Getting Started – The Public Health Nurses Guide to Commencing the Process of Developing an Advanced Nurse Practitioner Role within the Community

Irish Nurses Organisation

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# Table of Contents

Foreword ......................................................................................................................... 1

Introduction ..................................................................................................................... 3

Advanced Nursing Practice ............................................................................................ 4

    Community Advanced Nursing Practice ................................................................. 4

Establishing an Advanced Nurse Practitioner Role ...................................................... 5

Outlining a Business Case for Advanced Nurse Practitioner Post in the Public Health Nursing Service ................................................................. 6

    Identify the need for the specific ANP post......................................................... 7
    Benefits of the post..................................................................................... 7
    Case-load ............................................................................................. 7
    Funding .............................................................................................. 8
    Service planning process ..................................................................... 8
    Bibliography ...................................................................................... 8

Template of Advanced Nurse Practitioner Job Description ..................................... 9

Site Preparation ............................................................................................................. 12

Summary of the Two Part Process for the Establishment of ANP Post and the Accreditation of ANP ......................................................................................... 16

References ...................................................................................................................... 17
Over the past decades, multifaceted demographic, economic, political and social transformations have had a significant impact on the patterns and dynamics of delivering healthcare. The Irish health system and other health systems throughout the world have been under mounting pressure to balance increasing service demands within the resources available whilst ensuring patient safety and quality of care. Governments and health services have developed policies and made structural and resource adjustments to meet the demographic and epidemiological changes.

The National Section of Public Health Nurses of the Irish Nurses Organisation (INO) established a working group to discuss the issue of advanced nursing practice within the community and investigate how to support the development of such roles, with particular reference to the public health nurses.

The National Council for the Professional Development of Nursing and Midwifery has defined the role of the advanced nurse/midwife practitioner (ANP/AMP) in Ireland and established a framework for the establishment of ANP/AMP posts. The framework requires services to gain approval for job descriptions and site preparation and for individual nurses and midwives to gain accreditation in order for ANP/AMP services to be established.

The aim of the working group was to produce a document in the form of a resource guide, to assist and support public health nurse members in commencing the process towards establishing Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP) positions. Mary Power, Section Development Officer was the Coordinator of the Project and was supported by the working group which included:-

- Neil Dunne, Public Health Nurse, Dublin South City District
- Grainne Dowdall, Health Services Executive, Traveller Health Specialist.
- Marie Faughey, Director of Public Health Nursing, Dublin South
- Eileen O’ Farrell, Public Health Nurse, Rowlagh Health Centre, Clondalkin
- Amanda Phelan, Lecturer, School of Nursing & Midwifery, University College Dublin

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their support and assistance in developing this publication. In addition the INO wish to thank my colleagues on the working group and commend their interest and dedication for producing this document over the intervening year.

It is the aspiration of the National Section of Public Health Nurses that this document will facilitate and inform public health nurses contemplating the pursuance of an ANP role, and that it will act as a roadmap to the ANP process and assist in clarifying the ANP application requirements. The INO hopes that this document will support potential ANP candidates and services thereby positively impacting on the number of ANP’s in Public Health Nursing in the future.
Introduction

Significant changes have occurred in Ireland since public health nursing was established. Demographic and epidemiological influences have shaped the health of individuals, communities and society. Perhaps the most significant impact on nursing and midwifery has been the implementation of the recommendations of the Report of the Commission on Nursing – Blueprint for the Future (Government of Ireland 1998). Part of the main functioning of the National Council for the Professional Development of Nursing and Midwifery (National Council) as determined by the Report of the Commission on Nursing (1998) is to bring about a coherent approach to the progression of specialisation and the development of career pathways for nurses and midwives. In addition the role of the National Council is to monitor the ongoing development of nursing specialities, taking into account changes in practice and service need (Government of Ireland 1998).

To this end the National Council has developed a definition and core concepts of the role of advanced nurse practitioner. The document Framework for the Establishment of Advanced Nurse and Advanced Midwife Practitioner Posts outlines the process separately for approval of posts and accreditation of advanced nurse practitioners (National Council 2004).

In June 2005 the National Council published the Agenda for the Future Professional Development of Nursing and Midwifery (National Council 2005). The report recognises the uniqueness of public health nurses among community healthcare providers delivering and contributing to area-based services across a variety of communities and population groups underpinned by the philosophy of primary healthcare and health promotion.

