District Nurse Regional Events

Supporting the transition to the refocused role

Evaluation Report May 2018

Contents:

Acknowledgements

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank the participants and lead nurses for supporting and engaging with the events. I would also like to thank the practice education team who ably facilitated the events and made the days run smoothly.

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Introduction

The review of the District Nurse (DN) Band 6 Role was a key component of the first phase of the Chief Nursing Officer's Transforming Nursing Roles' programme which commenced in 2015. The aim of the review was to revisit and refocus the DN role within the context of an integrated community and primary care nursing team enabling care to be delivered closer to home and improving outcomes and experiences for individuals, carers and staff. Reviewing current and future DN education, continuing professional development (CPD) and career pathways was integral to the review. NHS Education for Scotland (NES) was commissioned to develop CPD to support DNs with the transition to the refocused role.

Purpose

This report provides an overview of the DN regional events and will share the main findings of the evaluation. Recommendations will be made from an educational perspective to further support the transforming roles' agenda.

Background

As part of the DN review there were three engagement events held across Scotland in 2016 where stakeholders were given the opportunity to help shape the refocused Band 6 DN role and the associated education. A clear rationale for a flexible, learning resource tailored to individual's needs became apparent. In response, NES worked with DNs to develop a digital learning resource which is accessible on the new NES Turas Learn platform [Home | Turas | Learn](). The resource is unique in providing a self-assessment of learning needs, content that reflects the skills and knowledge that DNs prioritised for developing their refocused role, practice-based activities to support development of the entire team and the opportunity to evidence and record evidence of learning for revalidation.

Regional event aims

The aim of the regional events was to highlight the DN refocused role as part of transforming roles and to promote the DN CPD learning resource.

The learning outcomes were to:
- describe the Band 6 refocused DN role as part of transforming roles' programme
- demonstrate awareness of the DN CPD learning resource and how to access relevant learning
- use the self-assessment tool
- evidence learning
- identify key requirements to embed learning and development within local teams.

To support attendance and enable access for all the NHS Boards, five events were held across Scotland in February and March 2018 with two having video conference (VC) access and a shortened GoToMeeting event. There was a great deal of interest shown by practitioners to attend the events and extra capacity was built into the central locations to accommodate this. Overall, 250 delegates attended the events. There was a good mix of delegates: Band 6 and 7 DNs, student DNs, lead

nurses, managers and educators. The content and delivery method of the events was influenced by feedback from DNs and learning from previous DN events.

The events were facilitated by key members of the NES Post-reg team, practice educators and practice education facilitators. The event programme included sessions on the Transforming Roles' programme and the refocused DN role; opportunities to network and share practice; workshops on the learning resource and a planning session to support local implementation of the resource.

Main findings

In this section an overview of the event feedback and main findings of the evaluation will be discussed. Feedback was collected by the event facilitators during the event and then collated following the events and key themes determined. Delegates were also asked to complete an online evaluation following the event although only 59 delegates responded overall.

Delegate objectives

Prior to the events, when delegates booked a place they were asked if they had heard of the refocused role; approximately 70 percent said they had heard and 30 percent had not. Despite most delegates being aware of the refocused role, when asked what they would like from the day the majority wanted to develop their understanding and find out more about the role.

Following the event delegates were asked to comment on if they felt we had raised awareness of the DN refocused role and the DN learning resource, the majority of those who completed the online evaluation responded yes (Table 1). They also indicated that their learning objectives had been met. Respondents commented that although it was good to get information on the learning resource, they also would have liked more focus on the refocused role, education pathways and the future of district nursing.

Table 1

Raised awareness

■ Yes ■ Partially ■ No
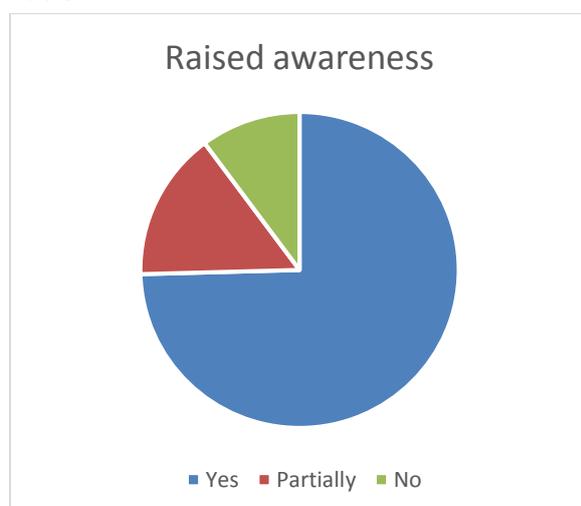
Transforming roles

During the event there were several discussion points where facilitators collected the delegates' feedback.

