

South-West Review of Allied Health Professionals (AHPs) and Pharmacists in Advanced Practice

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This paper has been prepared for the South-West Advanced Practice Faculty by:

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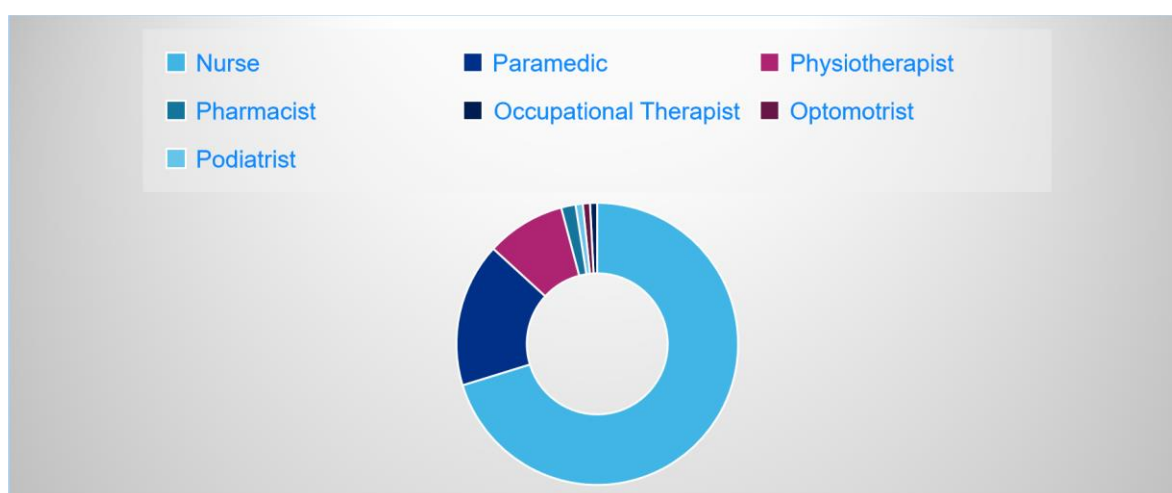
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Background

The HEE 2017 Multi Professional Framework for Advanced Practice outlines that ‘evidence consistently shows that multi-professional team working delivers better outcomes for patients and more effective and satisfying work for clinicians’ and strives to ‘enable and strengthen support [...] across the non-medical workforce.’

The South-West Advancing Practice Faculty analysed submissions on the 2021/22 scoping returns and subsequent funded places onto AP courses by profession. It showed that representation across the breadth of Health Professions was limited; 81% of funded Advanced Practice training places were offered to practitioners from 2 professional groups (64% Nursing, 16.5% Paramedic).

Scoping Data (2021-22) from SW Advancing Practice submissions shows 85 nursing trainee Advanced Practice places vs 36 AHPs, Pharmacists & Other.



There isn't a cap on submissions and the obvious questions are;

- Why aren't there more submissions from across the numerous professional backgrounds?
- Are we realising the potential of the multi-professional workforce at Advanced Practice level in the southwest?

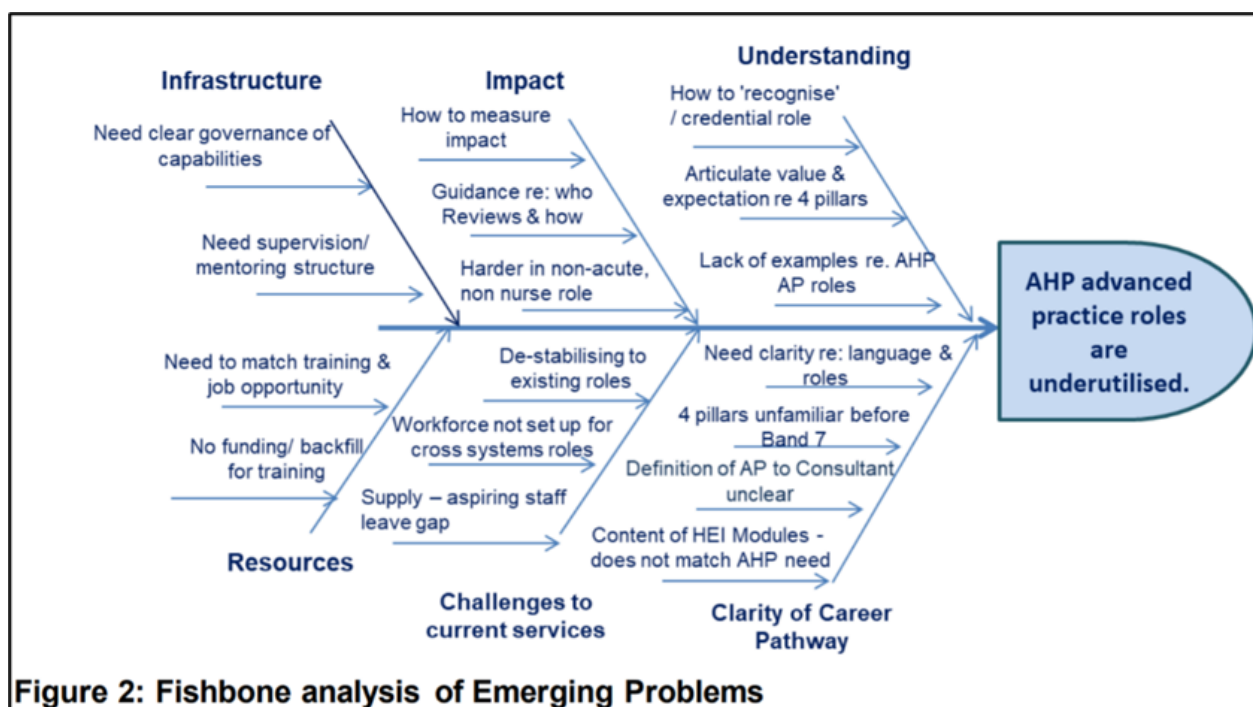
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Scoping of existing reports and research

