

Aspirant Cancer Career and Education Development programme (ACCEND)

Webinar 2 - Live Questions & Answers; In conversation with the
Centre for Advancing Practice, ACCEND, July 2023

Frequently asked questions.

Q1, What is advanced practice?

Advanced practice is delivered by experienced, registered health and care practitioners and is characterised by a high degree of autonomy and complex decision making. This area of practice is underpinned by a master's level award or equivalent that encompasses the four pillars of clinical practice, leadership and management, education, and research, with the demonstration of core capabilities for specific pillars.

The full definition of advanced practice can be found in '[Multi-professional framework for advanced clinical practice in England](#)' (Health Education England [HEE], 2017).

In England advanced practice training and education is overseen by The Centre for Advancing Practice and its Severn regional faculties, which are all part of the NHS England Workforce, Training and Education directorate (NHS England WT&E).

Q2, Can a clinical nurse specialist working in cancer apply for the e-portfolio route to become an advanced practitioner?

The ePortfolio (supported) route has been specifically designed to enable recognition of existing, experienced advanced practitioners with the Centre for Advancing Practice. All



applicants for the ePortfolio (supported) route will need to meet the eligibility criteria as outlined in the '[Applicant Guidance ePortfolio \(supported\) route](#)' (HEE, 2023) document to be eligible to apply.

Q3, How can services leads make the case to have advanced practitioners in cancer within NHS service provider organisations?*

The development of an advanced practitioner role should initially be driven by an analysis of service need and scrutiny of the capabilities and capacity of the existing and available workforce.

Improving population health, patient experience and outcomes as well as tackling unequal access to services, enhancing productivity and value for money are all priorities for Integrated Care Boards (ICBs). The partnership between health and care organisations will allow the development of joined up services that meet the needs of the population they serve. Designing and developing services and the workforce within them allows us to co-design and co-produce efficient solutions to fill existing skills gaps, while considering practitioners with different professional skill sets, competencies and levels of practice e.g., enhanced, advanced and consultant level practice.

The development of advanced practice roles should be inextricable linked to workforce development plans at divisional, organisational and ICB level. Crucially, expectations regarding the level of practice and the specific capabilities required in the context of specific roles must be seen as a key element linked to competence assessment.

The lead for advancing practice in each provider organisation should be aware of staff currently working in advanced practice roles. They should be able to help managers understand the level of practice and the potential need for these roles and how they may transform service delivery and improve patient care. To establish advanced practice roles, you will need to articulate the business case for this investment and the impact on population and service need. Job descriptions should be mapped to the '[Multi-professional framework for advanced clinical practice in England](#)', (HEE 2017) and job plans need to include time for clinical supervision and be representative of the four pillars of advanced practice.

The South West Faculty for Advancing Practice recently released the '[Advancing Practice in Emerging Areas Workforce Transformation Resource](#)' (HEE,2023) which is designed to be implemented locally by Integrated Care Systems or organisations. It aims to support and standardise the approach to workforce transformation for advanced practice in emerging areas. The resources will guide teams through workforce transformation principles that will

* Indicates ACCEND specific FAQ.

ensure bespoke advance practice plans which are designed to address local service challenges and could be utilised by anyone wishing to progress workforce transformation in their pathway area through implementation of advanced practice.

Q4, What information is required in a business case to support advanced practice roles?

The following are some key indicators, information and items to consider when developing a robust business case for advanced practice roles:

- What outcomes are expected from the advanced practice role?
- When will these outcomes be achieved and how will these be measured pre and post implementation?
- What risks and unintended consequences might there be to the introduction of this role and how may they be mitigated?
- What resources and support are required for role development (clearly include any work based and educational supervision requirements) and succession planning?
- Is the workforce optimised e.g., nursing, and allied health professions to ensure clinical and financial benefits are maximised?
- How will on-going competence and capability be reviewed and enabled?
- What reporting and line management structure will be in place?
- What processes will identify gaps in performance and/ or shortfalls in implementation and how will these be addressed?
- Has a quality assurance model been considered to measure this e.g., Care Quality Commission (2022) [The five key questions we ask](#) to support inspection.

