consult with patients/service users, their family, and the multi-professional team to undertake assessments of patient/service user need and devise and evaluate complex care plans.</p> <p>They evaluate and analyse clinical problems using their clinical knowledge, seeking out and applying relevant evidence, enhanced techniques, interventions, and equipment to make clinical decisions.</p> <p>They deliver enhanced care in the context of continual change, challenging environments, different models of care delivery, innovation and rapidly evolving technologies using analysis and their underpinning knowledge to manage complex interventions.</p> <p>They may teach and advise patients/service users and their families on how to manage their condition, or support the multi-disciplinary team to do so.</p> <p>They participate in audits and research projects and implement changes as required, including the development, and updating of practice protocols/guidelines and procedures locally.</p> <p>They work within national and local protocols where these exist.</p> <p>They recognise boundaries of their practice and know when and to whom patients/service users should be referred.</p> <p>They may delegate work to other members of the multidisciplinary team and take accountability for the delegated activity.</p>	<p>units, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) that enable the delivery of care at a specialist/enhanced level aligned to scope of practice</p>	<p>Respiratory Specialist Practitioner</p> <p>Tissue viability nurse</p> <p>Social Care Occupational Therapist Home Adaptations</p> <p>Children & Young People Diabetes Specialist Dietitian</p> <p>Prison Practitioner - RECONNECT</p>

Career Framework Level	Level Descriptor	Indicative Requirements to work at this level	Example Indicative Roles
	<p>They demonstrate initiative and are creative in finding solutions to problems.</p> <p>They have some responsibility for team performance and service development, and they consistently undertake self-development.</p>		
Advanced Level Practice	<p>People working at this level combine advanced clinical/professional skills with research, education, and clinical leadership within their scope of practice.</p> <p>They have a critical awareness of knowledge issues in the field and at the interface between different fields.</p> <p>They are innovative and have a responsibility for developing and changing practice and/or services in a complex and unpredictable environment.</p> <p>They demonstrate expertise in their scope of practice.</p> <p>They manage care at the highest level independently, from beginning to end, for example from when an individual presents through to the end of the episode, which may include admission, referral or discharge or care at home.</p> <p>They work as part of the wider health and social care team and across traditional professional boundaries.</p>	<p>HEE Centre for Advancing Practice Recognition through successful completion of:</p> <p>A HEE Centre accredited MSc programme which could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MSc Advanced Clinical Practice <p>A portfolio of evidence, validated by the HEE Centre</p>	<p>Advanced Community Access Practitioner</p> <p>Advanced Occupational Therapist - Discharge</p> <p>Advanced Practitioner Community Emergency Medicine</p> <p>Community Matron</p> <p>Advanced Paramedic Practitioner</p>

Career Framework Level	Level Descriptor	Indicative Requirements to work at this level	Example Indicative Roles
	<p>They work across the Integrated Care System and/or regionally – leading and influencing practice development and service improvements.</p> <p>They satisfy all the requirements of Health Education England’s Multi professional Framework for advanced clinical practice.</p>		
<p>Consultant Level Practice</p>	<p>People at this level require highly specialised knowledge, some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work, which they use as the basis for original thinking and/or research.</p> <p>They are leaders with considerable responsibility, and the ability to research and analyse complex processes.</p> <p>They have responsibility for service improvement or development.</p> <p>They generate new knowledge about best treatment and care by actively seeking and implementing best evidence to improve health and care outcomes and experiences for patients/service users and staff.</p> <p>Through ongoing clinical development and research, they apply expert knowledge and lead change strategically across whole systems in their everyday practice.</p> <p>They will operate at the ‘leading edge’ of their profession, developing and consolidating their clinical expertise and research independence through the development of novel, interdisciplinary research, and clinical leadership.</p>	<p>Further appropriate and relevant qualifications which could include, but not limited to:</p> <p>Professional Doctorate</p> <p>PhD (Research)</p> <p>Educational Doctorate (Education)</p>	<p>Consultant Nurse – Primary Care</p> <p>Consultant Frailty Practitioner</p> <p>Consultant Dietitian</p> <p>Consultant Clinical/Forensic Psychologist</p> <p>Enhanced RECONNECT Service</p> <p>Consultant Podiatric Surgeon</p> <p>Approved/Responsible Clinician – Occupational Therapist/Social</p>

