



Department of  
**Health**

An Roinn Sláinte  
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# CAREER PATHWAY FOR PERIOPERATIVE NURSING



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# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

**This document sets out a career pathway for nurses and those in support roles working in perioperative settings across Northern Ireland (NI).**

Perioperative nurses and support staff practice in a wide range of specialties, such as surgical suites, ambulatory surgical centres, and day procedure units, providing care for people before, during, and after surgical procedures. A stable perioperative nursing workforce which has the capacity and capability to meet the changing needs of the service and the population of NI is vital to ensure improved outcomes of care.

This Career Pathway is designed to help clarify and strengthen the range of important Perioperative Clinical Nursing and Support roles that support the delivery of high quality, safe, effective, person-centred care. The key knowledge, skills, behaviours and defined education will guide the development of individuals to enhance their knowledge, skills and experience in the perioperative environment and provide meaningful career progression opportunities (DoH 2023).

The career pathway comprises of eight core roles, which have been agreed by the Executive Directors of Nursing of the five Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts: Perioperative Nursing Assistant, Perioperative Senior Nursing Assistant, Perioperative Support Worker, Perioperative Staff Nurse, Perioperative Senior Staff Nurse,

Perioperative Specialist Nurse, Perioperative Advanced Nurse and Perioperative Consultant Nurse. The commissioned services will influence the roles adopted in each Trust to ensure an effective Perioperative Nursing Workforce to meet the demands of the specific service and population. The individual roles within the career pathway will enable HSC Trusts to identify the posts needed for their services through effective workforce planning.

The development of this pathway adds tremendous value for the growth and development of registered and non-registered nursing staff. For the eight different roles in the pathway, there is a great opportunity for staff in the perioperative environment to progress in their career whilst remaining in clinical practice. The pathway offers bespoke education and development maximising the nursing contribution in the delivery of safe and effective person-centred care.

# 2.0 PURPOSE OF CAREER PATHWAY FOR PERIOPERATIVE NURSING ROLES

**This Career Pathway is designed to help clarify and strengthen the range of important Perioperative Nursing roles that support the delivery of high quality, safe, effective, person and family centred care. The development of the clinical career pathway is critical in the strategic vision and transformational leadership for nursing (DoH 2016 and DoH 2020).**

**The Career Pathway is designed to be used as a guide for:**

- Those working in a nursing or support role in Perioperative Nursing;
- Employers and managers;
- Education providers.

The Career Pathway identifies the key knowledge, skills, behaviours and education requirements to enable a standardised approach to the continued development of the eight key roles within Perioperative Nursing, including registered and non-registered nursing roles<sup>1</sup>. The key knowledge, skills, behaviours and defined education will guide the development of individuals to enhance their knowledge, skills and experience in the perioperative environment. A number of standards and guidance documents as well as regulatory, professional, legal and strategic frameworks have been considered in developing this Career Pathway, see Appendix 1.

The commissioned services will influence the roles adopted in each Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust to ensure an effective Perioperative Nursing Workforce to meet the demands of the specific service and population.

The individual roles within the career pathway will enable HSC Trusts to identify the posts needed for their services through effective workforce planning. Each post will be advertised and a selection process utilised, there is no automatic progression through the nursing roles.

<sup>1</sup> The prevalence of core roles within HSC Trust perioperative environments is dependent on the needs of the services/populations and surgical specialities.

## 3.0 LEVELS AND PILLARS OF PRACTICE

Each role within the Perioperative Nursing Career Pathway is aligned to one of the Levels of Practice adapted from Skills for Health (2010), see Figure 1. The Levels of Practice reflect role development and progression similar to [the Knowledge and Skills Framework](#). It is the underpinning knowledge, skills and behaviours outlined in the 4 pillars of practice which determine the level of practice of each role. The Level of Practice does not equate to the banding of Agenda for Change, which is related to remuneration.

For more information about the Levels of Practice and how the Perioperative Nursing Career Pathway aligns to the NI Career Model for Nursing and Midwifery visit <https://nursingandmidwiferycareersni.hscni.net>

**Figure 1: Levels of Practice**

LEVEL	ROLE OVERVIEW
2	People at level 2 require basic factual knowledge of a field of work. They may carry out clinical, technical, scientific or administrative duties and provide safe, effective, person-centred care under the direction of a registrant
3	People at level 3 require knowledge of facts, processes and general concepts in a field of work. They may carry out a wider range of duties than the person working at level 2 and will have more responsibility, with supervision by a registrant.
4	People at level 4 require factual and theoretical knowledge in broad contexts within a field of work. Work is guided by standard operating procedures, protocols or systems of work and they may have responsibility for supervision. BSc (Hons) or MSc to Registered Nurse and Registered Midwife.
<b>BSc (Hons) or MSc to Registered Nurse and Registered Midwife</b>	
5	People at level 5 will have a comprehensive, factual and theoretical knowledge on registration. They use knowledge to solve problems creatively, make judgements which require analysis and interpretation, and actively contribute to service development, supervision or training.
6	People at level 6 require a critical understanding of detailed theoretical and practical knowledge, are specialist and/or have management, education and leadership responsibilities. They demonstrate initiative and creativity in finding solutions with responsibility for team performance and development.
7	People at level 7 have a critical awareness of knowledge and issues in the field and at the interface between different fields. They are innovative and have a responsibility for developing and changing practice and/or services in a complex and unpredictable environment.
8	People at level 8 require highly specialised knowledge, some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work. They are leaders with considerable responsibility, and the ability to research and analyse complex processes. They may lead policy, research, education or service delivery and improvement and have clinical, management or education responsibilities.
9	People working at level 9 require knowledge at the most advanced frontier of the field of work and at the interface between fields. They will have responsibility for the development and delivery of a service to a population or leading research at the highest level of the organisation.

**Figure 2: Pillars of Practice**

All Nursing roles in the Perioperative Nursing Career Pathway are supported by a set of 4 pillars of practice with associated key knowledge, skills, behaviours and education requirements.



The key knowledge, skills, behaviours and education requirements for the core Perioperative Nursing roles have been adapted, with permission from National Health Service Education Scotland (NES) (2020) *Career Development Framework for the Perioperative Nursing, Midwifery and Health Professions (NMAHP) Workforce* and National Health Service Education Scotland (NES) (2020) *Education Development Framework for the Perioperative Nursing, Midwifery and Health Professions (NMAHP) Workforce*.

It is important that individuals acquire all the knowledge, skills and behaviours appropriate to their specific role and are supported to develop through relevant education and development including preceptorship, supervision and continuous professional development (CPD).

# 4.0 PERIOPERATIVE NURSING ROLES

The nursing and support roles that have been agreed as core to Perioperative Nursing in Northern Ireland are as follows:

Level of Practice 2-4	Level of Practice 5	Level of Practice 6	Level of Practice 7	Level of Practice 8	Level of Practice 9
<b>SUPPORT ROLES</b>	<b>PERIOPERATIVE STAFF NURSE</b>	<b>PERIOPERATIVE SENIOR STAFF NURSE</b>	<b>PERIOPERATIVE SPECIALIST NURSE</b>	<b>PERIOPERATIVE ADVANCED NURSE PRACTITIONER</b>	<b>PERIOPERATIVE CONSULTANT NURSE</b>
<p><b>PERIOPERATIVE NURSING ASSISTANT</b></p> <p>Assists in the provision of safe, effective, person-centred care under the direction of a registered practitioner. Responsible for delegated activities including fundamentals of perioperative care.</p> <p>Level 2 Regulation Qualification Framework (RQF) or equivalent</p>	<p>Will be supported to learn roles such as Anaesthetic Nurse, Scrub Nurse, Circulating Nurse, and Recovery/Post Anaesthetic Care Unit (PACU) Nurse following completion of the relevant competency-based assessments, gaining new technical and non-technical skills exclusive to this environment.</p>	<p>Responsible for providing continuity of perioperative care. They build on experience including further development of technical and non-technical skills.</p> <p>They have a higher level of responsibility and autonomy and utilise management and leadership skills including deputising for the nurse in charge.</p>	<p>Works as a member of the perioperative team in a defined area of perioperative practice. They are responsible for providing specialist advice supported by autonomous decision-making to manage a greater level of complexity, unpredictability, and risk.</p> <p>They prescribe nursing care, treatment and interventions. They contribute to education, innovation, research and distill evidence-based learning into practice to enable care improvement.</p>	<p>Works autonomously at an advanced level and is an expert professional. Applies evidence informed knowledge, skills and capability to influence, shape, deliver and lead safe and effective person-centred care. They undertake comprehensive health assessments, manage risk, uncertainty and complexity across a range of illnesses &amp; conditions.</p>	<p>Practises autonomously as an expert at a highly advanced level in the delivery of quality, safe, effective and person-centred care. They use an innovative, evidence-based approach combined with complex decision-making to facilitate better outcomes and experience for patients. They lead and influence service and policy development at a strategic level while providing a strong clinical commitment and highly specialist expert advice to clinical colleagues.</p>
<p><b>PERIOPERATIVE SENIOR NURSING ASSISTANT</b></p> <p>As above and also including defined clinical duties.</p> <p>Level 3 Regulation Qualification Framework (RQF)</p>	<p>Induction Booklets – Anaesthetic, Intra-operative and Recovery</p> <p>In house Course relevant to role and area of perioperative practice</p> <p>And/or</p> <p>Stand-Alone Module</p>	<p>Short Course for relevant area of perioperative practice</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Speciality Specific Course</p>	<p>Specialist Practice Nursing qualification (SPQ) or equivalent post-registration qualification relevant to the area of specialist nursing practice</p> <p><i>Where prescribing is required for the role, include:</i></p> <p>NMC Independent and Supplementary Prescribing Qualification (V300)</p>	<p>MSc Advanced Practice</p> <p>NMC Independent and Supplementary Prescribing Qualification (V300)</p>	<p>Master's Level Programme or equivalent</p> <p>Post-registration qualification in the relevant area of practice</p> <p>May have a NMC Independent and Supplementary Prescribing Qualification (V300)</p>
<p><b>PERIOPERATIVE SUPPORT WORKER</b></p> <p>As above and has developed enhanced clinical skills specific to the surgical scrub practitioner role.</p> <p>Open College Network Northern Ireland (OCN NI) Level 3 Diploma in Healthcare Support Practice</p>	<p>Registered NMC, Part 1</p>	<p>Registered with NMC, Part 1</p>	<p>Registered NMC, Part 1</p>	<p>Registered NMC, Part 1</p>	<p>Registered NMC, Part 1</p>

