

Dear Colleague

PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING SERVICES – FUTURE FOCUS

Summary

1. To advise NHS Boards that, further to discussion with Executive Nurse Directors and Chief Executives, the current Public Health Nursing (PHN) role, as defined within *Nursing for Health 2001*, should be refocused and the titles of Health Visitor and School Nurse reintroduced. The role of Health Visitor should focus on 0 to 5 years (including preconception) and that of School Nurse focus on school years (5 to 19 years). Both Health Visitors and School Nurses will continue to be on the 3rd part of the NMC Register (Public Health Nursing). More information can be found in Annex A attached.

2. This takes account of the current and emerging policy landscape related to early years, children and families and the need to ensure we have a workforce with the capacity and capability to focus on the earliest years and school aged children. The Scottish Government will support implementation through the Children, Young People and Families Nursing Advisory Group which is chaired by an Executive Nurse Director. The Advisory Group will build on existing frameworks and policies in taking this work forward, including Getting it Right For Every Child (GIRFEC), The National Parenting Strategy, reintroduction of the 27-30 month review, roll out of the Family Nurse Partnership and A Scottish Framework for Nursing in Schools.

Action

3. NHS Boards are asked to work with staff, key stakeholders and partnership colleagues to implement this change. This Chief Executive Letter (CEL) can be obtained online at www.sehd.scot.nhs.uk

CEL 13 (2013)

28 June 2013

Addresses

For action

Chief Executives, NHS Boards and Special Health Boards
Executive Nurse Directors

For information

To following groups at NHS Boards and Special Health Boards:

Board Chairs
Medical Directors
Finance Directors
HR Directors
Directors of Education
Directors of Social Work
Child Health Commissioner's Group
Norman Provan
UK CNO

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Yours sincerely

R Moore

**ROS MOORE
CHIEF NURSING OFFICER**

Annex A

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Background

1. There have been significant developments in the maternity and early year's policy landscape since 2009 with several commitments on early years issues. For example: the development of a national parenting strategy; reintroduction of the 27-30 month review; roll out of the Family Nurse Partnership; refreshed Maternity Services Framework; establishment of the Early Years Task Force and associated work streams and the Children and Young People Bill. These policy developments and the planned legislation will have significant implications for the Public Health Nursing workforce, specifically those engaged with the 0-5 years population. These initiatives will also include a range of measures crucial to improving children's rights across Scotland and add momentum to implementation of the governments Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach.

2. We have discussed with the NHS Board Executive Nurse Directors the need to make explicit the respective roles of the health visitor and school nurse, alongside the respective education and training requirements within the above context. We have agreed that Health Visitors should focus on the population pre birth to age 5 years and School Nurses should focus on the 5 -11 years and 11-19 years respectively. We have also concluded that the titles of "Health Visitor" and "School Nurse" should be utilised. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the use of these "traditional" titles would be welcomed by the public who do not appear to fully understand or recognise the Public Health Nursing role and title. Partnership colleagues are supportive of this change.

Education

3. We are currently working with NHS Education for Scotland and colleagues from higher education to develop education programmes for the existing and future community nursing workforce, including Health Visitors and School Nurses. Further information will be available in due course.

What this means in practice

4. This refocusing of the PHN role will support the delivery of targeted interventions, delivered by a specialist workforce, who will be better equipped to address the specific needs of the respective age groups and their families. This should not be considered as a fragmentation of the existing service but as an opportunity to further enhance existing services through the development of a specialist integrated workforce. This re focus will also support NHS Boards in their workforce planning, service design and redesign programmes. Additionally, there is potential to reduce unhelpful variation through offering national guidance on core components of these roles.

Next Steps

5. A new Children, Young People and Families Nursing Advisory Group will take forward work to support NHS Boards to effect this change in 2013/14. The Group is chaired by an Executive Nurse Director and includes relevant stakeholders and partnership colleagues. The work of this Group will enable a coherent and consistent nursing contribution to Everyone Matters: Workforce 20:20 Vision related to these specific roles. Key objectives are to:

- Define the roles of Health Visitor and School Nurse during a child's different life stages - 0-5 (including pre-birth); 5 - 11 years and 11- 19 years respectively.
- Oversee the development of a Health Visiting caseload weighting model/tool.
- Develop national guidance to support implementation of the universal health assessment and the allocation of the Core and Additional Health Plan Indicators.
- Clarify health visiting and school nursing contribution to multi-agency work and partnerships.
- Provide guidance on vulnerability assessment in line with GIRFEC and evidence related policy.
- Examine and explore future health visiting and school nursing education provision.
- Provide guidance to ensure consistency of the nursing contribution within models of care for looked after and accommodated children.
- Consider the need for education programmes to be available for the future education of community children's nurses.

Further Information

6. If you would find it helpful to speak to someone about this refocusing of the Public Health Nurse role, please contact Dr Julia Egan, Professional Adviser for Early Years and Children's Services on 0131 244 5679 or Julia.egan@scotland.qsi.gov.uk