

# The Role of The Trainee/ Assistant Practitioner (TAP/AP) The North West Perspective

**Andy Morris Work-based Education Facilitator March 2015**

# Why were they introduced?

- Ensure the right flexible mix of skills to meet complex patient needs both in acute and non acute settings
- Free up registered practitioners to deliver what they have been uniquely trained for
- Support areas of skills shortage/recruitment difficulties
- Baby boomer retirement
- Changing demographic of the population
- Changes in technology and expectation
- Changes in Service Delivery Acute to Community
- Provide one fluid career pathway (NHS Career Framework)

# APs The North West Experience

- A strategic Approach to Introduction and Commissioning of the Role
- Across a range of service areas since 2002 including Social Care and the Not for Profit Sector
- Originally brown paper exercise around patient journey and workforce planning to identify appropriate role design
- Approx 3500 qualified and in training
- Approx 180 annual commissions including full costs of HEI fees and contribution to salary for replacement staff.

## AP North West Experience Cont :-

- Standardised AP Framework approach
- Development of support staff competence, knowledge and skills
- Developed through a Foundation Degree
- Work based learning supported by NW Work Based Education Facilitator Network
- Supports Core Standards for APs/Code of Conduct

# The Foundation Degree and AP Role

- 2 year Foundation degree leading to a diploma level qualification
- More than just a development opportunity
- A mixture of Core and Option Modules including negotiated work-based learning modules
- Introduction of a new role / Response to service need
- Enhancement of existing role
- Extension of existing role
- Role redesign
- Additional skills sets and a different level of responsibility
- Access to CPD funding post Qualification

# Support for the TAP and AP Role in the North West

- 2011 Creation of the Work based Education Facilitator Network . Role out of a single model of support across the North West. Hosted by UHSM Academy
- 2013 HEI tendering process to commission 3 Education Providers across the North West for The Foundation Degree in Health and Social Care (Foundation Degree) .
  - **Bolton University**
  - **Chester University**
  - **UCLAN**

**( Health Care Sciences delivered by MMU and Sheffield Hallam )**
- 2015 Become part of mainstream Commissioning with 3 Priority areas identified.
  - **Urgent and Emergency Care**
  - **Community Services including the Voluntary Sector**
  - **GP Practice**

# The Role of the WBEF Network

## Providing Support to:

- The Learner– advocate independent of employer and HEI
- The HEIs: to employers, linking theory to practice, support commissioning and recruitment.
- The Employer: development of Job Descriptions and scope of practice; support to mentors, organisational engagement; recruitment and selection of learners; benchmarking and quality assurance
- Stakeholders: HENW, Skills for Health and Care , RCN.  
Providing Regional forums for TAPs and APs to network and share good practice.

# Think about what your APs will do and how they will function ?

## 5. Career Framework Level 5

People at level 5 will have a comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge. They are able to use knowledge to solve problems creatively, make judgements which require analysis and interpretation, and actively contribute to service and self development. They may have responsibility for supervision of staff or training. Indicative or Reference title: Practitioner

## 4. Career Framework Level 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, but the worker makes judgements, plans activities, contributes to service development and demonstrates self development. They may have responsibility for supervision of some staff. Indicative or Reference title: Assistant/Associate Practitioner

## 3. Career Framework Level 3

People at level 3 require knowledge of facts, principles, 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 guidance and supervision available when needed. They will contribute to service development, and are responsible for self development. Indicative or Reference title: Senior Healthcare Assistants/Technicians

# Think at what level you might want the AP to function ?

Task / function/ procedure	Taking Decisions	Working under minimal supervision	Working under direct supervision	Assisting and Supporting	Advice and Signposting

# AP Role in MH and LD Services

- In-patient Services
- Community Services e.g. Early Intervention Teams, Crisis intervention Centre
- Dementia Services/ Memory Services/Care navigation
- Secure Services – Forensic
- Link with GP Practices

# Examples of Impact of AP Role

- Clozaril Clinic
- Depot Injections
- Care Pathway – cross boundary working
- Role Enhancement
- Reducing Length of Stay
- Memory services
- Care Navigators Role