The purpose of this guide is to inform public health nurses regarding the pursuit of advanced practice in the community. The National Council has delineated a specific framework within which advanced practice must be developed (NCNM 2004). This involves not only a commitment from the public health nurse in terms of education and clinical experience, but agreement from the relevant Health Services Executive regarding the establishment of the particular post. Each post needs to be individually negotiated and developed, with the development of an extensive professional portfolio by the potential ANP, in order to fulfil the National Council accreditation requirements. It is important to note that when considering the development of a post and applying for accreditation of an advanced nurse practitioner in the community, it is essential that the Framework for the Establishment of Advanced Nurse and Advanced Midwife Practitioner Posts published by the National Council is adhered to.
Advanced Nursing Practice

Advanced nursing practice represents a relatively new advancement in the scope of practice in nursing and midwifery. This development commenced in the United States, first with nurse anaesthetists and later with clinical nurse specialists (CNS), nurse-midwives and primary care practitioners. The first formal education in advanced practice was in the area of paediatrics and was established in the University of Colorado in 1965 by Loretta Ford and Henry Silver.

International interpretations of the advanced nurse practitioner’s (ANP) role are diverse, with differing legislative and regulatory mechanisms, prescriptive authority, role function, education preparation, scope of practice and role evaluation (ICN 2001). Central to the ANP role are additional competencies in a defined area of knowledge which incorporates an integration of research, intra and inter disciplinary collaboration, professional and clinical leadership, autonomy in practice, clinical expertise and teaching (Andrews 2001, Pearson & Peels 2002, National Council 2004). It may be argued that nurses at different levels exhibit similar qualities, however, the ANP practices at higher levels of clinical autonomy, accountability, responsibility and authority.

Community Advanced Nursing Practice

The role of advanced nursing practice in the community encompasses a leadership role in applying the nursing process and public health sciences to achieve specific positive outcomes for the client base of the community. The preparation of advanced nurse practitioners for a community setting is consistent with the reorientation of healthcare systems to a primary healthcare basis, which was formally initiated by the World Health Organisation through the Alma Ata Declaration (1978). Twinn (2003) points out that an essential principle of the community ANP is the promotion of a ‘wellness’ model of health rather than a curative model. This should include individual, family, community and population focused work (employing local and national epidemiological data), multi agency work, practice development and policy formulation. A primary focus should centre upon preventative care in terms of screening, case finding and subsequent diagnostic practice. Because of the diversity of practice in public health nursing, it is likely that future community ANP pathways are based within distinct areas, such as working with ethnic groups, family violence, community development, or screening for example. However, services should be innovative and creative in their thinking around ANP pathways that are based on service need. Once distinct areas are established, further development of roles will be ongoing to match the dynamic needs of individual populations.
This document articulates general guidelines for potential community ANP’s. Currently Ireland does not have any accredited ANP’s in the area of public health nursing. The following guidelines are both broad and general and may be subject to change in the future. They are intended to provide an overview of the process from negotiating the role to accreditation. However, each ANP may have differing experiences within the sequential pathway to accreditation. The National Council, reflecting on ANP posts that have been approved to date in Ireland, conclude that they have arisen in general from patient/client needs in their particular areas and that their development has been largely down to the creativity and leadership of all those involved (National Council 2004). In order to significantly relate the number of accredited ANPs to health service needs, the National Council recommends the development of the ANPs role and service as part of the overall strategic plan for health care in Ireland.

**Establishing an Advanced Nurse Practitioner Role**

The National Council for the Professional Development of Nursing and Midwifery was established on recommendations arising out of the Commission on Nursing (Government of Ireland 1998). In its mission statement the National Council concerns itself with the development of the professional role of the nurses and midwives with the goal of ensuring the delivery of quality nursing care to patients/clients in a changing health care environment (National Council 2002).

The National Council set about creating a framework for the establishment of advanced nurse practitioner and clinical nurse specialist roles. To be officially accredited to work as an advanced nurse practitioner it is necessary for a job description and site preparation to be approved by the National Council. As part of the development of a job description it is vital to identify and demonstrate the need for an ANP post by reviewing national and regional policy documents relevant to the service area. The role must develop in the context of current heath and social policy, the service planning process and the requirements of population health.

Where a need for a new role has been identified, the National Council suggests that it may be useful to examine national and international experience in relation to how appropriate and effective similar roles have been. Based on the evaluation that a public health nursing advanced practice post is legitimate and that the local community service deems an ANP post necessary, it is the responsibility of the Director of Public Health Nursing within the local area to use the service planning process to seek funding. The National Council also advises the Director of Public Health Nursing in conjunction with the advanced nurse practitioner candidate to work closely with the regional Director of the Nursing and Midwifery Policy Development Unit (NMPDU) regarding parameters of role and regional developments.

