



RESPONSE TO THE COMMENTARY

Advanced practitioner roles: relevance and sustainability in a 'liberated' NHS

Elaine Pierce and Ruth Belling

Our aim was to generate interest and debate around the advanced practitioner role and we are pleased that through this communication the process has begun.

Professional organisations both nationally and internationally have been slow in addressing role clarification of the advanced practitioner. This may be because it is an extension of the traditional role for both nurses and allied health professionals and also because of how practitioners are perceived by patients/service users. Hence, local UK National Health Service organisations and employers in other countries have implemented their own forms of clarification to assist workforce planning.

We recognise that there are many other issues outside the scope of this particular paper, which are ripe for debate and discussion, including the increasing use of healthcare assistants in UK healthcare settings.

With regard to 'regulation, registration and licensing', we have referred to these terms in an attempt to be inclusive of the terms used in the differing national contexts described within the paper, for professional regulation. However, in relation to the UK and nursing in particular, a system which more formally recognises the achievement of the advanced practitioner qualification would be a positive step forward and certainly seems possible within the UK's existing regulatory framework. We agree with the comments concerning multidisciplinary working and would encourage further debate to take place within a multidisciplinary context. With regard to patient satisfaction and experience, we agree that research focusing on the broader aspects of patient experience may be more constructive for the future. Nevertheless, as far as we ascertained, the current literature referred only to patient satisfaction with advanced practitioner roles.

We respect and appreciate there are numerous viewpoints and hope the sharing of these different perspectives will encourage and enhance this area of practice.

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