A framework for Clinical Education Careers for Nurses in Scotland has been developed to enhance clinical education career opportunities and positively contribute to staff development, retention and the practice education experience of all staff.

The ultimate aim is to enhance patient experience and support safe and effective care through the consistent provision of appropriate educational support in practice, at all levels, and wherever that practice may be.

The framework was developed as part of the Modernising Nursing Careers initiative (Scottish Executive 2006) in collaboration with stakeholder representation from NHS Education for Scotland, Scottish Government Health Directorate, NHS Scotland, Education Institutions and Professional Organisations. A review of models of employment was undertaken on behalf of NHS Education for Scotland to inform this work (Buchan et al. 2008).

Key features of the framework

- adopts a principles based approach for transforming clinical education careers
- relates to strategic drivers and national frameworks
- recommends educational preparation to support career planning
- describes broad capabilities and spheres of responsibility
- recognises roles with a specific remit for education as well as those where education is integral to another role
- supports both horizontal and vertical career progression including movement between service and educational organisations

Principles for clinical education careers

- nursing is a practice-based profession and requires support for education in both practice and academic settings in order to enhance, directly or indirectly, high quality patient care
- clinical education roles are integral to workforce planning for effective patient care delivery
- shared values across service and education organisations promote a commitment to develop, support and maintain a positive clinical learning environment
- clinical educators are accountable professionals and must be engaged in lifelong learning to expand and develop their unique expertise
- knowledge, skills and attributes, which are essential for clinical educator roles, are recognised and developed at all levels
- a framework for clinical education careers provides a consistent approach to role development and the application of the evolving evidence base for practice

Progress with this work is within the wider context of Clinical Academic (Research) Careers and Modernising Clinical Careers within Midwifery and Allied Health Professions.

The development of the clinical education framework supports health and education organisations, workforce planners, managers and individuals to develop flexible and responsive career pathways, which support quality improvement and Better Health, Better Care for the people of Scotland.

References


The Clinical Education Career Framework progress to date (NES 2009) and supporting information can be accessed at www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/practice_education/work/careerspathway/