Discussion point 1: asked delegates to consider in relation to the transforming roles' agenda, what do you think are the most important things to address if this change is to be effective? The main themes of the responses are detailed below (Table 2).

Table 2

Theme	Main points
Enabling existing workforce	Articulate a clear vision and rationale to promote motivation and assist with direction. Move with the workforce not in front: promote inclusion of those toward end of career to ensure experience is valued and used to benefit changes. Review staff transferable skills and individual learning plans to support meeting the requirements of the role.
Roles	Clearly define roles to ensure consistency and assist with recognition of role and remit, to promote clarity and understanding of changing ways of working. Develop clear pathways for those in the role. Make sure that the professional identity of district nursing is maintained. Defining/understanding the unique contribution of the DN for the transformed model for the future, including what service users need from the role.
Workforce planning/recruitment and retention	Workforce planning for the future to ensure the correct skills in teams. Across all boards significant issues with recruitment into Band 6 roles. Need more investment in people/teams. Workforce profile tools needed. Consistency across the country in role definition, pay award and roles and responsibility. Scoping existing workforce – Advanced Nurse Practitioner roles – payment – banding inequalities.
Integrated teams	Need more focus on primary care with investment to support shifting the balance of care. Improved communication with integrated team to understand need. Clarity regarding where the DN roles sits within the local integration agendas.

	Consider context of health and social care integration and impact on roles. Consideration of local delivery models and service descriptors within an integrated landscape.
Leadership/communication	Leadership and dissemination of key messages at every level. Workforce to be informed and consulted on changes. More effective discussions – does everyone understand why/what needs to change? Wide consultation to increase motivation and better information dispersal. Communication with all staff re transforming roles agenda. DN voice to be heard/listened to.
Resources	Protected learning time / supported development. Funding for education and training – recognising the diversity of the DN workforce in relation to these needs. Support to release staff. Potential time for training V300 or ANP and support for staff within working time.

Discussion point 2: delegates were asked to identify the most important things to address if the DN change is to be effective? The main themes and responses are detailed below (Table 3).

Table 3

Themes	Main points
Resources	Funding is great but need support from the service and time to release staff. Development of tools, such as caseload weighting tool, caseload management tools and discharge/referral criteria. Protected time and support for learning. Consistent job description with clear expectations of role. Recruit increased numbers of staff to provide better establishment of teams, e.g. more staff to enable learning in the workplace
Education	Accessible education: Creative and innovative education that does not require staff to be out of practice for significant time, e.g. use of technology and learning styles, using experienced mentors in different roles rather than 'force' changes in final years. Releasing time for education with local learning networks for support.
Integration	Integrated approach – sharing of workload with social care/other agencies, understanding and appreciation of roles/areas of expertise. Look at ways to improve communication and collaboration with GPNs.
Leadership	Being involved in the decision-making process through steering groups. Clear guidance and support to undertake learning and development required of the role. Keeping the workforce informed of changes and what's happening nationally.

	Stronger voice about professional role of DN to other disciplines. More public awareness of changes. More standardisation across service

Sharing practice

Networking and sharing practice featured highly on the delegates' learning objectives. Throughout the events there were lots of opportunities to enable sharing, for example we asked delegates to share what they were involved in locally and had a speed-sharing activity where delegates could swap details. This is a snapshot of the main topics/projects shared at the events:

- Development of a 'Skills Academy' to support work-based practice for trainee/junior/developing DNs whereby there is a structured framework to consolidate theory.
- Set up of 'Virtual wards' to support anticipatory care, improve communication with acute services, prevent/reduce admission and avert crisis and facilitate integrated working.
- Advancing practice being supported, e.g. Consultant ANP facilitating consolidation of clinical examination skills in practice through case-based discussions and clinical practice supervision.
- Many areas are looking at caseload management and patient complexity using the complexity tool.
- Integrated working is a priority in many areas with innovative ways of working and teams being developed, e.g. with home-care colleagues, palliative care, social work, GPs, etc.
- Leadership development featured highly with many different approaches taken e.g. Band 6s encouraged to attend leadership programme "Ready to Lead" alongside other leaders from within the Health and Social Care Partnership and developing the Band 7 role to support advancing practice within their teams.
- Forums to support learning and development, e.g. prescribing forum for V300 prescribers.
- Provision of 24-hour services.

Feedback at the events highlighted that the sharing practice element was the most positively received as it helped delegates to get new ideas and reassure them that teams across Scotland were in similar positions and faced similar challenges. Delegates also felt it was important to develop a national network or forum to enable the continued sharing of practice and a medium for DNs to discuss the future role. Delegates confirmed that most NHS Boards were supporting the refocused role and were starting to set up DN steering and implementation groups to facilitate the transition.