Q5, For an allied health professional (AHP) who is in a senior role and can evidence that they have education, research and service development in their role and that they practice at an advanced level - what is the mechanism for recognition for that level?

Currently the only routes for practitioners (nurses or allied health professionals) to gain NHS England WT&E recognition is by either undertaking a Centre for Advancing Practice accredited MSc Advanced Practice programme, or via the ePortfolio (supported) route (see Q2). A list of Centre [‘Accredited Programmes’](#) (HEE, 2023) is available which meet the standards set out in the [‘Multi-professional framework for advanced clinical practice in England’](#) (HEE 2017).

Q6. Can a clinical nurse specialist (CNS) become a consultant practitioner without being an advanced practitioner - what would the Centre for Advanced Practice define as the advised route?*

CNS's or allied health professionals can become consultant practitioners without being an advanced practitioner, advanced to consultant practice is just one development route. Professional bodies educational and career frameworks should provide practitioner and organisations with additional guidance on career development. It is also the decision and responsibility of organisations to develop consultant level job descriptions and the associated role specifications. The '[ACCEND Career Pathway, Core Cancer Capabilities and Education Framework](#)' (HEE, 2023) with the supporting user implementation guides and the '[Multi-professional consultant-level practice capability and impact framework](#)' (NHS England, 2023) have been developed to support organisations to map consultant capabilities and help identify the education and training pathways for trainee consultant practitioner. The '[Multi-professional consultant-level practice capability and impact framework self-assessment tool](#)' (NHS England, 2023) released in June 2023 provides a self-assessment guide for practitioners to support the developmental pathway from advanced to consultant level practice, supporting practitioners to evidence the impact of the role on practice.

NHS England WT&E will therefore require practitioners to be able to evidence all advanced practice capabilities either via a formal route or equivalence to be eligible for any future pilots and funding offers (see Q2 & Q5).

ACCEND is aiming to run the first cohort of the Cancer Multi-professional Consultant Pathway in 2024/2025. This is aimed at early years consultant practitioners in cancer careers to map and align to the '[Multi-professional consultant-level practice capability and impact framework self-assessment tool](#)' (NHS England, 2023).

Q7. I believe I work at an advanced level but am not recognised as such. How can I have my current level of learning and skills recognised as an advanced practitioner?

Currently the only routes for practitioners to gain NHS England WT&E recognition is by either undertaking a Centre for Advancing Practice accredited MSc Advanced Practice programme, or via the ePortfolio (supported) route (see Q2 & Q5). Both routes require organisational support which acknowledges that the practitioner is already employed (ePortfolio route) or will be employed (MSc route) as an advanced practitioner once training is complete. It is therefore advised that in the first instance practitioners discuss their role and Trust governance requirements with their line managers.

* Indicates ACCEND specific FAQ.

Q8. Can I be both a clinical nurse specialist and an advanced practitioner, and be an advanced clinical nurse specialist for example?

Job titles are an organisational responsibility, the '[Multi-professional framework for advanced clinical practice in England](#)' (HEE 2017) defines a level of practice which covers multiple health and care settings, speciality areas and job roles. Those practitioners who have 'advanced' in their title will need to be able to demonstrate that they meet all core capabilities across the 4 pillars of advanced practice as outlined in the multiple-professional framework and align with organisational and ICB governance requirements to ensure the delivery of high quality, safe, effective care for patients.

Q9. Is there a structured portfolio for advanced practice for those working in oncology?*

Currently the only portfolio provided by NHS England WT&E is the ePortfolio (supported) route. This is not speciality specific but enables practitioner to evidence against the capabilities as outlined in the '[Multi-professional framework for advanced clinical practice in England](#)' (HEE 2017).

Q10. Can stakeholders provide clear guidance for Trusts on grading posts in cancer care? e.g. Band 6 for developmental clinical nurse specialist posts / Band 7 for clinical nurse specialist roles / Band 8a for clinical nurse specialist (advanced) or advanced clinical practitioner, advanced nurse practitioner.