Those in support roles can be supported to pursue a career as a Registered Practitioner.

The individual roles within the career pathway will enable HSC Trusts to identify the posts needed for their services through effective workforce planning. Each post will be advertised and a selection process utilised, there is no automatic progression through the nursing roles.



# PERIOPERATIVE NURSING ROLES DESCRIPTORS

## PERIOPERATIVE NURSING ASSISTANT ROLE

The Perioperative Nursing Assistant assists in the provision of safe, effective, person-centred care under the direction of a registered practitioner. They take responsibility for delegated activities including fundamentals of perioperative care, within the limits of their competence.

## PERIOPERATIVE SENIOR NURSING ASSISTANT ROLE

The Perioperative Senior Nursing Assistant assists in the provision of safe, effective, person-centred care under the direction of a registered practitioner. They take responsibility for delegated activities including defined clinical duties and fundamentals of perioperative care, within the limits of their competence.

## PERIOPERATIVE SUPPORT WORKER

The Perioperative Support Worker assists in the provision of safe, effective, person-centred care under the direction of a registered practitioner. They take responsibility for delegated activities including defined clinical duties and fundamentals of perioperative care, within the limits of their competence. The Perioperative Support Worker has developed enhanced clinical skills specific to the surgical scrub practitioner role.

## PERIOPERATIVE STAFF NURSE

The Perioperative Staff Nurse role consolidates previous experience and prepares those new to the perioperative environment. They will develop comprehensive, specialised, factual, and theoretical knowledge within the perioperative environment and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge.

The Perioperative Staff Nurse is a patient advocate, facilitating person-centred care and patient safety in the perioperative environment including day surgery units. They will be supported to learn roles such as Anaesthetic Nurse, Scrub Nurse, Circulating Nurse and Recovery/Post Anaesthetic Care Unit (PACU) Nurse following completion of the relevant competency-based assessments, gaining new technical and non-technical skills exclusive to this environment.

They will use knowledge to solve problems creatively, make judgements that require analysis and interpretation, and actively contribute to service and self-development. They will have responsibility for delegation, supervision, and supporting the development of staff and nursing students.





## **PERIOPERATIVE SENIOR STAFF NURSE**

The Perioperative Senior Staff Nurse is responsible for providing continuity of perioperative care. They build on experience including further development of technical and non-technical skills. They have a higher level of responsibility and autonomy and utilise management and leadership skills including deputising for the nurse in charge.

## **PERIOPERATIVE SPECIALIST NURSE**

The Perioperative Specialist Nurse works as a member of the perioperative team in a defined area of perioperative practice. They work at a specialist level of practice and are responsible for providing specialist advice supported by autonomous decision-making to manage a greater level of complexity, unpredictability, and risk. They prescribe nursing care, treatment and interventions. They contribute to education, innovation and research and distill evidence-based learning into practice to enable care improvement.

## **PERIOPERATIVE ADVANCED NURSE PRACTITIONER**

The Perioperative Advanced Nurse Practitioner works autonomously at an advanced level and is an expert professional. They apply evidence informed knowledge, skills and capability to influence, shape, deliver and lead safe and effective person-centred care, while managing risk, uncertainty and complexity. The Perioperative Advanced Nurse Practitioner is a bespoke role based on service/population need for example performing operations such as Carpal Tunnel, stripping of varicose veins, sub-tenon injection. This will be determined by each Trust.

## **PERIOPERATIVE CONSULTANT NURSE**

The Perioperative Consultant Nurse practises autonomously as an expert at a highly advanced level in the delivery of quality, safe and effective person-centred care. They use an innovative, evidenced based approach combined with complex decision-making skills to facilitate better outcomes and experience for patients. They develop and improve practice through involvement in local, regional and national groups and disseminate their findings at national and international conferences. They establish links with Higher Education Institutions and lead innovations across the perioperative environment. This is a bespoke role based on service/population need and the individual could for example work across pre, intra and post-operative care in the perioperative environment. This will be assessed and determined by each Trust where benefits for service users can be quantified and improvements in health outcomes measured.

## **5.0 CAREER PATHWAY FOR PERIOPERATIVE NURSING**

### **5.1 PERIOPERATIVE NURSING ASSISTANT ROLE**

#### **LEVEL OF PRACTICE 2**

The Perioperative Nursing Assistant assists in the provision of safe, effective, person-centred care under the direction of a registered practitioner. They take responsibility for delegated activities including fundamentals of perioperative care, within the limits of their competence.

#### **Broad Sphere of Responsibility/Role**

As a valuable member of the perioperative team will undertake, assigned duties in line with the NIPEC Deciding to Delegate Framework (2019). These duties will reflect person-centred and family centred care.

## Core Competencies for Perioperative Nursing Assistant

Pillar: Clinical Practice	
Safe, Effective and Person-Centred Care	
Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/ Role	Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work under supervision of registered practitioners to assist with person-centred care in the perioperative area.</li> <li>• Assist with the delivery of person-centred care.</li> <li>• Take responsibility for delegated activities, within the limits of their competence.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate routine information to patients and staff.</li> <li>• Maintain clear and concise communication and documentation in line with Northern Ireland (NI) Record Keeping Guidelines (2016) and local Theatre Management System.</li> <li>• Maintain high standards of infection prevention and control.</li> </ul>

Pillar: Education & Learning		
Learning, Teaching and Assessment		
Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role	Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and maintain own knowledge and skills to provide safe and effective care.</li> <li>• Within the boundaries of role and seeking support where necessary, facilitate learning for patients, families and carers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn from experience through observation, supervision, feedback, reflective practice techniques and evaluation.</li> <li>• Show awareness of person-centred advocacy and an awareness of wider issues (for example home concerns, etc).</li> <li>• Undertake appropriate education, learning and development including mandatory training.</li> <li>• Apply knowledge and demonstrate appropriate understanding of for example:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Accountability and delegation</li> <li>– Access to health records</li> <li>– Consent</li> <li>– Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) regulations</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Escalate concerns regarding patient’s well-being to registered practitioners.</li> <li>• Develop knowledge of the preparation within the perioperative environment while adhering to standard operating procedures and protocols.</li> <li>• Comply with health and safety recognising and reporting risk in relation to perioperative care provision.</li> <li>• Comply with infection prevention and control policies and procedures.</li> <li>• Comply with appropriate standards for maintaining confidentiality, data protection and complying with United Kingdom General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).</li> </ul>

## Core Competencies for Perioperative Nursing Assistant

Pillar: Leadership	
Teamwork and Development	
Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role	Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the perioperative team in the delivery of high-quality safe, effective and person-centred care.</li> <li>• Use effective communication strategies to inform the perioperative team of any concerns or issues related to safe, effective and person-centred care.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop organisational and time management skills.</li> <li>• Develop team working skills that contribute to the team's decision making for safe, effective and person-centred care.</li> <li>• Develop personal knowledge and skills in preparation for senior nursing assistant role.</li> </ul>

Pillar: Research and Development	
Guidelines and Evidence-Based Practice	
Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role	Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow guidelines under the direction of a Registered Practitioner.</li> <li>• Support quality improvement initiatives relevant to own work area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop knowledge and skills in using information technology systems to access resources for example: clinical guidelines and policies, relevant publications.</li> </ul>

## PERIOPERATIVE NURSING ASSISTANT EDUCATION

Completion of Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) - level 2

## **5.2 PERIOPERATIVE SENIOR NURSING ASSISTANT ROLE**

### **LEVEL OF PRACTICE 3**

The Perioperative Senior Nursing Assistant assists in the provision of safe, effective, person-centred care under the direction of a registered practitioner. They take responsibility for delegated activities including defined clinical duties and fundamentals of perioperative care, within the limits of their competence.