Career Framework Level	Level Descriptor	Indicative Requirements to work at this level	Example Indicative Roles
	<p>They lead the transfer and mobilisation of new knowledge and the use of implementation science methods, ensuring that the research undertaken is addressing high-priority questions relating to service delivery, optimising patient/service user experience and outcomes, and that the value and impact of research activity is demonstrated at a service level.</p> <p>They transform the way care is developed and delivered to patients/service users, leading partnerships with those receiving care and the public, clinical academic experts, and other key stakeholders to make improvements locally, nationally, and internationally.</p> <p>They may have considerable service delivery and/or management responsibilities, be accountable for service delivery or have a leading education or commissioning role.</p>		<p>Worker/Mental Health Professional</p>

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Routes to working in in Primary & Community Care



Pre-entry

Individuals with lived experience have a particularly valuable set of skills to bring to the delivery of high quality services within primary and community care settings. People with existing experience, for example, those with informal carer responsibilities for a child, parent or other person; individuals currently working, or who have worked in care homes, schools or similar, and/or individuals engaged in volunteering services which interact with people, have the potential to kick start rewarding careers in the health and care sector.

Potential for employer/wider system to support access and entry to health and care careers.



Support Worker Level Staff

Supported (if applicable) to develop entry level skills and orientated to the care environment.

Potential then to move laterally and vertically across Primary/Community Care and/or undertake Nursing Associate/Assistant Practitioner Training via apprenticeship.



Existing Associate/ Assistant Practitioner Level staff from non-Primary/Community Care role and/or newly qualified staff at this level of practice

Develop portfolio of evidence which demonstrates attained Knowledge and Skills.

May need/want to undertake additional learning relevant to their scope of role.

Opportunity to work across the breadth of Primary/Community Care.

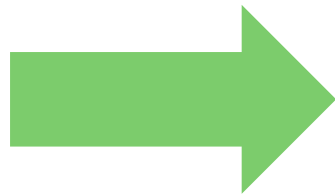


Existing Registered Level staff not presently working in Primary/Community Care and/or newly qualified Registered Professionals

Should discuss with potential employer the opportunity for to work in primary/community care, demonstrating their insight into working in this space.

Undertake appropriate and suitable learning and development relevant for scope of role - with supervision in the workplace.

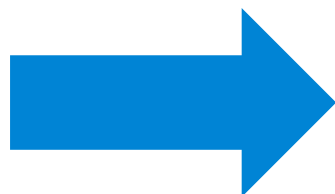
Develop portfolio of evidence which demonstrates as appropriate.



Existing Primary/Community Care Registered Level staff who wish to progress to an Enhanced Level Role or Registered Level Staff from outside Primary/Community Care who work at an Enhanced Level of Practice

Demonstrate through their portfolio where they already have the necessary capabilities to work at an enhanced level.

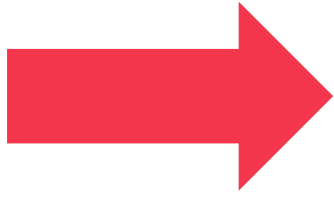
Work in partnership with employers to identify skills and knowledge gaps (which could indicate a need for additional study/CPD).



An Existing Advanced Level Practitioner from another clinical/practice setting

May need/want to undertake additional modules to gain knowledge and skills relevant to primary care/community setting and scope of role.

Develop portfolio of evidence against the framework.



The existing Enhanced Level Practitioner

Individuals who wish to progress into working at an Advanced Level

Must undertake masters level study to gain a minimum of a PG Dip Advanced Clinical Practice with the expectation of a full MSc or undertake ACP Apprenticeship to build on their existing knowledge, skills and expertise – with clinical supervision in the workplace.



Existing Advanced Level Staff who wish to progress to working at Consultant Level

Support from employer and wider health system.

Supported to develop the required additional capabilities as determined by the scope of the role.

Clear, defined purpose of role identified and bought into by others across the system.

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Department of Health and Social Care