

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Nurse Practitioner

Reporting To: Team Leader

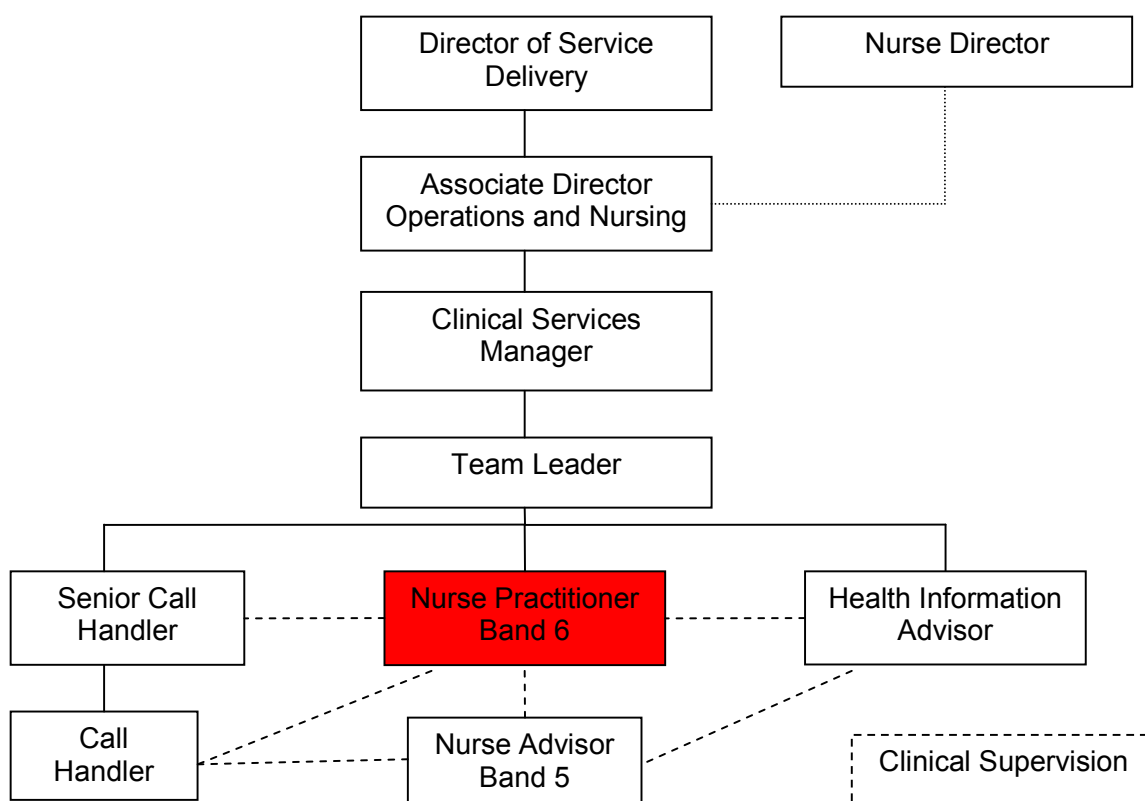
Department(s)/Location: Operations & Nursing

Job Reference number (coded): NP6

1. JOB PURPOSE

- To act as an autonomous practitioner providing a comprehensive telephone triage and clinical assessment service to patients and/or their carers/relatives resulting in a safe and appropriate clinical decision.
- To facilitate the provision of accurate healthcare information, self-care/health improvement advice or, where applicable, referral to the appropriate level and location of care, in order to meet the holistic and therapeutic requirements of the patient/carer.

2. ORGANISATIONAL POSITION



3. SCOPE AND RANGE

The Nurse Practitioner (NP)

- Will work autonomously within a health care team consisting of Clinical Service Managers, Team Leader, Nurse Practitioners, Nurse Advisors, as well as Call Handlers and Health Information Advisors (HIAs). The composition of this team will vary from shift to shift and Nurse Practitioners must be able to communicate effectively and professionally with all staff members.
- As part of a national service, will deal with calls of a very diverse nature covering all clinical aspects and issues, from an infinite variety of callers, whose cultural, social and emotional diversities require to be acknowledged and taken into consideration during the consultation.
- Will be required to use a multi skilled approach. Whilst using the available technology, the NP will use effective listening and communication skills in order to make clinical decisions, create records and refer to clinical reference literature during the consultation period.
- Must be able to retrieve and use information regarding healthcare provision in the patient's locality, allowing appropriate care to be accessed where necessary.

