

from shared learning and development. It encourages co-creation of learning opportunities with the aspiring Nurse Consultants.

Aims In our presentation we will explore the advantages/challenges of developing a contemporary programme of education and support for aspiring Nurse Consultants, as a prototype to develop consultant nurses of the future who can fill the requirement for consultant level input to hospice and broader palliative care workforces. The paper considers how this programme might be upscaled.

Approach An initial cohort of three aspiring Nurse Consultants at St Christopher's will be joined by further candidates to start a formal programme of learning, augmented by in-role support and reflection. All attend to clinical practice, service development, leadership, research and QI. The detail of the approach reflects seminal work by Manley, Taylor and Canadian capabilities related to the delivery of palliative care.

Results We will report on progress related to recruitment, the detail of the programme, development of the community of practice to which all participants will join and any learning along the way. Also, our insights regarding the value of such a course to support the increasing need for high quality end of life care as detailed in the Long-Term Plan and the Health and Social Care White Paper.

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DEVELOPING A NURSE PRACTITIONER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME TO SUPPORT CAREER PROGRESSION

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Nurse Practitioners are registered nurses with additional education and clinical experience. They are able to diagnose conditions, perform physical assessment, interpret diagnostic tests and prescribe medication within a holistic patient-centred framework (Collins & Small, 2019. *Can Oncol Nurs J.* 29: 4). The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the need for more nurses with advanced skills, such as prescribing, in our local area. These skills were required to support complex patients and their families in the home environment and achieve a good death.

The hospice identified the need to develop a programme which would support developmental roles in the community setting and provide a clinical career pathway. A 2-year programme was developed which identified key learning opportunities for those in the developmental roles, which could be accessed alongside their academic programme of study. Year 1 of the programme focused on learning opportunities, which increased the nurses' clinical skills and supported their learning in history taking and physical assessment. Year 2 focused on learning opportunities, which supported their learning in relation to prescribing and consolidated their learning from year 1.

The aim of the programme was to provide staff with clear career progression, and a programme which would enable them to enter the role of Nurse Practitioner confidently and competently. Whilst formal evaluation is still to take place, the initial indications are that this is an effective programme and as such, the second cohort has been recruited to support succession planning within the organisation. The role has been popular and the career progression has aided retention of staff. The programme has been

expanded into the Advice and Referral centre with two new development posts recruited to.

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PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE: GROWING OUR OWN CLINICAL NURSE SPECIALISTS

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Background A shortage of experienced nurses suitably qualified to work as Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS) in palliative care, was recognised and predicted many years ago (Skills for Health, 2013). Shortages in our healthcare workforce are now so severe that they are defined as endemic (King's Fund, 2022). With no recognised qualification or set experience required to work as a CNS (National Council for Palliative Care, 2016), this presents the problem of how to develop willing nurses into this role.

Aims To create a robust training programme of sufficient education, experience and support to produce nurses who are competent to work at 'specialist level' (NHS England, 2016).

Method A hospice panel of senior practitioners, guided by a published concept analysis (Griffith, 2018. *Int J Palliat Nurs.* 24: 399), devised a training programme and set of competencies to support the progression of registered nurses to CNS level. The two-year training programme includes working within care teams alongside CNS mentors, as well as placements in the in-patient unit and with outside agencies, such as hospital palliative care, heart failure, COPD and oncology teams. The trainee CNSs also receive clinical supervision and attend monthly teaching sessions covering topics designed to support the necessary learning, including advanced symptom control and communication skills. Promotion to full CNS will be on completion of a set of competencies, and approval of the panel.

Results It is too early to report results at this stage. However, five trainee CNSs were employed in the last seven months, and are already making progress with learning and competency completion.

Conclusion/Learning At a time when nationally there are minimal applicants for full CNS positions, successful recruitment suggests that this project offers an opportunity to address a gap in the workforce. The robustness of the competencies and training process also ensures that in future, this hospice can hope to have five fully competent CNSs to complement the existing team. Ongoing evaluation/refinement is part of the process.

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FACILITATING A HEALTHFUL CULTURE THROUGH SELF-COMPASSION

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Background COVID-19 has further highlighted that the physical and emotional wellbeing of healthcare staff must be of equal priority to that of patients. Organisations can do a lot to promote informal support. Whilst facilitating training of staff to become resilience based clinical supervisors, an organisational gap was identified - supporting wellbeing of