#### **Broad Sphere of Responsibility/Role**

As a valuable member of the perioperative team will undertake, assigned clinical duties and fundamentals of perioperative care in line with the NIPEC Delegation Framework (2019). These duties will reflect person-centred, family centred care.

## Core Competencies for Perioperative Senior Nursing Assistant

Pillar: Clinical Practice	
Safe, Effective and Person-Centred Care	
Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role	Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will possess an awareness and relative understanding of what is normal concerning their patients' wellbeing and report that which is out-with normal to registered practitioner.</li> <li>• Work effectively as part of the perioperative team.</li> <li>• Plan and prioritise delegated tasks and duties in consultation with registered practitioners.</li> <li>• Able to problem solve and act regarding person-centred care in line with local policy and NIPEC Deciding to Delegate Framework.</li> <li>• Following an initial assessment by the registered practitioner, carry out delegated elements of assessment to enhance the patient journey in line with appropriate protocols and procedures.</li> <li>• Monitor patient observations, reporting any variance to the registered practitioner.</li> <li>• Support the registered practitioner during the perioperative period, carry out circulating duties and assist with person-centred care in the perioperative area.</li> <li>• Undertake swab, needle and instrument count with registered personnel.</li> <li>• Assist registered practitioners in transporting patients to and from theatre via wards or other departments.</li> <li>• Assist with and/or perform routine investigations e.g. specimen/blood collection.</li> <li>• Maintain high standards of infection prevention and control.</li> <li>• Communicate information effectively to patients, relatives and staff.</li> <li>• Document care in line with NI Record Keeping Guidelines (2016) and local Theatre Management System.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the registered practitioner in the provision of safe, effective and person-centred perioperative care.</li> <li>• Communicate effectively within the perioperative team to ensure safe, effective and person-centred perioperative care provision.</li> <li>• Work within the delegated scope of the role and undertake relevant training and development.</li> <li>• Apply knowledge and demonstrate appropriate understanding of for example:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Accountability and delegation</li> <li>– Access to health records</li> <li>– Consent</li> <li>– COSHH regulations</li> <li>– Duty of Candour</li> <li>– Equality and diversity policies</li> <li>– Health and safety</li> <li>– Infection prevention and control measures</li> <li>– Mental health and capacity</li> <li>– Safeguarding policies and procedures</li> <li>– Record Keeping</li> <li>– Risk management</li> <li>– Waste management</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Recognise risk in relation to perioperative care provision and further develop risk assessment skills.</li> <li>• Act on findings within role boundaries to ensure patient safety.</li> <li>• Develop knowledge of infection prevention and control.</li> <li>• Able to effectively reflect on practice.</li> <li>• Comply with appropriate standards for maintaining confidentiality, data protection and complying with UK GDPR.</li> </ul>

## Core Competencies for Perioperative Senior Nursing Assistant

Pillar: Education & Learning		
Learning, Teaching and Assessment		
Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role		Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop organisational and time management skills.</li> <li>• Help meet the learning needs of patients, families and carers within the boundaries of role.</li> <li>• Ensure patient safety is at the forefront of care by sharing knowledge and learning with those new to perioperative practice, including students and visitors.</li> <li>• Support the practice and development needs of Perioperative Nursing Assistants through supervision and teaching those new to role.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding of person-centred advocacy and awareness of wider issues (for example home concerns etc).</li> <li>• Develop and maintain own knowledge and skills to provide safe and effective care with support from registered practitioners.</li> <li>• Engage with line manager to identify education and development needs and undertake appropriate education, learning and development including mandatory training.</li> <li>• Reflect on practice with line manager as part of appraisal and personal development planning.</li> </ul>
Pillar: Leadership		
Teamwork and Development		
Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role		Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand role within the perioperative team.</li> <li>• Act as a positive role model.</li> <li>• Contribute to teams' vision and objectives.</li> <li>• Undertake delegated duties and use own initiative within the context of role and remit.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan and prioritise own workload and activities.</li> <li>• Communicate clearly and concisely within the perioperative team for safe, effective and person-centred care.</li> <li>• Works effectively within the perioperative team.</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding of person-centred advocacy and awareness of wider issues (for example home concerns, etc).</li> <li>• Recognise and understand role boundaries and limitations.</li> </ul>



## Core Competencies for Perioperative Senior Nursing Assistant

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### Pillar: Research and Development

#### Guidelines and Evidence-Based Practice

##### Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role

- Follow the direction of registered practitioners in accordance with the relevant evidence-based guidance.
- Participate in quality and service improvement activities and audits as directed by the registered practitioner.
- Contribute to the development of local guidelines.
- Assist with clinical projects or research, for example specimen collection.

##### Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours

- Effectively reflect on and discuss own practice.
- Recognise risk in relation to care provision.
- Develop knowledge and skills in using information technology systems to access resources, for example clinical guidelines and policies, relevant publications.

## PERIOPERATIVE SENIOR NURSING ASSISTANT EDUCATION

Completion of Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) - level 3

## 5.3 PERIOPERATIVE SUPPORT WORKER ROLE

### LEVEL OF PRACTICE 4

The Perioperative Support Worker assists in the provision of safe, effective, person-centred care under the direction of a registered practitioner. They take responsibility for delegated activities including defined clinical duties and fundamentals of perioperative care, within the limits of their competence. The Perioperative Support Worker has developed enhanced clinical skills specific to the surgical scrub practitioner role.

#### Broad Sphere of Responsibility/Role

As a valuable member of the perioperative team will undertake, assigned clinical duties and fundamentals of perioperative care in line with the NIPEC Delegation Framework (2019). These duties will reflect person-centred, family centred care.

## Core Competencies for Perioperative Support Worker

Pillar: Clinical Practice	
Safe, Effective and Person-Centred Care	
Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role	Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work within agreed protocols, guidelines and the competencies of their role, under the delegation and supervision of a registered practitioner.</li> <li>• Take responsibility for planned, delegated care including defined clinical or therapeutic interventions within the perioperative environment, recognising and understanding their role competencies at all times.</li> <li>• Carry out routine elements of person-centred care following protocols and guidelines delegated by the registrant.</li> <li>• Problem solve related to needs and tasks and act within the agreed parameters of the role.</li> <li>• Assist in the transfer and positioning of patients within the perioperative environment to include supporting limbs during prepping and draping.</li> <li>• Recognise changes in patient's condition and report to the registrant.</li> <li>• Apply knowledge of infection prevention and control in order to lead by example and support others to comply with infection prevention and control policies.</li> <li>• Apply knowledge of investigations and procedures to assist with, and as directed undertake specific complex procedures, for example wound care, collection of clinical specimens, urinalysis, vital signs.</li> <li>• Possess an in-depth knowledge and understanding of their job role and related tasks.</li> <li>• Develop towards attaining all the attributes, skills and knowledge described for Perioperative Support Worker including circulating and scrub and the recovery area.</li> <li>• Risk assessment is completed on each patient to identify the complexity of surgery, before the registered practitioner delegates the role of 'scrub' to the Perioperative Support Worker.</li> <li>• Document care in line with NI Record Keeping Guidelines (2016) and local Theatre Management System.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop knowledge on how and why their care provision and that of others in the multidisciplinary team, impacts on the patient journey.</li> <li>• Develop risk assessment skills in relation to patient care.</li> <li>• Develop an understanding of best practice within the perioperative setting including scrub, circulating and recovery roles.</li> <li>• Develop underpinning knowledge that enables integration of theory relating to perioperative practice in relevant settings.</li> <li>• Understand the concepts of accountability and responsibility and be confident to accept delegated responsibility from a registered practitioner.</li> </ul>

## Core Competencies for Perioperative Support Worker

Pillar: Education & Learning	
Learning, Teaching and Assessment	
Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role	Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be responsible and accountable for keeping own knowledge and skills up to date through continuing development.</li> <li>• Participate in the support and experience of pre-registration nursing students, new members of staff and other Perioperative Nursing Assistants.</li> <li>• Act as a positive role model for others.</li> <li>• Give and receive feedback in an open, honest and constructive manner.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflect on practice with line manager as part of appraisal and personal development planning to support development of resilience when facing adverse situations.</li> <li>• Recognise the personal impact of any difficult situations and have strategies to enable personal learning and development, recognising the limits of their competence and personal strengths.</li> </ul>

