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Advancing Practice in Ophthalmic Nursing

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Advanced Nursing Practice in Ophthalmic Nursing and its Importance in the Provision of Health Care

- Describes advanced nursing practice.
- Outlines the events associated with the evolution of advanced nursing practice and reflects on its origins.
- Follows with the definition, role, educational preparation and Domains of Practice and Competencies (RCN, 2008; NMC, 2005) related to advanced nursing practice.
- Concludes by considering the profession of advanced practice nursing and its expanding role.



Background

- Janet Marsden and Mary E Shaw addressed the development of advanced practice roles in ophthalmic nursing throughout the United Kingdom (UK) in 2007.
- Paper provided a snapshot of advanced practice roles in ophthalmic nursing.
- Ophthalmologists, rather than nurses who control many of the parameters of the role of advanced practice and provide much of the training and assessment related to advanced practice.



Changes in the NHS

- *New Deal for Junior Doctors* (National Health Service Management Executive, 1991)
- *Making a Difference* (DoH, 1999)
- *NHS Plan* (DoH, 2000)
- Medical and allied health professionals are diminishing in numbers and in some instances no longer available to provide this care.
- Recommendations made by the British Medical Association (BMA, 2002).
- Chief Nurse for England consultation document of July 2004 (DoH, 2004)
- Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC, 2005) decision to open a second part of the register to record an Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP) qualification.



Origins of the Advanced Practice Role in the UK

- A response to a demand in health care.
- Shortage of doctors in primary and secondary care.
- Legitimized with the reduction in junior hospital doctors' hours in acute care (Cox, 2001) and the paper published by the BMA (BMA 2002) .
- According to Marsden and Shaw (2007:121), advanced practice development in ophthalmic nursing “has often been perceived to be reactive and haphazard”.



Drivers of the Role

- Drivers of the role in relation to ophthalmic nursing have been a lack of experienced ophthalmic doctors, reconfiguration of services, a reduction in doctors' hours because of new working patterns, the requirement for improved patient care, reducing waiting times for appointments and emergency care (Marsden and Shaw, 2007).



Origins of the Advanced Practice Role in the UK

- An emphasis on advanced nursing practice occurred in the context of a post-modern culture, with increased professionalization of health care, a fundamental emphasis on interprofessional working, an increasing consumerist approach to health and a move away from the traditional biomedical model of health care towards a more holistic approach that has an increased emphasis on improving the health care experience for patients (Colyer, 2004).



Origins of the Advanced Practice Role in the UK

- Advanced practice in ophthalmic nursing has been primarily medically driven (Marsden and Shaw, 2007) ophthalmic nurses have been at the forefront of advanced practice, facilitating cost effective care and positive patient outcomes (Marsden and Shaw, 2007; Czuber-Dochan et al., 2006) for a number of years.



Origins of the Advanced Practice Role in the UK

- A response throughout the UK for educational institutions to provide the knowledge, and in some instances generate the knowledge that addresses the need for appropriately trained advanced practice nurses/advanced nurse practitioners (Horrocks et al, 2002).



Delineation of Advanced Practice

- *adjusting the boundaries for the development of future practice, pioneering and developing new roles responsive to changing needs and with advancing clinical practice, research and education to enrich professional practice as a whole (UKCC, 1994:20).*
- The requirement for education at Master's degree level or the ability to demonstrate master's level knowledge, patient/family-focused practice and an expanded role. In the UK advanced practice is associated with competencies articulated in the RCN (2008) and the NMC (2005) Domains of Practice.



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Delineation of Advanced Practice

- *Advanced nurse practitioners are highly experienced, knowledgeable and educated members of the care team who are able to diagnose and treat your health care needs or refer you to an appropriate specialist if needed (NMC, 2006).*



Skills of the Advanced Nurse Practitioner (NMC, 2006)

- **Undertakes a comprehensive patient history**
- **Undertakes physical examinations**
- **Uses expert knowledge and clinical judgment to identify the potential diagnosis**
- **Refers patients for investigations where appropriate**
- **Makes a final diagnosis**
- **Decides on and carries out treatment, including the prescribing of medicines, or refers patients to an appropriate specialist**
- **Uses extensive practice experience to plan and provide skilled and competent care to meet patients' health and social care needs, involving other members of the health care team**
- **Ensures the provision of continuity of care including follow-up visits**
- **Assesses and evaluates, with patients, the effectiveness of the treatment and care provided and makes changes as needed**
- **Works independently, although often as part of a health care team**
- **Provides leadership and**
- **Makes sure that each patient's treatment and care is based on best practice. (NMC, 2006)**