# Implementing the Role

## What Hinders ?

- Introduction of the Role based on opportunities for the HCA and not service redesign/need
- No Vision for the qualified AP role. Job Descriptions/Scope of Practice
- Inconsistent approach in deploying the AP role
- Confusion over role
- Refusal to buy in to the role. 'Cheap Nurses/Therapists'
- Unwillingness to change
- Lack of support for the TAP in Practice/ Mentorship/ Time to develop practice
- Concerns around accountability
- Lack of Registration
- Local Policies and Procedure

## What Helps ?

- High level support for the role
- A desire to think outside the box and rethink service delivery. Someone to drive the role forward
- Clear Preparation for the role with a sound business case and identified service need
- Robust risk assessments
- Robust Job Description and Scope of Practice
- Recognition for the Role across services and the organisation
- Well supported mentors with clear expectation of assessment needs and accountability
- Review of Policy and Procedures within the organisation
- Allowing the qualified APs to utilise their skills and knowledge to improve patient care

# A few Words from one of the Qualified APs in Mental Health Services.

# The Role of the Assistant Practitioner

## Early Intervention in Psychosis Service



# Assessments and CPA Documentation

The Assistant Practitioners within the service assist the Multi Disciplinary Mental Health Practitioners undertake the PANNS assessments which is an assessment tool to identify emerging psychosis or if a patient is currently experiencing a psychotic episode. Specific training is needed to use this tool and is updated regularly. We also assist the practitioners in completing Initial Assessments, Risk Assessments and if required updating data on electronic systems after assessment's and Care Pathway Approach (CPA) reviews. We have accessed the appropriate training to facilitate this.



# Physical Health Screening

- **Practitioners in the service are drastically over stretched so Assistant Practitioners assist in meeting the necessary targets and delivering a holistic service to patients.**
- **When necessary, we visit patients in their own homes to undertake physical health monitoring such as blood pressure, pulse, weight, height, and obtain family history of cardiovascular and diabetes risks.**
- **We also run a physical health screening clinic for those patients who are able to access this service in the community. In addition to the above interventions we also offer a phlebotomy service, smoking cessation sessions and dietary and exercise advice and support.**

# Support Worker Liaison

**AP's provide case load management to Support Time and Recovery Workers (STR). This entails meeting with the STR's monthly to discuss any practical issues with their case loads. This includes providing direction in terms of activities an interventions and ensuring the time limits set by the patients' care coordinator are met.**

This work aims to ensure that patients receive equitable access to the resources and interventions of the STR Workers within the service.

# Funding Process: 6 Steps



## Assistant Practitioner (AP) – Applying for Funding

Have you considered developing your support worker workforce, enhancing their skills to that of an Assistant Practitioner? Funding is available which includes contribution to salaries and course fees for eligible organisations to develop new roles at Band 4 (NHS Agenda for Change) or equivalent.

Here are the steps to this process:

1. Identify how an Assistant Practitioner (AP) would enhance service delivery and patient care.

For support on identifying how the AP role can fit within your team please contact the Work Based Education Facilitator Network (WBEF) at [WBEFNetwork@UHSM.NHS.UK](mailto:WBEFNetwork@UHSM.NHS.UK)

2. Visit Health Education North West (HENW) website for details of the application process for September 2016 intakes

<http://www.nw.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/education-commissioning/applications-for-workforce-transformation-funding/>

Here you can also find links to case studies highlighting the impact of Assistant Practitioners in a variety of different service areas.

3. To ensure an excellent experience for the organisation and learner, the WBEF network will work with you to complete a Preparation for Application Checklist, offering support and guidance in any areas where you need help.
4. Applications close on the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2016. Your application for funding will be reviewed by a panel and if successful you will be notified by HENW in early March.
5. Prospective candidates will be interviewed between May and June 2016. The panel will include employer, WBEF and University representation.
6. Upon appointing successful candidates, ensure that funding documents are returned to Ruth Cunliffe at [ruth.cunliffe@nw.hee.nhs.uk](mailto:ruth.cunliffe@nw.hee.nhs.uk) in line with notified deadline.



# Useful Links

- Dementia Care Navigators Event :<http://www.cmscnsenate.nhs.uk/strategic-clinical-network/our-networks/mental-health-dementia-and-neurological-conditions/senate-news/dementia-care-navigation-event/>
- Case studies and resources: <https://www.ewin.nhs.uk/>
- Medicines administration: <http://www.nwwmhub.nhs.uk/media/41474/final-report-25-june-2012-.pdf>