NES DN CPD learning resource

As part of the workshops delegates were asked for feedback on the learning resource. The response was very positive and confirmed the value of involving DNs in the development of the resource. Key messages were that the resource was simple to navigate, learning activities easy to use, the resource provided a good opportunity to develop and support learning in the work place and the self-assessment tool was rated highly.

'Very useful resource not only for transforming roles but could provide a structure for KSF and PDP'.
'Good that it brings all levels of experienced practitioners together, using the same resource to learn and develop and like the fact there's team activities'.

Concern was raised around the learning support or supervisor role and how this would be taken forward in practice. Delegates recognised the value of the role but also recognised the challenge of time needed to take this forward within the already pressured working day. Protected time was raised as the most important aspect needed to support teams to undertake the learning.

The delegates were asked to consider what their key actions would be following the events. The main themes and examples of some actions identified are detailed below (Table 4).

Table 4

Themes	Examples of actions
Share information and raise staff awareness	Meet with teams and disseminate information Set up forums and implementation groups Use professional forums and events to discuss and disseminate information Need to set up local events – looking at the refreshed role and how we move forward Pilot with a few teams and share learning
Supporting learning	Set up learning network to support DNs Identify and train staff to be supervisors Establish ways to enable protected time for learning Seek funding opportunities Planning – start small Prioritise staff to undertake V300, clinical assessment modules and CPD Identify any local support e.g. Practice Educators (PEs) or Practice Education Facilitators (PEFs)
DN CPD learning resource	Complete self-assessment to identify learning needs Undertake learning Sign up to Turas Learn Get ePortfolio

Delegates feedback on the events

The main aim of the events was to raise awareness of the refocused role and the DN CPD learning resource. The delegate feedback indicated that this was achieved overall with delegates identifying their key learning in two main areas; in relation to the refocused role and transforming roles agenda and the DN CPD learning resource. Examples of responses are presented below (Table 5).

Table 5

Theme	Examples of learning
CPD learning resource	Good to learn about the CPD resource and how to use the tools and will share with teams. Good to see the resource in action.

	Better understanding of how to use the resource. Learning resource will be a good opportunity to identify individual's gaps in their knowledge and complete the relevant learning to suit the areas of their practice.
Refocused role/Transforming Roles	Great to share practice and hear about what is happening in other areas. All faced with same challenges in our community teams. We all appear to have the same issues/concerns no matter where we are in the country. We are not alone, DNs all over are feeling the pressure. Areas already further in journey to implementation with similar ideas and can learn from this. Importance of leadership. Surprised by the variation across boards and between teams. Variety of Band 6 roles and education pathways in different areas. Similar challenges in other areas regarding lack of national clear direction. Diversity of roles throughout career pathway.

Delegates were also asked to share a reflection of the event they attended, some examples are given below (Table 6).

Table 6

Reflections
'I hope that community nursing is starting to get the recognition and reward we deserve'
'Informative and inspiring day'
'Excited about transforming role however concerned about one size fits all- rural areas will provide unique issues with staff release and access to training'
'It is just the start of the journey'
'Food for thought'
'Can see the exciting opportunities but the difference in areas is worrying'

Summary and next steps

The regional events were intended to support the transition to the refocused DN role and to promote the new DN CPD learning resource. Overall the events achieved their aims, in that they enhanced delegates understanding of the refocused role and enabled identification and sharing of key actions to support learning and development within local teams. The events were developed on the assumption that delegates had a good knowledge of the Transforming Roles' work following their reported responses from the event application forms. However, a common theme raised by delegates at the events was that they had limited awareness of the implications of the refocused role on their practice and what this meant in terms of their development needs. The events were, therefore, amended to allow more focus on the Transforming Roles and sharing practice elements. There was also a call for more consultation and information regarding strategic change, the opportunity to be involved in shaping change and opportunities to discuss and implement change locally. To help support the continued collaboration with practitioners, NES plan to set up an expert DN education group comprising of educators and practitioners to shape education and development of the profession.

There was very positive feedback from the virtual delegates who attended the events by VC or GoToMeeting. Consideration was given as to how to ensure an equitable experience and, where possible, facilitators supported engagement locally. This meant that delegates could participate in facilitated group discussions and share practice with delegates from different boards just like those at the events. Learning from this type of approach and building on it for future events could have implications for future events and enable improved access for remote and rural boards.

The national network of PEs and PEFs are working with NHS Boards to support implementation of the refocused DN role by promoting the CPD resource and supporting local teams with learning in the workplace. To support communication and the sharing of information all the content from the regional events is available via the NES Transforming Roles' webpage (URL).

Finally, the DN CPD learning resource will be evaluated to enable analysis of user views, levels of utility and satisfaction. The evaluation will also look at the of impact of the learning and follow up some teams and individuals.

Further Information
For further information, please contact:
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