Pillar: Leadership	
Teamwork and Development	
Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role	Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Act as a positive role model.</li> <li>• Contribute to multi-professional working, actively participating and respecting the contribution of others.</li> <li>• Contribute to team objectives in relation to service development initiatives.</li> <li>• Understand role within the perioperative team.</li> <li>• Plan and prioritise delegated workload and activities.</li> <li>• Communicate clearly and concisely within the perioperative team for safe, effective and person-centred care.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work effectively in a multi-disciplinary team and participate in team development.</li> <li>• Problem solve and act regarding person-centred care through an awareness of policy and legislation under direction of the registrant.</li> <li>• Demonstrate organisational and time management skills.</li> <li>• Demonstrate awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion needs of patients and staff.</li> </ul>

## Core Competencies for Perioperative Support Worker

Pillar: Research and Development	
Guidelines and Evidence-Based Practice	
Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role	Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to the design and development of service improvements and a range of quality assurance activities, including involvement with audits.</li> <li>• Access, assess and apply relevant guidelines.</li> <li>• Apply knowledge and skills in using information technology systems.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effectively reflect on and discuss own practice with appropriate personnel.</li> <li>• Develop knowledge of relevant guidelines.</li> <li>• Recognise the importance of resolving complaints in a timely manner and effectively at local level and escalate as appropriate.</li> </ul>

## PERIOPERATIVE SUPPORT WORKER EDUCATION

Open College Network Northern Ireland (OCN NI) Level 3 Diploma in Healthcare Support Practice. To comprise the following:

### Core competencies

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principles of Infection Control</li> <li>• Promoting Communication in Healthcare Support</li> <li>• The Role of the Healthcare worker</li> <li>• Promoting and Implementing Health and Safety in Healthcare</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparing and dressing for scrubbed clinical role</li> <li>• Preparing and providing surgical instrumentation and supplementary items for the surgical team</li> <li>• Anatomy and physiology</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

### Optional

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing Support for surgical teams when preparing individuals for operative and invasive procedures</li> <li>• Assisting in the delivery of perioperative care and support to the individual</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transporting, transferring and positioning individuals and equipment in the perioperative environment</li> <li>• Receiving and Handling of clinical specimens within the sterile field</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

**“Each patient will be risk assessed with regard to the complexity of the surgery, before the registered practitioner delegates the role of ‘scrub’ to the healthcare support worker.”**

### **Risk Assessment for Perioperative Support Worker**

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The following risk assessment<sup>2</sup> is to be used when deciding what a Perioperative Support Worker (PSW) can scrub for.

The individual patient’s risk of blood loss is decided by the surgeon and disseminated during the team brief.

The risk assessment must be/will be completed by PSW in collaboration with the registrant. The PSW must act within one’s own sphere of competence.

The Registrant holds responsibility for standards within the list. If there is disagreement with the assessment of competence, the Registrant takes the final decision.

The results of the risk assessment must be recorded in the patient documentation.

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<sup>2</sup> This risk assessment tool has been adapted and developed from work undertaken in Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust, England, Western HSC Trust, Belfast HSC Trust Northern Ireland





## 5.4 PERIOPERATIVE STAFF NURSE ROLE

### LEVEL OF PRACTICE 5

**The Perioperative Staff Nurse role consolidates previous experience and prepares those new to the perioperative environment. They will develop comprehensive, specialised, factual, and theoretical knowledge within the perioperative environment and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge.**

The Perioperative Staff Nurse is a patient advocate facilitating person-centred care and patient safety in the perioperative environment including day surgery units. They will be supported to learn roles such as Anaesthetic Nurse, Scrub Nurse, Circulating Nurse, and Recovery/Post Anaesthesia Care Unit (PACU) Nurse following completion of the relevant competency-based assessments, gaining new technical and non-technical skills exclusive to this environment.

They will use knowledge to solve problems creatively, make judgements that require analysis and interpretation, and actively contribute to service and self-development. They will have responsibility for delegation, supervision, and supporting the development of staff and nursing students.

#### **Broad Sphere of Responsibility/Role**

- Deliver safe, effective and person-centre care as part of the multi-disciplinary team.
- Undertake personal and professional development.
- Contribute to the supervision of pre-registration students as practice assessors, practice supervisors and contribute to the supervision of other staff.

## Core Competencies for Perioperative Staff Nurse

Pillar: Clinical Practice	
Safe, Effective and Person-Centred Care	
Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role	Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage and deliver safe, effective, person-centred, evidence-based compassionate care and meet all perioperative needs.</li> <li>• Continue to develop competence in meeting the holistic needs of patients in the perioperative environment.</li> <li>• Be accountable and responsible for assessment, planning and delivery of perioperative care.</li> <li>• Assess risk and escalate as appropriate to ensure patient safety.</li> <li>• Share information effectively and concisely for a range of situations and contexts to ensure patient safety and continuity of care.</li> <li>• Effectively use a range of information and communication technologies to support and enhance practice.</li> <li>• Use initiative while operating within organisational procedures, legislation, and professional guidance relevant to perioperative practice.</li> <li>• Recognise and respect people's dignity, culture, diversity, human rights, individual differences and perspectives to promote inclusivity.</li> <li>• Ensure the principles of shared decision-making and informed consent are adhered to while caring for the patient.</li> <li>• Collaborate effectively with other members of the multidisciplinary team involved in the patient's care.</li> <li>• Utilise knowledge and skills to recognise, report and respond to clinical emergencies.</li> <li>• Maintain a safe environment for patients, relatives, and staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop knowledge and skills relevant to perioperative practice underpinned by theory, relevant clinical experience and specific clinical competence.</li> <li>• Demonstrate additional specific clinical competencies as required for the role.</li> <li>• Demonstrate safe effective person-centred compassionate care, and communication skills and behaviours.</li> <li>• Assess situations and contribute to the identification of the root cause of a problem, suggesting solutions and follow-up where required.</li> <li>• Apply knowledge and demonstrate understanding of:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– COSHH regulations</li> <li>– Equality and diversity policies</li> <li>– Health and safety</li> <li>– NICE Guidelines</li> <li>– Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) Code</li> <li>– Risk management</li> <li>– Standard infection control precautions</li> <li>– The Association for Perioperative Practice (AfPP) standards</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of clinical governance frameworks both locally and nationally, and act within these.</li> <li>• Work within protocols and standard operating procedures including patient group directions and/or standing orders, contributing to policy development or updates.</li> <li>• Understand the principle of informed consent and the implications of the Data Protection Act and UK GDPR.</li> <li>• Understand quality improvement processes and incorporate them into own practice.</li> <li>• Participate in patient safety and quality governance processes.</li> </ul>

## Core Competencies for Perioperative Staff Nurse

<b>Pillar: Clinical Practice</b>	
<b>Professional Judgement and Decision Making</b>	
<b>Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role</b>	<b>Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work autonomously within the scope of practice, critically evaluating interventions while accepting professional accountability and responsibility.</li> <li>• Draw on a range of sources in making judgements, guided as necessary by senior colleagues regarding management and delegation to others.</li> <li>• Ability to manage incidents and utilise the incident reporting system.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply knowledge of legal and ethical principles.</li> <li>• Maintain, develop, and apply knowledge of legislation, policies, procedures, protocols, professional regulation and codes of professional practice.</li> <li>• Use critical thinking, analysis and evaluation in making clinical judgments.</li> </ul>
<b>Pillar: Education &amp; Learning</b>	
<b>Learning, Teaching and Assessment</b>	
<b>Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role</b>	<b>Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be responsible and accountable for keeping own knowledge and skills up to date through continuous professional development and actively participating in clinical support strategies, for example coaching, patient safety and quality governance activities, reflective supervision.</li> <li>• Facilitate students and others to develop their competence, using a range of professional and personal development skills.</li> <li>• Act as practice supervisor and practice assessor for pre-registration and post-registration students.</li> <li>• Conduct a fair, objective and timely assessment of learners.</li> <li>• Provide education to support and facilitate patients and families in self-management and decision making.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accept responsibility for own professional development and the maintenance of professional competence and NMC revalidation (2021).</li> <li>• Learn from experience by participating in reflective supervision, receiving feedback and continuous reflection and evaluation.</li> <li>• Motivate, stimulate, encourage and facilitate the learning process.</li> <li>• Use effective reflective practice techniques.</li> <li>• Participate in practice assessment/teaching/facilitation.</li> </ul>
<b>Creation of the Learning Environment</b>	
<b>Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role</b>	<b>Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to the creation of an effective learning environment optimising learning opportunities.</li> <li>• Support nursing students by acting as a practice assessor and/or practice supervisor.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use facilitation and teaching skills.</li> <li>• Contribute to the development of educational materials.</li> <li>• Understand improvement approaches such as learning audit and appreciative inquiry.</li> <li>• Use models of supervision.</li> </ul>