4. MAIN DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES

- In compliance with the nursing regulatory body (Nursing Midwifery Council – NMC) Codes of Conduct and Practice, and within ethical, legislative and organisational frameworks, the NP will work as an autonomous nurse practitioner, ensuring the privacy of the patient's interests and wellbeing at all times including patient confidentiality.
- The NP is the first clinical point of contact to access health care in the out of hours (OOH) periods for all of Scotland. The NP will identify and respond timeously to callers' needs which are Immediately Life Threatening (ILT) and arrange appropriate and safe SAS/SAS and GP attendance (Dual Response) if required.
- Patient triage and assessment is conducted by telephone, this being the only source of patient contact, and with all information regarding the patient being gathered in this way. NP's are required to use their clinical knowledge and expertise in conjunction with listening, questioning and probing skills in order to interpret the information obtained.
- During telephone consultation, the Nurse Practitioner will synthesise and analyse all relevant information to come to a differential diagnosis and/or negotiated clinically safe decision with specialist health improvement advice and appropriate referral to both internal and external resources following agreed processes.
- Following the completion of the call the NP must document the call on the Patient Record Management (PRM) software giving an accurate and concise clinical summary that outlines reasons for call, decisions reached, relevant patient history and onward transmission with timescale given to patient.

- The NP, having decided that the level of healthcare required is home care will negotiate and empower the caller with appropriate and relevant advice, advising caller to contact NHS 24 again should condition deteriorate.
- Where referral on to local healthcare services is necessary the NP will make arrangements for the appropriate service e.g. Out of Hours Centre, home visit (by appropriate professional), ambulance, or referral to local A&E Department, by transferring the information received to the relevant service via the appropriate transfer system
- The NP will be expected to maintain collaborative, inter-professional links with colleagues, external healthcare professionals and other agencies.
- Reflect on and contribute to feedback from Partner organisations, and, using this as a research and development indicator, identify areas for Continual Professional / Personal Development (CPD).
- The NP's involvement in lifelong learning will be integral to maintaining and developing practice, utilising CPD, self directed learning, reflective practice, coaching, clinical supervision, performance management in the interests and needs of self and the service.
- The NP will share specialist clinical knowledge with colleagues and be involved in the delivery of ongoing training, education and support of colleagues, e.g. as preceptor or coach.
- Participate in quality improvement through ongoing involvement in Clinical Audit and Call Review.

5. SYSTEMS AND EQUIPMENT

The Nurse Practitioner must be able to -

- Maintain accurate computerised consultation records using Patient Record Management (PRM) software.
- Use complex telephony systems to handle calls and must be able to operate these systems skilfully to ensure the 'patient journey' is smooth.
- Access clinical referencing sources to obtain information for a patient.
- Use the above systems simultaneously during the consultation with the patient and must have the ability to operate the systems while assessing the patient needs.
- Implement knowledge of the systems failure procedures when required.
- Actively participate in identifying Health and Safety risk issues.
- Access and make effective use of the language systems required for people with language or communication barriers e.g. Language Line or Text Talk