5
After approval, the National Council requires the applicant to undergo the process of accreditation laid down in their recently revised framework (*Framework for the Establishment of Advanced Nurse Practitioner and Advanced Midwife Practitioner Posts, 2004*). The National Council has identified four core concepts in advanced nursing practice; autonomy in clinical practice, demonstration of expert practice, ability to show professional and clinical leadership and finally a commitment to research (National Council 2004). The National Council’s framework for the establishment of ANPs/AMPs posts states that ‘*the nurse/midwife must be educated to masters degree level (or higher) and …have a minimum of 7 years post-registration experience, which will include 5 years experience in the chosen area of specialist practice*’ (NCNM 2004). In order to ensure advanced practice remains within the context of nursing the National Council stipulates that development of the post must be grounded in the theory and practice of nursing incorporating nursing/midwifery and other related research.

Where an applicant has been accredited as an ANP they will be issued with a certificate of accreditation bearing the seal of the National Council. The title will be granted for a five-year period valid as long as the person continues to hold the approved post. Re-accreditation requires that the ANP post holder demonstrates to the National Council that the requirements for the initial application continue to be met. A submission of re-accreditation form and a portfolio up-date are recommended by the National Council at least six months before the current period of accreditation expires.

**Outlining a Business Case for an Advanced Nurse Practitioner Post in the Public Health Nursing Service**

This section focuses on the main areas to be addressed when applying for an ANP post for the public health nursing service. It must be emphasised that there is no generic process. The National Council criteria are explicit that each post’s merit must be based on service need. This means that:

- Each ANP post identified must be backed up by a clear outline of the benefits to the organisation.
- Outcomes associated by the creation of an additional post are tangible.
- The added value to the service, client and organisation is explained.

The following section may appear to mirror what is already covered in other sections, however, the emphasis here is on the Health Service Executive (HSE) as an organisation and how this post contributes to its organisational goals.
Identify the need for the specific Advanced Nurse Practitioner post

The section draws on local needs analysis including: service plans, annual reports and review of demographic data. It is recommended to utilise and draw on national policy documents which will support the post development (for example, the Census, Department of Health and Children Strategies, Expert Reports). It is important to include background details of the current service.

If possible use tools which will provide a population health focus on both the need and benefits of the post. For example, consideration should be given by Directors of Public Health Nursing to undertake training in Health Impact Assessment. It is important that the need and data relate specifically to the post identified for example, number of older persons, where the service does not exist at present.

Benefits of the post

This section should include potential benefits for clients, the service, staff and the organisation.

- **Clients**: benefits of a locally based service, include current waiting times or gaps in service, state the interventions that will have maximum health and social gain for client. Ability of post holder to help clients/families to lead an optimal lifestyle within their communities.

- **Staff**: improved resources within the service, all direct referral pathways developed or ones which can potentially be developed.

- **Organisation**: how the creation of the post links with organisational goals, contributes to identified organisational priorities or national policy priorities.

In addition:

- Emphasis on the necessary aspects of clinical leadership in the post.
- Include a research component and how this post can spearhead policy in relation to public health nursing.
- Explain how the benefits of the post will be evaluated for transparency and accountability. Include concrete outcomes such as reduced re-admission to hospital, reduction of falls, consultation times if appropriate and especially client satisfaction evaluation.

Case-load

In this section it is important to identify clearly the key components of the role. All ANP posts must have case management included and therefore optimal numbers should be suggested. Other areas to include are:
• Objectives for the key result areas that have been developed to include target indicators and expected outcomes where relevant.

• Highlight the collaborative working for inclusion in the case-load.

• Outline how key stakeholders have been involved to date in agreeing collaborative working arrangements, including supervision by hospital consultants or primary care physicians.

• An outline job description where the ANP components are visible. This should include what advanced clinical skills, consultancy and diagnostic practice are needed and what direct access to diagnostic services is envisaged.

• A population health approach focusing on preventative care, screening and case finding.

**Funding**

• List all staffing costs and other resource implications, space and equipment needed, to include the costs for diagnostic services, ICT, clerical support if applicable.

• State and outline if alternative sources of funding are available or have been negotiated. The National Council may consider funding for site preparation facilitation and all applications must be processed as outlined on the National Council’s website: www.ncnm.ie. Applications should be made whilst the post is in development and awaiting approval.

• How the post will be supported through nursing management and if any additional educational funding is required also requires inclusion.