## Core Competencies for Perioperative Staff Nurse

Pillar: Leadership	
Teamwork and Development	
Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role	Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Act as a positive role model.</li> <li>• Practice independently and contribute to the co-ordination, delegation and supervision of care delivered by the team.</li> <li>• Work effectively across professional boundaries, actively involving and respecting others' contribution.</li> <li>• Develop skills to lead a team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate clinical leadership behaviours and skills.</li> <li>• Give and receive feedback in an open, honest, and constructive manner.</li> </ul>
Professional and Organisational Leadership	
Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role	Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify priorities, and manage time and resources effectively to ensure that quality of care is maintained or enhanced.</li> <li>• In conjunction with senior staff, monitor and evaluate standards of care, adhering to defined guidelines, policies, standards, and protocols to ensure the delivery of safe, effective and person-centred care.</li> <li>• Responsible for aspects of clinical effectiveness and management of resources.</li> <li>• Recognise own accountability to act where performance and practice of self and others should be improved.</li> <li>• Recognise role and responsibility in raising concerns, listening to others' concerns, and escalating these in line with local policies to support the psychological safety of self and others.</li> <li>• Engage in and, where appropriate, lead on specific aspects of change management, quality and service improvement.</li> <li>• Participate in monitoring the effectiveness and impact of change.</li> <li>• Seek opportunities to improve the service, for example, by generating ideas for innovation and solution.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond autonomously and confidently to planned and uncertain situations, managing themselves and others confidently.</li> <li>• Develop skills in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– negotiation</li> <li>– influencing</li> <li>– organisation</li> <li>– problem solving</li> <li>– decision making</li> <li>– resource management</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Consolidate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– critical thinking skills</li> <li>– analytical skills</li> <li>– evaluation skills</li> <li>– interpersonal skills</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Understand improvement approaches to support service enhancement.</li> <li>• Understand implications for practice of key legal and ethical issues.</li> </ul>

## Core Competencies for Perioperative Staff Nurse

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### Pillar: Research and Development

#### Evidence Into Practice

##### Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role

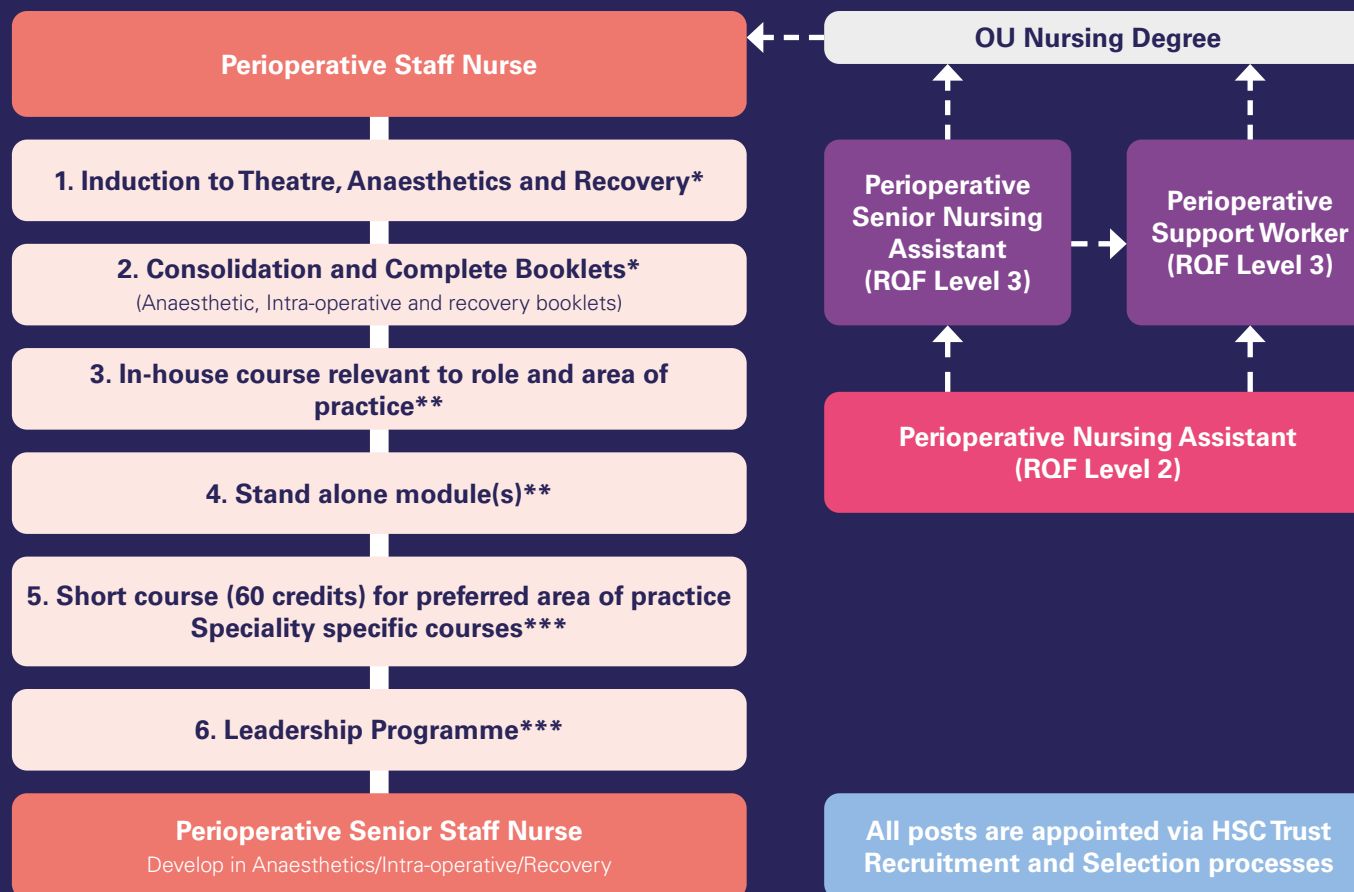
- Measure own practice and interventions against person-centred outcomes.
- Assess and critically appraise sources of information to support and augment practice.
- Contribute to improvements in person centred care through evaluation and constructive feedback.
- Consolidate understanding and application of different research approaches.
- Identify ideas for research/development activity from own practice.
- Contribute to data gathering activities such as audit and evaluations.
- Contribute to service improvement initiatives.

##### Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours

- Search databases and apply information literacy skills including critical appraisal of same.
- Demonstrate confidence in digital literacy skills and systems.
- Access and apply research.
- Ability to demonstrate knowledge of:
  - local processes that contribute to quality improvement
  - research governance - ethics, data protection UK GDPR, confidentiality, and informed consent.

## Perioperative Staff Nurse and Non-Registered Staff Education

Guide for developing knowledge and skills.



### To apply for a Senior Staff Nurse post:

- \* 1 and 2 are essential
- \*\* One of 3-4 is essential
- \*\*\* 5 and 6 are desirable.

- \* successful completion essential to progress to No 3 onwards
- \*\* subject to availability

## **5.5 PERIOPERATIVE SENIOR STAFF NURSE ROLE**

### **LEVEL OF PRACTICE 6**

The Perioperative Senior Staff Nurse is responsible for providing continuity of perioperative care. They build on experience including further development of technical and non-technical skills. They have a higher level of responsibility and autonomy and utilise management and leadership skills including deputising for the nurse in charge.

#### **Broad Sphere of Responsibility/Role**

- Develop clinical expertise in the provision of quality, safe, person-centred care in the perioperative setting.
- Undertake personal and professional development.
- Supports the Perioperative Specialist Nurse by leading, empowering and challenging the perioperative team.



## Core Competencies for Perioperative Senior Staff Nurse

Pillar: Clinical Practice	
Safe, Effective and Person-Centred Care	
Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role	Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide clinical expertise and advice to deliver holistic safe, effective, person centred care in the perioperative environment.</li> <li>• Promote the delivery of safe, effective, person-centred, evidence-based care and interventions and appropriately meeting all perioperative needs.</li> <li>• Be accountable and responsible for assessment, planning and delivery of perioperative care.</li> <li>• Identify and assess risk and act and escalate as appropriate to ensure patient safety.</li> <li>• Maintain effective communication to ensure patient safety and continuity of care.</li> <li>• Work collaboratively to identify and utilise information and communication technologies to support and enhance practice.</li> <li>• Understand lines of accountability with respect to organisational procedures, legislation and professional guidance relevant to perioperative practice.</li> <li>• Recognise and respect people’s dignity, culture, diversity, human rights, individual differences and perspective to promote inclusivity.</li> <li>• Ensure shared decision making and informed consent in their perioperative care.</li> <li>• Collaborate effectively with other members of the multidisciplinary team involved in the patient’s care.</li> <li>• Recognise, report and respond to clinical emergencies.</li> <li>• Maintain a safe environment for patients, relatives, and staff.</li> <li>• Participate in multidisciplinary activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement quality improvement processes and incorporate into own practice.</li> <li>• Demonstrate specific clinical competencies as required for the role.</li> <li>• Communicate effectively demonstrating safe effective person-centred, compassionate care.</li> <li>• Work collaboratively to implement patient safety and quality governance processes.</li> <li>• Utilise knowledge and skills appropriate to perioperative practice underpinned by theory, relevant clinical experience, and specific clinical competence.</li> <li>• Risk assess and identify the root cause of a problem, implementing solutions and follow up where required.</li> <li>• Apply in-depth knowledge and contribute to the review and implement the following policies, standards and guidelines:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– NMC Code</li> <li>– Risk management</li> <li>– Standard infection control precautions</li> <li>– The Association for Perioperative Practice (AfPP) standards</li> <li>– COSHH regulations</li> <li>– Equality and diversity policies</li> <li>– Health and safety</li> <li>– NICE guidelines</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Understand the lines of accountability with respect to delegation, supervision and mechanisms for the assurance of clinical governance frameworks both locally and nationally, and act within these.</li> <li>• Ensure protocols and standard operating procedures, including patient group directions and/or standing orders are adhered to.</li> <li>• Apply the principles of informed consent and know the implications of the Data Protection Act and UK GDPR.</li> </ul>