Delineation of Advanced Practice

- *Advanced nursing practice can be defined as a set of skills that involve the undertaking of: taking a clinical history, performing a physical examination, performing appropriate investigations including, for example, proctoscopy and endoscopy, prescribing treatments following agreed protocols based on research or consensus and providing advice and counselling on prognosis and management (Mayberry and Mayberry, 2003:38).*



Delineation of Advanced Practice

- *A role that is not one for which the nurse received education in their general or ophthalmic training and one that is seen as new role for ophthalmic nursing with greater autonomy and accountability than would normally be expected (Marsden and Shaw, 2007:122).*
- *A registered nurse who has undertaken a specific course of study of at least first degree (Honours) level (RCN, 2008:3).*
- *Advanced practice nurses work alongside doctors, practice autonomously and are legally responsible for the care they provide. They make clinical decisions based on investigations and subsequently can treat patients independently (Cox, 2004: Forward vii –viii).*



Role of the Advanced Practice Nurse

- Physical examinations, diagnosis and treatment of illnesses, ordering and interpreting tests independently of the doctor, establishing preventive health care through health promotion and education, prescribing medications, managing caseloads based on a population perspective that ideally includes individuals, families and/or communities and using business and management strategies for the provision of quality care and efficient use of resources.
- The model of care provided by the advanced practice nurse has been identified as making an important contribution to quality, cost-effective care (Cox and Hall, 2007).



Activities Associated With the Advanced Practice Role That Ophthalmic Nurses Undertake

- Emergency care
- Nurse-led cataract clinics
- Minor surgery including procedures such as incision and drainage of chalazions and removal of papilomas
- Yag laser capsulotomy and iridotomy clinics
- Nurse-led glaucoma clinics
- Nurse led fluorescein angiography clinics
- Pre-assessment
- Post op cataract care
- Botulinum toxin.



Educational Preparation

- Addressing the determinants of health and working with others in the primary, secondary and tertiary care setting to integrate a range of activities that promote, protect and improve the health of the patient/client population served;
- Functioning in new health care settings and interdisciplinary teams that are designed to meet the primary, secondary and tertiary health care needs of the public, with an emphasis on high quality, cost-effective integrated care;
- Managing and continuously using scientific, technological and patient information that leads to the maintenance of professional competence throughout clinical practice life;
- Gaining advanced assessment skills used in the provision of care in primary, secondary and tertiary health care settings;
- Diagnosing, screening, treatment and case management of care in primary, secondary and tertiary health care settings;
- Prescribing and supplying drugs, independently and/or according to patient group directions, in primary, secondary and tertiary health care settings;
- Providing emotional support, counselling, referral and discharge in primary, secondary and tertiary health care settings.



NMC (2005) Domains of Practice and Competencies

- Domains of Practice as specified by the NMC (2005) are:
- The nurse-patient relationship
- Respecting culture and diversity
- Management of patient illness/health status
- Education function
- Professional role
- Managing and negotiating health care delivery systems
- Monitoring and ensuring quality of health care practice.



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RCN (2008) Domains of Practice and Competencies

- Assessment and management of patient illness/health status
- The nurse/patient relationship
- The education function
- Professional role
- Managing and negotiating health care delivery systems
- Monitoring and ensuring quality of advanced health care practice
- Respecting culture and diversity.



Ophthalmic Nursing and Future Directions of Advanced Clinical Practice Nursing

- **There must be nurses prepared, through appropriate educational programmes, to meet the changing needs of a reformed health care system. In addition, it must be remembered that nursing is more than and different to the sum of its parts and must articulate its unique nature and professional perspective within advanced practice. “It is more than an aggregation of tasks captured and/or recaptured from other professionals” (Fralic, 1985:292).**
- **Ophthalmic nurses approach a patient care situation from a very distinct and different perspective to that of medicine.**
- **Ophthalmic nursing’s perspective is holistic in its approach to caring.**
- **In advanced practice nursing, ophthalmic nurses approach the patient care situation from a perspective which addresses the total constellation of care needs of the patient.**