6. DECISIONS AND JUDGEMENTS

The Nurse Practitioner

- is required to work autonomously, reaching clinically appropriate decisions based on information received and the use of their knowledge and experience. Support and assistance is available and may be requested entirely at the discretion of the Nurse Practitioner if deemed necessary.
- is ultimately responsible, and therefore accountable, for their decisions made relating directly to patient care requirements, following telephone triage/clinical consultation and assessment
- will identify and respond timeously to callers needs which are Immediately Life Threatening (ILT) and arrange appropriate SAS/Dual Response, based on availability, location and timeframes.
- will, from the information received via the telephone from the patient, assess patient needs using their analytical and clinical skills, and reach a safe and effective decision regarding the appropriate level of care required. In some cases, this information will be restricted and the decision must be based on minimal information from the caller.
- must, where the caller is hostile or in an emotive or uncooperative state, and refusing to comply with advice which the Nurse Practitioner believes to be crucial to the patient's health/wellbeing, be aware of current procedures/responsibilities relating to his/her Duty of Care.
- will make a clinical decision using evidence based practice, then decide on the appropriate level of care and obtain the agreement of the patient to act on healthcare advice given or to access appropriate level of care.
- will make all arrangements for the patient to be further examined/treated by the particular care provider, should onward referral be required. For example they will contact OOH services giving all relevant details using computerised information links and/or verbally, by telephone.
- will act as the patient advocate during the consultation process, identifying potential risk factors for patients, their carers and others e.g. potential violent situations, child protection issues or mental welfare issues. Identified risk factors will be referred to the appropriate service through agreed NHS 24 procedures.

7. COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS

In order to successfully achieve a smooth patient journey, with the safe and desired outcome the Nurse Practitioner will -

- communicate with patients making clinical decisions from information given, obtaining agreement from the patient on the level of care.
- facilitate and ensure patient understanding of advice/disposition prior to conclusion of telephone consultation.

- identify requirement for additional resources to supplement home care advice which will be required by the patient .e.g. referral to health information services for written information.
- share specialist clinical knowledge with colleagues and be involved in the delivery of ongoing training, education and support of colleagues e.g. as preceptor or coach.
- Deal professionally and sensitively with highly personal, delicate, confidential and sometimes complex issues such as Bereavement, Child protection issues, and mental health calls.
- control and de-escalate situations which might prevent a safe and effective consultation such as the aggressive patient. ,
- deal with other barriers to effective communication such as sensory impairment.
- facilitate the consultation process utilising a high level of expertise, using appropriate interpersonal skills demonstrating empathy and understanding
- will participate in regular, formal and informal communications with team members and other members service e.g.
 - Internal – Medical, Nursing and Operations Directorates
 - External - Emergency and Out of Hours Services

8. PHYSICAL DEMANDS OF THE JOB

- The Nurse Practitioner is required to use a VDU and wear a telephone headset for the whole of their shift and is restricted to their personal workspace for most of the shift.
- Intense concentration is required for the majority of the shift while dealing with patient triage and consultations. The diversity of calls means that the Nurse Practitioner has no prior knowledge of the nature of the call before it arrives.
- Given the diversity and complexity of patient needs, sustained analytical and critical thinking skills are required during all stages of the telephone consultation period,
- The Nurse Practitioner regularly has to deal with abusive and aggressive callers.

9. MOST CHALLENGING/DIFFICULT PARTS OF THE JOB

The Nurse Practitioner is required to

- work as an autonomous practitioner, with the freedom to make clinical decisions based wholly on the nurse's experience, knowledge and analytical skills used during the telephone consultation process with any patient.

- handle very high call volumes varying in clinical diversity, frequently moving from one call to the next with virtually no gap between them using high levels of concentration for long periods of time with no fore warning of the nature of the call. Due to the high call volumes at times, the Nurse Practitioner may feel isolated, when all colleagues are occupied, and interaction with others is limited.
- work predominantly in the out of hours period unsocial shift patterns and public holidays.

10. KNOWLEDGE, TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED TO DO THE JOB

- RGN qualified.
- Minimum of 5 years post registration experience, preferably within an acute or primary care setting.
- Evidence of well developed critical decision making skills.
- Evidence of excellent communication and interpersonal skills.
- Experience of unscheduled care would be an advantage.
- Educated to degree level or equivalent preferable.
- IT skills must be acquired/developed during the in-house training period to allow a clear understanding and skilled use of the functionality of the specialised software systems.
- Successful completion of induction training programme and attainment of specified competencies is essential.

11. JOB DESCRIPTION AGREEMENT

A separate job description will need to be signed off by each jobholder to whom the job description applies.

Job Holder's Signature:

Date:

Head of Department Signature:

Date: