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07 March 2023

Dear Crystal

Draft QNI Field Specific Standards consultation response

We welcome the opportunity to comment on The Queen's Nursing Institute's (QNI) draft field specific standards. As you will be aware, the NMC developed and rolled out a strategic programme of change for education for nurses and midwives (and in setting standards for our new profession - nursing associates). As part of this strategic programme of change, in 2019 we embarked on a [review of our post-registration standards](#) to review our [Standards of proficiency for specialist community public health nurses](#) (SCPHN) and [Standards of proficiency for community nursing specialist practice qualifications](#) (SPQ).

Background

The ambition for the new NMC proficiencies for community nursing specialist practice qualifications reflect the specialist knowledge, skills and attributes required by nurses working in the community in any roles which involve more autonomous decision making and in situations that require registered nurses to manage greater clinical complexity and risk, both in terms of the people they care for, the caseloads they manage and the services they work within, which in turn may be integrated with other agencies, professionals and disciplines.

In 2018 we published [new Standards of proficiency for registered nurses](#) and these are organised under seven headings, and were designed to ensure that across all four fields of nursing practice, registered nurses are able to meet the person-centred, holistic care needs of the people they encounter in their practice who may have a range of mental, physical, cognitive, behavioural, social or spiritual needs.

Post-registration standards

This approach and format from our 2018 registered nurse proficiencies has been carried through to our new proficiencies for community nursing SPQs (2022); they demonstrate what professionals with these qualifications need to know and be able to do that surpasses the registered nurse proficiencies to meet the diverse, often complex needs of people of all ages, in their home, in settings close to home and in the community.

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These post-registration standards apply to the five fields of community nursing SPQs that already existed and a new community nursing SPQ in Health and Social Care. However, importantly the evidence base and their application in these different fields of community nursing practice will differ.

The new community nursing SPQ in health and social care annotation does not specify a particular field of health and social care community nursing role and can be applied to registered nurses who work in a range of specialist roles in the community, including potential new roles that are emerging in the community, however, education providers are expected to specify the different field of community nursing.

A prescribing qualification is optional for community nursing SPQ programmes. Where community nursing SPQ programmes offer post-registration community nursing students admission to an NMC approved independent/supplementary prescribing programme (V300) it will be mapped to the [RPS Competency Framework for all Prescribers](#).

Specific comments about the Draft QNI Field Specific SPQ Standards

We appreciate the efforts to ensure that the draft QNI field specific standards align with our updated 2022 post-registration standards for community nursing SPQs. As with the previously published QNI voluntary standards we appreciate that some education providers and partners may wish to include voluntary standards within their programme design. We would welcome clear communication within the documents that these QNI field specific standards are voluntary standards and how they align to our regulatory community nursing SPQ standards.

We have provided our observations on the draft QNI field specific SPQ standards in the attached annexe.

Programme approval and implementation of the NMC standards of proficiency for community nursing SPQ standards

All approved education institutions (AEIs) who wish to offer post-registration programmes will need to seek approval by the NMC prior to commencing any new programme in line with the 2022 standards.

We have communicated this information to them and reiterated the need to read the new NMC [Standards for post-registration programmes](#) in conjunction with the NMC [Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education](#) and [Standards for student supervision and assessment](#) which apply to all NMC approved programmes.

Education providers and their practice placement partners must meet our programme standards in order to be approved to deliver a programme and in ensuring that post-registration students learning is tailored to meet the proficiencies which lead to one of the community nursing SPQs: community children's nursing, community learning disabilities nursing, community mental health nursing, district nursing, general practice nursing or community nursing in health and social care.

AEIs and their practice learning partners are responsible and accountable for the development, delivery and management of post-registration programme curricula. The individual learning needs of students should be taken into account and learning should be tailored for the intended field of practice. Post-registration community nursing programmes may offer various routes to community nursing SPQ qualifications however, all programmes must include routes within the programme specific to the relevant fields of community nursing specialist practice for which approval is being sought.

As part of [our quality assurance](#) (QA) process, institutions will need to submit evidence to show how they meet our new post-registration standards. All post-registration education providers must have new programmes approved against the new standards by 1 September 2024.

We have appointed two new post-registration advisers to support implementation activity across the UK and they would be happy to support any local or national workshops that QNI are planning.

We look forward to continue to collaborating with you further on the Draft QNI Field Specific Standards and the implementation of the NMC community nursing SPQ standards.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Anne Trotter', written over a horizontal line.

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