Banding of roles is an organisational decision; NHS England WT&E can only provide guidance. The Centre for Advancing Practice recommends band 7 for a trainee advanced practitioner and 8a upon MSc qualification and meeting required competencies and capabilities. This is based upon the level of autonomy, accountability and responsibility associated with this level of practice.

Q11. What is enhanced level practice and how can a practitioner working at enhanced level transition to advanced level within ACCEND?*

Enhanced practitioners are registered health and social care professionals who are working at an enhanced level of practice with specific knowledge and skills in a field of expertise. They manage a discrete aspect of a patient / individual's care within their current level of practice, which will be particular to a specific context, be it a client group, a skill set or an organisational context. This is in contrast to advanced practitioners who have developed

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their knowledge and skills to an advanced (Masters level award or equivalent) level of practice and would manage the whole episode of a patient's clinical care, from the time they first present, through to the end of the episode. Advanced practitioners can evidence working across all 4 pillars of practice found in the '[Multi-professional framework for advanced clinical practice in England](#)' (HEE 2017).

The '[ACCEND Career Pathway, Core Cancer Capabilities and Education Framework](#)' (HEE, 2023) provides level descriptors, indicative requirements for practice and capabilities in practice at each level which can be used for role development in conjunction with employing organisations dependent upon requirements. The framework is mapped against levels of practice defined by NHS England WT&E.

Q12. Can you confirm that Consultant practitioner pathways are open to clinical nurse specialists who are working at an advanced level and not only advanced clinical practitioner post holders?*

There are currently no nationally defined consultant practitioner pathways. The Centre for Advancing Practice is however currently undertaking national pilots in which the multi-professional consultant framework is being utilised to map and recognise the transition from advanced to consultant level practice, i.e., practitioners should be able to evidence all advanced capabilities as part of that transition.

NHSE WT&E will therefore require practitioners to be able to evidence all advanced practice capabilities either via a formal route or equivalence (see Q2 & Q5) to be eligible for any future pilots and funding offers.

There are plans for the ACCEND programme to run the first cohort of the Cancer Multi-professional Consultant Pathway in 2024/2025. This initial cohort will be aimed at early years consultant practitioners in cancer careers to map and align to the '[Multi-professional consultant-level practice capability and impact framework self-assessment tool](#)' (NHS England, 2023).

Q13. What is the process for evidencing and accreditation / recognition of advanced practice in non-advanced clinical practitioner roles for those whose job descriptions clearly stipulate all of the 4 pillars at the requisite level?

The Multi-professional framework for advanced clinical practice in England has been developed to ensure that there is a national consistency and understanding about the level of advanced practice and is inclusive of all practitioners working at an advanced level, and

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therefore encompasses multiple job titles such as advanced clinical practitioner, advanced practice paramedic, advanced nurse practitioner etc.

Currently the only routes for practitioners to gain NHS England WT&E recognition is by either undertaking a Centre for Advancing Practice accredited MSc Advanced Practice programme, or via the ePortfolio (supported) route (see Q2 & Q5).

Q14. What funding opportunities come with the programme to support development?

Funding is available to support trainee and advanced practitioners to undertake a Full MSc advanced practice programme via the Regional Faculties for Advancing Practice. For more information on regional commissioning timeframes, eligibility criteria, governance requirements and application processes please contact the relevant Regional Faculty for Advancing Practice.

North West england.acp.nw@nhs.net

North East and Yorkshire england.neyadvancedpractice@nhs.net

East of England england.eoeapfaculty@nhs.net

Midlands england.apfac.midlands@nhs.net

London ACP england.acpenquirieslondon@nhs.net

South West england.advancingpractice.sw@nhs.net

South East england.acpenquiries.se@nhs.net

Reference documents and links

Care Quality Commission (2022) The five key questions we ask. Available at: <https://www.cqc.org.uk/> (Accessed 16 November 2023).

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