HEE South-East AHP Fellows

AHP Workforce Fellows in the South-East completed the “Spotlight on AHPs in Advanced and Consultant Practice” project from November 2020 to April 2021. This succinctly described the issues and barriers facing AHPs in the South-East wishing to access advanced practice in the specialities of Mental Health and Community rehabilitation.

The themes that emerged from this piece of work are summarised in the following diagram:



A similar scoping activity was completed by Alannah Pasokhy-Holmes for the Dorset AHP Faculty in 2021, which matched the themes of barriers and opportunities for AHPs.

Published reports and papers

The wider published literature has been reviewed alongside this document, including that around the Pharmacy workforce. Key papers identified as of January 2022 alongside key quotes that link into the themes identified by the “Spotlight on AHPs...” are shown below:

Paper	
Stewart-Lord et al. Role and Development of ACP within AHPs	<p>Objective: To investigate the profiles of advanced clinical practitioners (ACPs) in the allied health professions (AHPs) and their skills, attributes, experiences and involvement in new models of care.</p> <p>Conclusion: This is the first comprehensive profile of ACP roles across AHPs and indicates that these roles are already having a positive impact on healthcare services and supporting new models of care. However, establishing the necessary infrastructure, standardization and governance for ACP roles across sectors, along with the career pathways, funding, sustainability and education, could increase impact in the future.</p>

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Lawler et al Workforce experience paper	<p>Background: This study aims to understand how the implementation of the advanced clinical practice framework in England (2017) was experienced by the workforce to check assumptions for a national workforce modelling project. The advanced clinical practice framework was introduced in England in 2017 by Health Education England to clarify the role of advanced practice in the National Health Service.</p> <p>Conclusions: Efforts to establish further clarity and structure around advanced clinical practice are needed for both the individuals practising at this level and their employers. A robust evaluation of the introduction of this role should take place.</p>
Pharmacy Education - ACP Pharmacy role in England 2020	<p>Objectives: Advanced clinical practice (ACP) (pharmacy) aims to address workforce challenges within the rapidly changing, complex National Health Service (NHS) landscape in England. This review explores the current role, scope of practice and impact of ACP, with a focus on pharmacists.</p> <p>Conclusion: To further develop and sustain ACP, it is essential for future work to focus on evaluating impact of the role.</p>
HEE Clever Together AP Scoping report 2019	<p>This report sought views from across the workforce on issues raised by emergence of ACP and to guide development of these roles. Feedback was split into themes of ‘impact on patient care’, ‘workforce implications’, ‘assurance mechanisms’ and ‘other ideas’. This paper is not specific to any profession, but contributions were made by AHPs and Pharmacists.</p>
HCPC Advanced Practice Research Report	<p>“This study was undertaken to explore these issues and seek opinion on the need for additional regulatory measures for persons working at an advanced practice level.”</p> <p>“The study data presented in this report reflect the complexity of the concept of advanced practice within the HCPC regulated professions.”</p> <p>“Despite this, there is no clear evidence, based on the findings of this research, that additional regulation of advanced level practice is needed, or desired, to protect the public. However, as the HCPC is one of the few organisations with a UK wide remit, it may have a central role in achieving unification across the 4 nations in relation to the future role expectations, educational standards, and governance of advanced level practice.”</p>
Northern Ireland Advanced AHP Practice Framework	<p><i>Although Northern Ireland is not aligned with the HEE 2017 Multi-Professional Framework, this paper reinforces themes around barriers and possible solutions for development of AHPs into Advanced Practice roles.</i></p> <p>“NI’s Advanced AHP Practice Framework has been developed to provide clarity about the Advanced AHP Practitioner role. It provides a regional approach to addressing the needs of advanced AHP practice within the HSC in NI for application by Trusts, commissioners, education providers, workforce planners and Advanced Practitioners.”</p>