**Service planning process**

It is important to be familiar with the service planning process of the HSE to ensure that deadlines for submission are not missed. Ensure all requirements of the service planning process are fulfilled, for example, sign-off by Local Hospital Office manager and Nursing and Midwifery Planning and Development Unit (NMPDU). Involve key stakeholders in the HSE in supporting the post. In addition it is important at an early stage to meet with the regional NMPDU regarding support to establish the post.

**Bibliography**

If possible include a bibliography to support the application.
The following is an example of an ANP job description in population health pertaining to Travellers health. The template provided by the National Council for the Professional Development of Nursing & Midwifery is used to provide brief examples of what should be included. Specific job descriptions need considerable elaboration and must be relevant to local service needs.

### Example of Role Description

**Job title**
Advanced Nurse Practitioner - Travellers Health.

**Grade**
Advanced Nurse Practitioner.

**Whole time equivalent hours**
39 hours per week.

**Reporting relationships**
- Professionally accountable to the Director of Public Health Nursing.
- Clinically accountable to named professional member of the healthcare team relevant to population health, for example, another ANP or GP specialising in Traveller Health.

**Location**
- Health Region relevant to area population of Travellers.

**Background to post**
- Current service needs.
- ANP - Travellers Health is placed within the Public Health Nursing services where there is a defined population of Travellers, e.g. ratio: 1 ANP:500 Traveller Families (*National Traveller Health Strategy 2002-2005*).
- Post developed in response to recommendations from *National Travellers Health Strategy and National Antipoverty Strategy* (NAPS) [In addition, supporting details of recommendations etc should be included].

**Purpose of post**
- Manage the health and social needs of Travellers including being a specialist advisor to complement the Public Health Nursing services to the Traveller Community.
Example of Responsibilities

Clinical practice
A detailed example is not possible in this example but some broad responsibilities are given below:

Autonomy
- Caseload - population of 500 Traveller families in a region.

Expert practice
- Works with Traveller Health Unit, National Traveller Health. Advisory Committee, Social Inclusion Managers, Primary Care teams etc.
- Outline the level of clinical decision making and scope of practice including: population health planning/cultural appropriate health service design, community health and social needs assessments and health innovations to meet those needs identified.
- Level of autonomy for the management and co-ordination of the scope of practice above.
- Practical and theoretical knowledge required for the role would include: community development approach, service planning and needs assessments, Traveller culture, social analysis and cultural diversity etc.
- Expert resource and specialist on Traveller health to Traveller community and groups.

Professional and clinical leadership
As a broad example this section would include details and references from the following aspects of the scope of practice:
- Expanding areas of nursing practice to include, social analysis and cultural diversity.
- Population health issues and community health and social needs.
- Multi-disciplinary approaches and community participation at all levels.
- Peer-led initiative such as the Traveller Primary Health Care Projects.
- Local, regional and national partnerships of relevant stakeholders.
- Linking population health issues to determinants of health.
- Social needs, poverty and social inclusion seen as health related issues.
- Expanding nurse training to include community development and social analysis.
- Developing a partnership approach to health services - from needs analysis, to planning and service delivery.

Research
- Ongoing research and evaluation to support best practice relating to Traveller health and service needs.
- Service plans to support the National Traveller Health Strategy, equality proofed and anti-poverty proofed.
- All research on Traveller health to be developed and carried out in partnership with Travellers.
- Development of quality management programme in relation to Traveller Health.

Example of Person Specification

Qualifications

Essential
- Registered General Nurse and Registered Public Health Nurse.
- Masters degree (or higher) in nursing or an area which is relevant to the specialist field of practice, e.g. primary health care/population health/cultural diversity/health promotion.

Desirable
- Community development training/cultural diversity training.

Experience

Essential
The applicant must have:
- Five years extensive experience in Traveller health.

Desirable
- Involvement in service planning / community needs assessment.

Competencies
- The core competencies for ANP/AMP as defined by the National Council.
- Specific competencies for the role including: cultural awareness / equality & antiracism advocacy/motivator and innovator.

Terms of service
- In accordance with HSE - Human Resources.

Source: Adapted from the National Council for the Professional Development of Nursing and Midwifery Job Description Template
Site Preparation

The site preparation is carried out in consultation with the applicant, nursing managers, health service provider and key stakeholders. The aim of this process is to demonstrate that the Health Service Provider has given sufficient consideration to the employment of an Advanced Nurse Practitioner. This consideration must include continued support and integration of existing and future multi-disciplinary teams and certain criteria must be addressed. The most critical elements for development include the following:

Healthcare requirements

**Criterion:** The healthcare requirements to be met by the ANP as identified within service plan and/or client/patient feedback

**Supporting Evidence**
- Clinical audit.
- Service evaluation/review.
- Policy document for example, Primary Care Strategy.
- Nursing and midwifery literature.
- Epidemiological and demographic data, for example, new urban areas.
- Caseload analysis.
- National and International developments in best practice, for example breast feeding.