## Core Competencies for Perioperative Senior Staff Nurse

Pillar: Clinical Practice	
Professional Judgement and Decision Making	
Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role	Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work autonomously within scope of practice, critically evaluating interventions while accepting professional accountability and responsibility.</li> <li>• Apply the NIPEC Delegation Framework (2019) and the AfPP Standards and Recommendations for Safe Perioperative Practice.</li> <li>• Understand the incident reporting system and use appropriately.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilise critical thinking, analysis, and synthesis skills in clinical judgments.</li> <li>• Apply knowledge of legal and ethical principles.</li> <li>• Maintain, develop, and apply knowledge of legislation, policies, procedures, protocols, professional regulation and codes of professional practice.</li> </ul>
Pillar: Education & Learning	
Learning, Teaching and Assessment	
Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role	Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accept responsibility for own continuous professional development and the maintenance of professional competence and NMC revalidation and actively participate in clinical support strategies, for example coaching, person safety and quality governance activities, reflective supervision.</li> <li>• Supervise and support others in the team and delegate appropriately, within the scope of each team's role and competence.</li> <li>• Act as practice supervisor and practice assessor for pre-registration and post-registration students.</li> <li>• Facilitate appraisals and KSF Personal Development Plans, mandatory and job specific training for the team.</li> <li>• Contribute to the development of a positive teaching/learning environment to develop the capability and capacity of staff to care for patients and families to support self-management and decision making.</li> <li>• Provide guidance and support to the perioperative staff nurse in planning, implementation and evaluation of perioperative education for patients.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accept responsibility for own continuous professional development and the maintenance of professional competence and NMC revalidation.</li> <li>• Facilitate and contribute to the dissemination and implementation of learning from, for example incident reporting, team briefs/de-briefs, compliments and complaints, learning/safety alerts etc to promote the delivery of safe, effective person-centred care.</li> <li>• Facilitate and engage in the development of learning from supervision, feedback, reflection, and evaluation to support learning in the perioperative environment.</li> <li>• Contribute to the development, delivery and evaluation of educational initiatives that address the needs of staff and patients.</li> <li>• Engage in the development of learning from supervision, feedback, reflection, and evaluation.</li> <li>• Motivate, stimulate, encourage, and facilitate the learning process.</li> <li>• Use effective reflective practice techniques.</li> <li>• Participate in practice assessment/teaching/facilitation.</li> <li>• Contribute to learning needs analysis.</li> </ul>

## Core Competencies for Perioperative Senior Staff Nurse

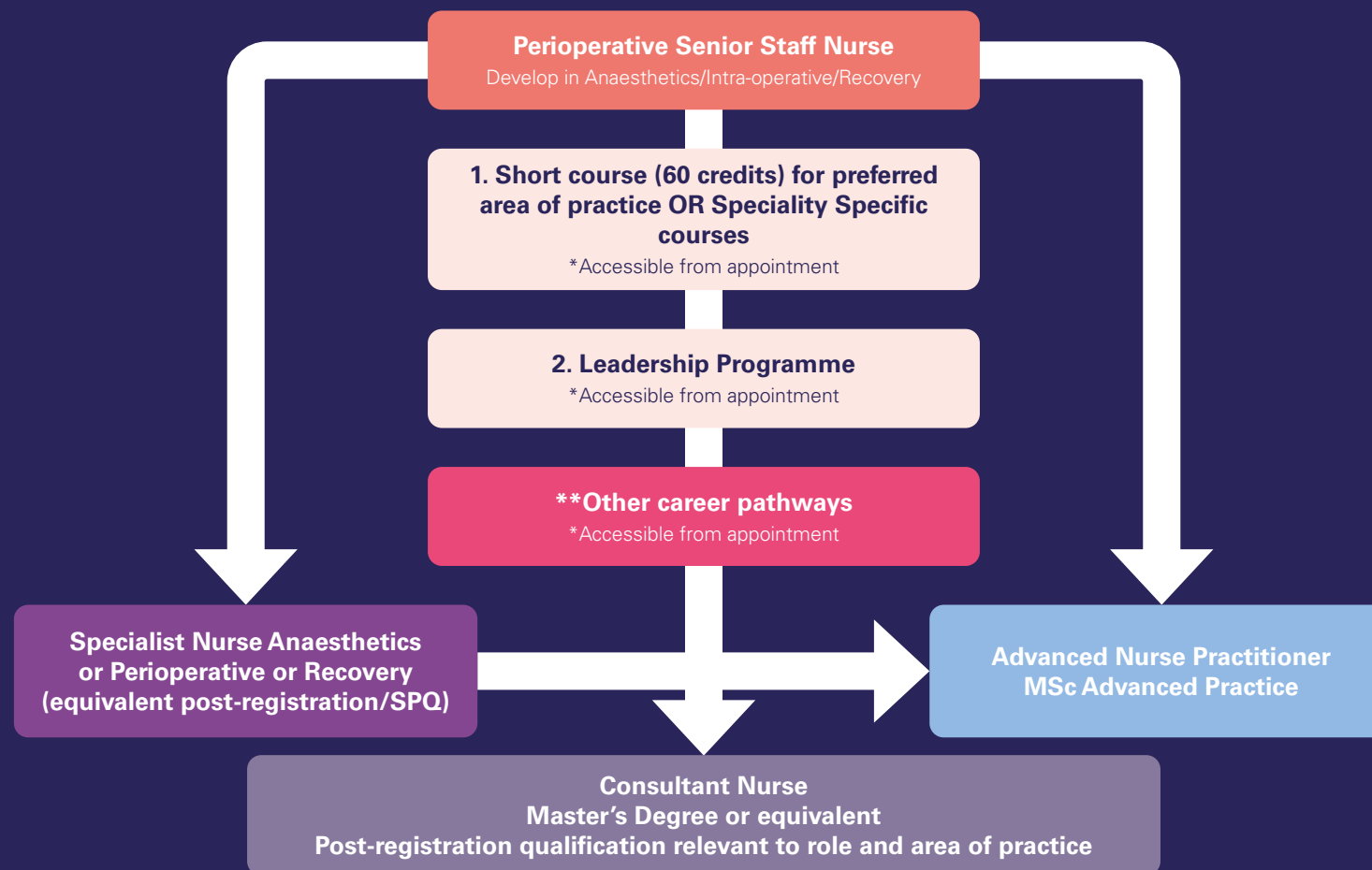
Pillar: Education & Learning	
Creation of the Learning Environment	
Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role	Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote an effective learning environment that optimises learning opportunities.</li> <li>Participate as required in educational audit and professional groups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use facilitation and teaching skills.</li> <li>Develop and implement speciality specific educational resources.</li> <li>Implement improvement approaches such as learning audit/safety and governance and appreciative inquiry.</li> <li>Supervise and support others within each team members role and competence.</li> </ul>
Pillar: Leadership	
Aspects of Practice - Teamwork and Development	
Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role	Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Act as a positive role model.</li> <li>Demonstrate leadership skills when leading a team modelling effective team working, problem solving and collective leadership.</li> <li>Demonstrate the value and unique contribution of Perioperative Nurses within the Perioperative Team.</li> <li>Work effectively across professional boundaries, actively involving and respecting others' contribution.</li> <li>Apply the principles of human factors to foster a caring, safe and supportive environment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate clinical leadership behaviours and skills.</li> <li>Foster a culture of openness, recognising duty of candour and act on concerns raised.</li> <li>Contribute to the allocation, management, and monitoring of resources.</li> <li>Use Information Systems to inform decision making, safe staffing and workloads.</li> <li>Develop own resilience to manage the demands and challenges of their role and use appropriate organisational support systems.</li> </ul>