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What constitutes advanced level clinical practice is more problematic as it is variable, dynamic, evolving, responsive to local clinical needs and often considered through a profession specific lens
HCPC 2021

Where roles are shared across professional groups, a threshold clinical competency for one group may be considered advanced level practice when undertaken by another, causing further confusion in interpretation and implementation
HCPC 2021

AHPs often lack a voice as often are not recognised and represented at Board level. This can mean we have to shout louder to get through levels of bureaucracy even when new roles could be innovative and highly cost effective. [...] Better non-medical role development networks are being established but need joining up with leaders
HEE Clever Together 2019

There seems to be a dichotomy developing in terms of implementation of the HEE framework by employers between [ACP] as a level of practice of the registered professional and [ACP] as a novel omni profession role framed in the medical model as opposed to advanced of professional practice.
Lawler et al 2020

ACPs discussed the importance of measuring outcomes from new models of care but they explained that, due to the complexity of patient pathways and interprofessional working, measuring direct impact of the ACP role within the services could be challenges
Stewart-Lord et al 2020

Discrepancies between competencies, training and qualification within the advanced title have created confusion within many professionals
Lawler et al 2020

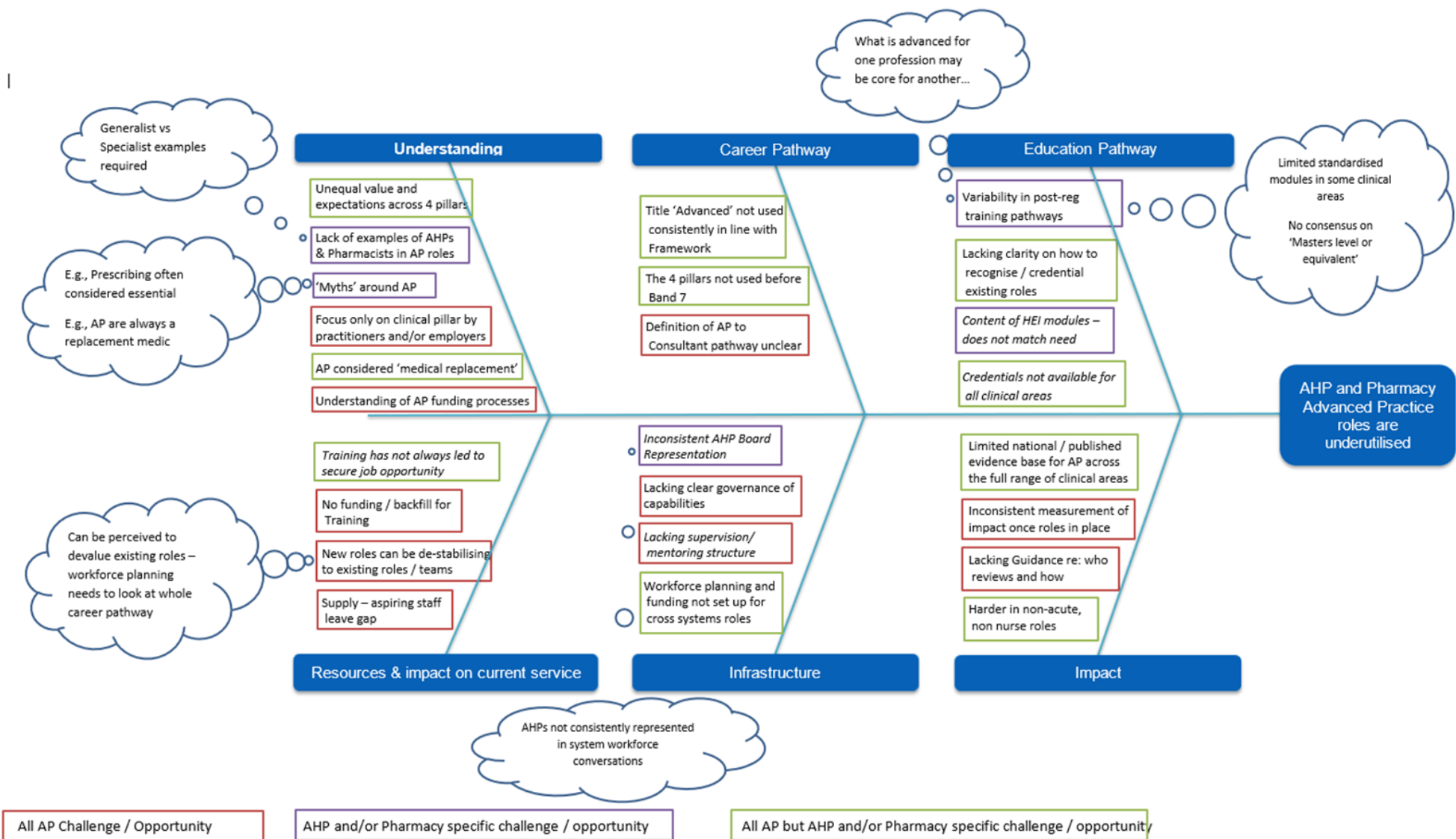
The Professional Bodies for AHPs & Pharmacy's web pages were also reviewed. The majority of professional bodies had either a supporting statement, guidance or framework for Advanced Practice. These have been published at different points in time, with some pre-dating the HEE 2017 Multi-Professional Framework. As a result, there is variation in alignment with the HEE Framework.