Governing legislation, regulations and rules

**Criterion:** Clear understanding of the legislation, rules and regulations that govern nursing practice

**Supporting Evidence**
- Relevant legislation, regulations, rules and guidelines that govern practice in the ANP area of practice, for example, working within current legislation, own scope of practice and locally agreed protocols.
- Possibility of expanding an area of practice within a chosen field in the future for example, nurse prescribing.
Insurance

Criterion: Ensure that service insurance arrangements incorporate all aspects of the post

Supporting Evidence
- Copies of communication with insurers in which the role and scope of the ANP is outlined.
- Correspondence should also verify that the insurers are satisfied that the changes will be incorporated within the standard insurance agreements.

Collaborative guidelines

Criterion: Ensure that guidelines for good practice are developed collaboratively

Supporting Evidence
- Guidelines developed to support role together with a framework to allow ongoing review and development.
- Details of contributions from key stakeholders to the guidelines.

Benefits

Criterion: Determine how patient /clients will benefit from ANP service

Supporting Evidence
- Identify projected outcomes to patient/client service.
- Indicate current level of service.
- Indicate projected level of service when the ANP established.

Service philosophy

Criterion: Ascertain that the service to be provided will be in line with service philosophy

Supporting Evidence
- Include a copy of service philosophy or mission statement.
- Outline how role will fit in with the existing philosophy.
**Contribution to service plan**

**Criterion:** How will the ANP contribute to service plan

**Supporting Evidence**
- Identify the section of service plan to which the ANP will work within, outlining how they will support the stated aims within the plan.

**Location suitability**

**Criterion:** Give consideration to the optimal location of the service

**Supporting Evidence**
- Outline the rationale for the location of service, highlighting practical advantages for the chosen location.

**Integration**

**Criterion:** Give consideration to the integration of the ANP into existing multi-disciplinary teams highlighting its effect on the workload of other health professionals

**Supporting Evidence**
- Statement indicating the relationship of the role to other members of the multi-disciplinary team including referral procedures, communication networking and areas of responsibility.
- Statement to how role development was negotiation or managed.
- Explicit clarification of team member roles, for example, public health nurse managers, clinical nurse specialists, public health nurses, staff nurses and others as appropriate.

**Responsibility, authority and accountability**

**Criterion:** Define role within the framework of nursing/midwifery practice identifying areas of responsibility, level of authority and channels of accountability

**Supporting Evidence**
- Document how role fits in within existing nursing/midwifery framework, including reporting and accountability structures.
**Resources**

**Criterion:** Identify resource implications:

- Support Staff, for example, secretarial support.
- Equipment and facilities, for example, designated office and clinical space; computer; telephone.
- Diagnostic and treatment equipment.
- Access to research via library facilities, CIT, internet access and opportunity to network.
- Opportunities to engage in continued professional development.
- Facilities to audit and evaluate own work, take part in research and to develop/provide evidenced based services.
- Liaison arrangements with an appropriate third level educational institution.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Statement enumerating the resources required to develop and maintain the role and how the role will continue to be resourced taking into consideration developments in the role and service.
- Financial approval form.

The National Council offers support throughout the site preparation process and in some circumstances may require a visit to the site and to meet members of the multi-disciplinary team. The National Council will work with applicants at each stage of their application process. In addition, workshops are run throughout the year to support applicants and to provide networking opportunities. It is therefore recommended if the development of an ANP post is being considered that advice is sought from the National Council from an early stage.
Summary of the Two Part Process for the Establishment of ANP Posts and the Accreditation of ANP

Part 1: Application by the Health Care Organisation for Approval of Job Description and Site Preparation

1. Identify a Need or Gap in the Community Service
2. Job Description
3. Site Preparation
4. Submission of Application to the Nursing Midwifery Planning and Development Unit
5. Submitted by the Nursing Midwifery Planning & Development Unit to the National Council for the Professional Development of Nursing and Midwifery
6. Review by the National Council Accreditation Committee
7. Decision on the Approval of the Post

Part 2: Application by the Public Health Nurse for Accreditation as a ANP

1. Application Form and Portfolio Preparation
2. Reviewed by the Director of Public Health Nursing
3. Submission of Application to the National Council for the Professional Development of Nursing and Midwifery
4. Review of Application by the National Council Accreditation Committee Decision on Accreditation as Advanced Nurse Practitioner
5. Five-year review
References