## Core Competencies for Perioperative Senior Staff Nurse

Pillar: Leadership	
Professional and Organisational Leadership	
Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role	Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guide the Perioperative Staff Nurse in decision making practice.</li> <li>• Organise and delegate care, ensuring time management and resource efficiency.</li> <li>• Monitor and evaluate standards of care, adhering to defined guidelines, policies, standards, and protocols to ensure the delivery of safe, effective and person-centred care.</li> <li>• Understand the organisational structure and contribute to the development of perioperative services.</li> <li>• Contribute to clinical effectiveness and management of resources.</li> <li>• Demonstrate effective performance of staff against local policies and procedures</li> <li>• Act upon and listen to concerns raised and escalate these in line with local policies to support the psychological safety of self and others.</li> <li>• Contribute to specific aspects of change management and service improvement.</li> <li>• Monitor the effectiveness and impact of change.</li> <li>• Use quality improvement methodologies to support service improvement and innovation.</li> <li>• Work collaboratively with others to challenge current practice, identify gaps in service provision, implement initiatives to enhance and/or redesign services</li> <li>• Represent Trust on Contract Adjudication Group (CAG) groups and other relevant forums.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond autonomously and confidently to planned and uncertain situations, managing themselves and others confidently.</li> <li>• Utilise the skills of:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– negotiation</li> <li>– influencing</li> <li>– organisation</li> <li>– problem solving</li> <li>– decision making</li> <li>– resource management</li> <li>– critical language in practice</li> <li>– performance management</li> <li>– skill mix and rostering of nursing team</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Demonstrate:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– critical thinking skills</li> <li>– analytical skills</li> <li>– evaluation skills</li> <li>– advanced communication skills</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Advocate for the implementation of relevant legal and ethical principles related to person-centred care.</li> </ul>
Pillar: Research and Development	
Evidence into Practice	
Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role	Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measure own practice and interventions against person-centred outcomes.</li> <li>• Evaluate perioperative practitioner’s interventions on the wider individual/patient experience.</li> <li>• Engage with patients and use the feedback from their experience of care to improve outcomes and service delivery.</li> <li>• Access databases for research and evidence related to area of practice.</li> <li>• Consolidate understanding and application of different research approaches and identify ideas for research/development activity from own practice.</li> <li>• Utilise knowledge to identify, contribute to and participate in audit, quality improvement and research and use findings to inform decision making.</li> <li>• Support the implementation and dissemination of audit, quality/service improvement and research findings through team meetings, Trust presentations, regional events, and publications.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Search database and apply information literacy skills.</li> <li>• Demonstrate confidence in digital literacy skills and systems.</li> <li>• Critically appraise research and available evidence to enhance the quality, safety, and effectiveness of person-centred care.</li> <li>• Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– local processes that contribute to quality improvement</li> <li>– Research governance – ethics, data protection UK GDPR, confidentiality, informed consent.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## PERIOPERATIVE SENIOR STAFF NURSE EDUCATION

Successful completion of **1 and 2** is **essential** in the Senior Staff Nurse role



\* Subject to availability

\*\*Senior Staff Nurses can progress along career pathways including managerial, education or research roles.

## 5.6 PERIOPERATIVE SPECIALIST NURSE ROLE

### LEVEL OF PRACTICE 7

The Perioperative Specialist Nurse is responsible for providing continuity of perioperative care. They exercise a higher level of clinical autonomy, independent decision-making and leadership in complex and high-risk situations. They build on experience including further development of technical and non-technical skills.

#### Broad Sphere of Responsibility/Role

- Deliver person-centred care as part of the perioperative team.
- Undertake personal and professional development.
- Contribute to the supervision of undergraduate/pre-registration nurses and support workers within team.

The Perioperative Specialist Nurse role is aligned to the [NMC standards](#) of proficiency (2022) and the Role Framework for Specialist Nurses (DoH 2025a).

## Core Competencies for Perioperative Specialist Nurse

Pillar: Clinical Practice	
Safe, Effective and Person-Centred Care	
Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role	Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate specialist competence, innovation and clinical leadership in perioperative practice.</li> <li>• Work autonomously and independently as part of the perioperative team, exercising a higher level of clinical autonomy, independent decision making and leadership in addition to specialist knowledge and skills to enhance clinical care.</li> <li>• Assume accountability and responsibility for clinical practice in the perioperative environment, ensuring best person-centred care for anaesthesia, surgical intervention and postoperative recovery.</li> <li>• Incorporate clinical governance into own practice and support others to do so.</li> <li>• Recognise the patient's health beliefs and adapt behaviour and approaches to enable self-management, while ensuring involvement with family, carers and significant others.</li> <li>• Support and manage staff within the perioperative area ensuring that patient needs are assessed, care planned, implemented and evaluated, and ensure care is evidence-based and risks identified and managed to promote health and well-being.</li> <li>• Contribute, as part of the inter-disciplinary team, to the development, implementation and maintenance of policies, procedures, standards and protocols to ensure adherence to, and delivery of the highest level of person-centred care at all times.</li> <li>• Support others to incorporate quality improvement processes into practice.</li> <li>• Provide and share complex information effectively and concisely using advanced communication skills for a range of situations and contexts to ensure patient safety and continuity of care.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be fully conversant with the NMC Standards for Specialist Practice, Professional Conduct and other relevant documents, which support and maintain standards of professional practice for nurses.</li> <li>• Apply specialist knowledge, skills and behaviours appropriate to specific area of perioperative practice.</li> <li>• Apply comprehensive knowledge of clinical guidelines and standards within the speciality/area of practice.</li> <li>• Contribute to the development and review of protocols and standard operating procedures.</li> <li>• Appraise and identify significant aspects in conversations with others and respond appropriately.</li> <li>• Understand the concept and nature of inequalities in health and wellbeing.</li> </ul>
Professional Judgement and Decision Making	
Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role	Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work autonomously by virtue of specialist knowledge and skills.</li> <li>• Utilise evidence-based knowledge with freedom to exercise judgement about actions guided by professional accountability and responsibility.</li> <li>• Draw on a range of sources in making judgements including clearly defined policies, procedures and protocols.</li> <li>• Demonstrate proficiency in risk assessment and management in the promotion of patient safety and positive person-centred outcomes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflect in practice on own values and beliefs and support others in ethical decision making.</li> <li>• Use critical thinking to explore and analyse evidence, cases and situations in clinical practice.</li> </ul>



## Core Competencies for Perioperative Specialist Nurse

<b>Pillar: Education &amp; Learning</b>	
<b>Learning, Teaching and Assessment</b>	
<b>Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role</b>	<b>Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and support the achievement of learning needs of individuals/team in response to service need and personal development planning.</li> <li>Evaluate the effectiveness of educational interventions.</li> <li>Consolidate own assessment skills and support others in making assessment judgements.</li> <li>Participate in uni- and inter-disciplinary teaching and student selection in Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) and/ or other education organisations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consolidate core skills to support workplace learning.</li> <li>Reflect on practice and support reflection in others.</li> <li>Understand and apply standards and guidelines that underpin a quality learning environment.</li> <li>Undertake and respond to evaluation of learning.</li> </ul>
<b>Creation of the Learning Environment</b>	
<b>Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role</b>	<b>Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create an effective learning environment that ensures learning opportunities for staff and students.</li> <li>Lead/participate in educational audit and learning needs analysis.</li> <li>Facilitate access to a range of clinical support strategies (mentoring, coaching, clinical supervision and action learning).</li> <li>Support ongoing mandatory learning including orientation, induction and relevant educational/ development opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate high level of specialist skill in facilitation, support, supervision and developing learning needs analysis.</li> <li>Use a range of information to review/evaluate the learning environment.</li> </ul>
<b>Pillar: Leadership</b>	
<b>Teamwork and Development</b>	
<b>Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role</b>	<b>Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Act as a positive role model.</li> <li>Promote teamwork within defined area of responsibility.</li> <li>Contribute to and manage other members of the team by sharing information and expertise.</li> <li>Contribute to the achievement of the teams' purpose and objectives.</li> <li>Manage professional development of individuals and groups.</li> <li>Contribute to workload and staff planning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effectively manage others.</li> <li>Be receptive to the contribution of others.</li> <li>Implement suggestions for own improvement and that of others.</li> <li>Understand and use tools to support learning and the implementation of staff personal development plans.</li> <li>Understand own contribution to delivering safe, effective and high-quality care.</li> </ul>

## Core Competencies for Perioperative Specialist Nurse

Pillar: Leadership	
Professional and Organisational Leadership	
Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role	Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Act as an agent for change.</li> <li>• Coordinate episodes of care within the perioperative environment.</li> <li>• Provide leadership in identifying critical incidents and reporting findings.</li> <li>• Provide leadership for quality improvement and service development to enhance people's wellbeing and experiences of healthcare.</li> <li>• Encourage staff to contribute ideas and solutions for quality improvement and innovation.</li> <li>• Actively engage and contribute specialist nursing knowledge and skills within the inter-professional team for positive person-centred outcomes.</li> <li>• Actively contribute to a variety of professional networks.</li> <li>• Negotiate and influence locally in terms of professional practice and in relation to healthcare.</li> <li>• Recognise early signs of poor practice/performance and take appropriate measures to address concerns.</li> <li>• Respond in a transparent and structured way to any complaints from staff about the unacceptable or unfair behaviours of other members of the team.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate expertise in clinical skills and assessment within perioperative field of practice.</li> <li>• Organise and implement change.</li> <li>• Support others to improve and enhance practice.</li> <li>• Display creativity and innovation in exploring and implementing possible solutions to problems and evaluate their effectiveness.</li> <li>• Lead, persuade and influence others effectively.</li> <li>• Act as a positive and supportive role model, demonstrate advocacy, cultural competency and leadership.</li> <li>• Contribute to effective management of a budget in conjunction with others.</li> </ul>