Summary of themes

Themes from published papers, discussions with colleagues in the South-West have been combined with the work created in the South-East. The result is an updated overview of the identified barriers and challenges that face the AHP & Pharmacy workforce wishing to progress into Advanced Practice roles.

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Challenges and barriers to AHP & Pharmacy progression into Advanced Practice roles



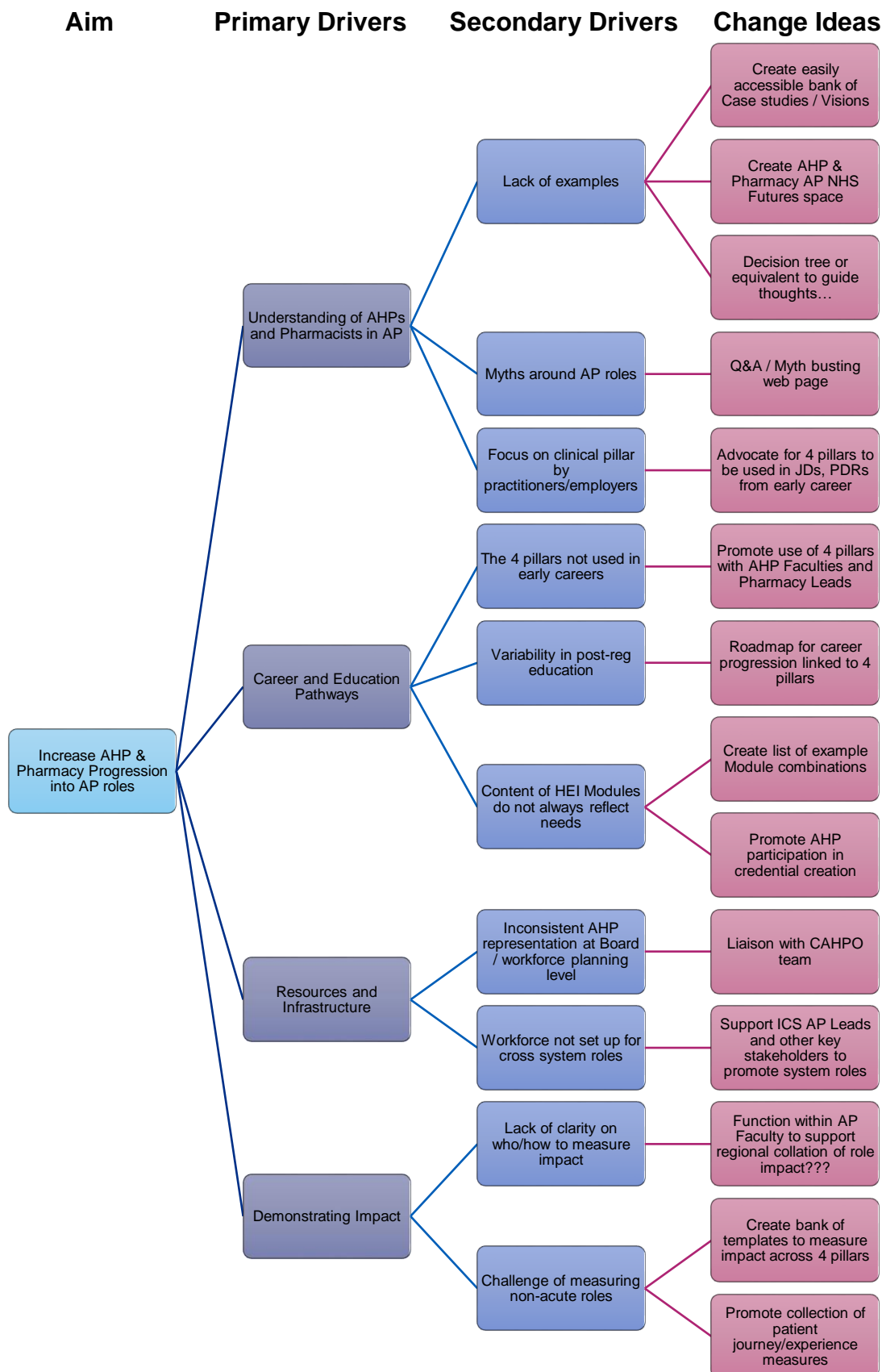
Being explored outside SW AP Faculty

Not being explored outside SW AP Faculty

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Recommendations and next steps

The areas of AHP and/or Pharmacy Specific challenges, along with some initial change ideas, have been summarised in this driver diagram:



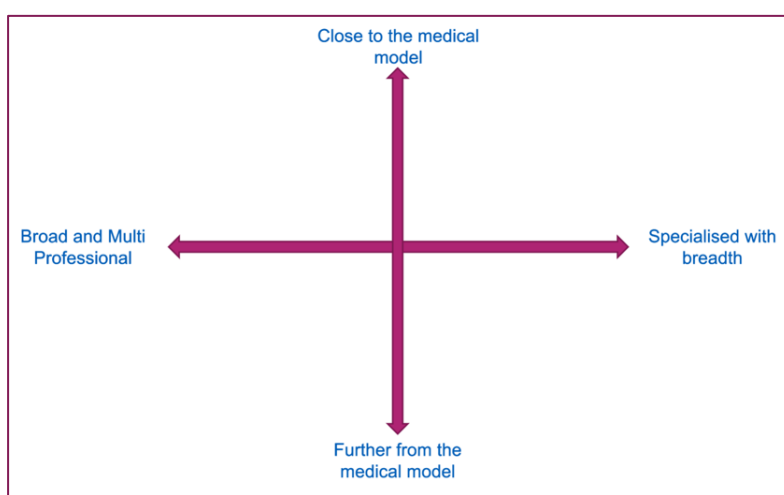
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Next steps in the South-West

The diagrams above were shared with Stakeholders in the South-West for feedback and priorities.

Priorities for the remainder of the SW AHP and Pharmacy Project (April to October 2022) are:

1. Continue to promote the development AHPs and Pharmacists in the South-West through networking, advice and support at all levels (Regional, ICS, Organisational and Service)
2. Develop focused case studies with increased detail across a wide variety of roles



3. Review and influence System workforce strategies in collaboration with the Advancing Practice Faculty Workforce Transformation Lead and ICS Advanced Practice Leads
4. Support the National Centre to update and reimagine the Advanced Practice Toolkit

Related workstreams