## Core Competencies for Perioperative Specialist Nurse

Pillar: Research and Development	
Guidelines and Evidence-Based Practice	
Examples of Sphere of Responsibility/Role	Key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and use skills and knowledge of staff to support or undertake research related activity such as audit, evaluation, and wider research for the benefit of the organisation.</li> <li>• Use research-related approaches to assess how evidence is being used to inform the quality of care of individuals by self and others.</li> <li>• Observe and record data using appropriate methods, tools and technology for complex audits or clinical trials or projects.</li> <li>• Participate in research related activity including analysis of information.</li> <li>• Identify and disseminate information on HSC Trust/University programmes of research/forums/special interest groups/networks relevant to area of practice.</li> <li>• Contribute to the development of guidelines and policy at local and where appropriate, at regional and national level.</li> <li>• Critically appraise, distil and share research activity findings, which can be shared through local bulletins, team meetings, forum/ professional journals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand different research approaches, methods and analysis.</li> <li>• Adhere to research governance for self and others.</li> <li>• Support others to understand audit/evaluation and quality improvement approaches.</li> <li>• Assist others to access, use and apply evidence from databases relevant to area of practice.</li> </ul>

## PERIOPERATIVE SPECIALIST NURSE EDUCATION

Specialist Practice Nursing Qualification (SPQ) or equivalent post-registration qualification relevant to role and area of perioperative practice.

Where prescribing is required for the role, include: NMC recorded Independent and Supplementary Prescribing Qualification (V300).

## 5.7 PERIOPERATIVE ADVANCED NURSE PRACTITIONER ROLE

### LEVEL OF PRACTICE 8

The Perioperative Advanced Nurse Practitioner works at an advanced level and is an expert professional using evidence-informed knowledge, skills and capability to influence, shape, deliver and lead safe and effective person-centred care. They undertake comprehensive health assessments, manage risk, uncertainty and complexity across a range of illnesses & conditions.

The Advanced Nursing Practice role is supported by a set of four pillars and a Role Framework for Advanced Nurse Practitioners (DoH 2025b) which are aligned to the Principles of Advanced Practice (NMC 2025). This supersedes the Advanced Nursing Practice Framework (DHSSPS 2016).

The principles enable individual professionals who have attained the capabilities of advanced level practice and are employed in an Advanced Practice role to achieve their full potential and to optimise their contribution to meeting population health needs, delivering person centred care and improving quality, safety and efficiency. They also ensure the service is delivered effectively for the benefit of the people, families and communities they serve.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> The NMC is developing Standards for Advanced Practice and until these are published, Advanced Nurse Practitioners should work to the Principles for Advanced Practice.

## **Perioperative Advanced Nurse Practitioner**

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The Principles for Advanced Practice (NMC 2025) is included in the *Role Framework for Advanced Nurse Practitioners* (DoH 2025b)

<https://nipec.hscni.net>

The Principles (NMC 2025) are set out under two headings:

1. Principles applying to the individual professional working at an advanced level of practice, and
2. Principles applying to those organisations that employ individual professionals working at an advanced level of practice (this includes self-employed practitioners). <https://nmc.org.uk>

The NMC is developing Standards for Advanced Practice which NIPEC will map against each of the four pillars of practice. Until these standards are published Advanced Nurse Practitioners should use the Principles for Advanced Practice (NMC 2025). NIPEC's self-assessment and development tool can also be used to help practitioners prepare for revalidation, appraisal/supervision.

The Advanced Nurse Practitioner will undertake comprehensive health assessments and will manage a range of illnesses and conditions in the care settings within which the individual works.

### **The Perioperative Advanced Nurse Practitioner will:**

- Practise autonomously within an expanded scope of practice.
- Demonstrate a person-centred approach to care delivery.
- Develop and sustain partnerships and networks to influence and improve healthcare outcomes and healthcare delivery.
- Educate, supervise or mentor nursing colleagues and others in the healthcare team.

Contribute to and undertake activities, including research, that monitor and improve the quality of healthcare and the effectiveness of practice.

It must be noted that only those who meet the requirements of the role and who are employed as Advanced Nurse Practitioners, will be able to use the title.

## **PERIOPERATIVE ADVANCED NURSE PRACTITIONER EDUCATION**

Advanced Nurse Practitioners must have successfully completed an MSc Advanced Practice programme and NMC recorded Independent/Supplementary Prescribing qualification as set out in the *Role Framework for Advanced Nurse Practitioners* (DoH 2025b).

<https://nipec.hscni.net>.

Students undertaking the MSc Advanced Practice programme will be supported in practice by a clinical practice Practice Assessor and Practice Supervisor/s who will be a nurse with an Advanced Nurse Practitioner qualification or a practitioner from another discipline other than nursing for example, a GMC registered Consultant/Specialty Doctor grade or equivalent who meets the criteria for this role. In some instances, this may be a practitioner from another discipline other than nursing for example, a GMC registered Consultant/Specialty Doctor grade or equivalent.

The Perioperative Advanced Nurse Practitioner should be supported through annual appraisal and supervision to continue to develop skills in their role.

## **5.8 PERIOPERATIVE CONSULTANT NURSE ROLE**

### **LEVEL OF PRACTICE 9**

The Perioperative Consultant Nurse practises autonomously as an expert at a highly advanced level in the delivery of quality, safe and effective person-centred care. They use an innovative, evidenced based approach combined with complex decision-making skills to facilitate better outcomes and experience for patients. They develop and improve practice through involvement in local, regional and national groups and disseminate their findings at national and international conferences. They establish links with Higher Education Institutions and lead innovations across the perioperative environment. This is a bespoke role based on service/population need and the individual could for example work across pre, intra and post-operative care in the perioperative environment. This will be assessed and determined by each Trust where benefits for service users can be quantified and improvements in health outcomes measured.

### **Perioperative Consultant Nurses:**

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- Lead and influence service and policy development at a strategic level.
- Provide a strong clinical commitment and expert advice to clinical colleagues.
- Develop and influence professional practice locally and nationally through the promotion and evaluation of evidence-based practice, research and service development.
- Provide oversight of perioperative education through the development and promotion of a range of learning opportunities across the perioperative multidisciplinary team.
- Lead service/quality improvement/innovations across Interdisciplinary teams.

**The Perioperative Consultant Nurse role is supported by a Role Framework for Consultant Nurses and Consultant Midwives (Level of Practice 9; DoH 2025c) and aligned to the four pillars of practice.** <https://nipec.hscni.net>

### **PERIOPERATIVE CONSULTANT NURSE EDUCATION**

In order to be eligible to apply for a Perioperative Consultant Nurse role, practitioners must be on the NMC register, have a Master's Level Programme or equivalent and post-registration qualification relevant to area of practice and may have a NMC Independent and Supplementary Prescribing Qualification.

The Perioperative Consultant Nurse role demands a portfolio of career long learning, experience and formal education, up to or beyond master's degree level; research experience and a record of scholarship and publication. Perioperative Consultant Nurses will:

- Seek opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills within all four core competency areas. It is important that the individual continues their portfolio of practice development, scholarship, research and is recognised as an expert and innovator in Perioperative Nursing.
- Develop their role in leading and influencing strategic planning, interprofessional and interagency working including service developments.
- Have well established professional networks and collaborations associated with Perioperative Nursing, which will assist them with supervision and support them to develop their professional knowledge and leadership skills. These networks are an important element of the individual's CPD and can be local, regional, national and international.



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# APPENDIX 1

- [A Collective Leadership Framework for Nursing and Midwifery](#)
- [Advanced Nursing Practice Framework - Supporting Advanced Nursing Practice in Health and Social Care Trusts](#)
- [The Association for Perioperative Practice](#)
- [All Ireland Digital Capability Framework for Health and Social Care](#)
- [Career Framework for Health](#)
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- [Induction and development pathway for nursing assistants](#)
- [ICO UK General Data Protection Regulation](#)
- [ICO UK GDPR guidance and resources](#)
- Knowledge and Skills Framework.
- [NHS England Improving patient safety culture – a practical guide](#)
- [Published guidance, NICE advice and quality standards | Guidance | NICE](#)
- [NMC Principles for Advanced Practice](#)
- [NI Preceptorship Framework](#)
- [NMC Revalidation](#)
- [NMC Standards for prescribing programmes](#)
- [NMC Standards for student supervision and assessment](#)
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- [The NMC Code](#)



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