Some of the priority areas have not been picked up under the South-West AHP and Pharmacy project as these are already being addressed elsewhere. These include:

Challenge	Supporting work (regional and national)
Focus on Clinical Pillar by practitioners and/or employers	2022 National AHP Research Strategy
Development of Senior/Board level AHP leadership roles	Investing in Chief AHP Leadership Chief allied health professionals handbook
Lack of clarity in some systems/organisations on how to implement and support Advanced Practice roles	HEE development of the Maturity Matrix Within the South-West – implementation of fixed term contract Integrated Care System Advanced Practice Leads
Lack of Supervision / Mentoring structure	HEE National Advanced Practice Supervision Task & Finish group
Lacking clarity on how to recognise existing roles	National ePortfolio route has been live for the first round to accredit existing Advanced Practitioners

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	Retrospective accreditation of some pre 2017 Masters courses
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AHPs Deliver

The 2022-27 AHP Strategy '[AHPs Deliver](#)' provides a strategic mandate to continue to optimise AHP roles and ways of working, including Advanced Practice, through its foundations 'AHPs in the right place, at the right time, with the right skills' and 'AHPs commit to research, innovation, and evaluation'.

AHPs in Advanced Practice roles also hold vital potential for leading on the implementation of all five areas of focus outlined in the paper, but particularly: 'People first', 'Optimising care' and 'Social justice: addressing health and care inequalities'.

References

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