



CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE NURSE ACADEMICS UK

BACKGROUND

The contribution of children's nurses to the health and wellbeing of children and young people in the UK

Children's nurses make a significant and sustained contribution to the health and wellbeing of children and young people up to the age of nineteen years in the United Kingdom. Essentially, qualified children's nurses secure the best possible physical and emotional health outcomes for the children and young people in their care, supporting and working with families in the joint endeavour of caring for their children. They require a sound knowledge of developmental anatomy, physiology and pathophysiology and a clear understanding of emotional and social development specific to the 0-19 year spectrum. They also need the skills to apply this knowledge in order to promote healthy development and meet the physical and emotional support needs of this group in the context of a wide variety of clinical conditions. Significantly, this includes mental health, since children and young people experiencing long term illness are twice as likely to develop emotional disorders. We now know that many mental health problems in adult life start by the age of 18 years, and that around one in ten children need support or treatment for mental health problems ranging from short spells of depression or anxiety through to severe and persistent conditions¹.

Children's nurses require an understanding of the complex and dynamic relationships in which children and young people grow, develop, and interact with society since their work takes place in a diverse and ever changing social and political context, and in collaboration with a multitude of other health and social care professionals. Children's nurses carry out these activities in nurseries, schools, colleges, and universities; in hospitals, health centres, and youth centres, in the many and varied places that children and young people call home, and, indeed, places for those without a home. Children's nurses deliver, lead and manage this care within a multidisciplinary environment and in all care settings, promoting and upholding the standards of the profession through education, research and evidenced based practice.

The public health and health promotion work they undertake to foster healthy lifestyles in children and young people subsequently contributes to reducing the illness burdens of adulthood. The economic case for investment in children's nursing as a profession is therefore powerful since it exerts a cost-effective, positive impact on the major physical and mental health problems of the nations' children, young people and adults.

The education of children's nurses in the UK

The 1994 Clothier report recommendations highlighted the importance of ensuring that an appropriate number of qualified children's nurses are present during each shift of duty to ensure the safety of the children and young people in their care. However, there remains a chronic shortage of children's nurses in all care settings including out of hours services, with staffing gaps at all levels.

Whilst approximately 25% of our population are under 19 years old, only around 5% of registered nurses have undertaken specific programmes that lead to a children's nursing qualification. The children's nursing profession have been engaged in hard fought battles for registration and direct entry education for over a century. As a group of academics engaged in the provision of programmes designed to prepare the children's nursing workforce of the future, we aim to ensure that students undertaking a qualification to nurse children and young people in all care settings are equipped with the appropriate knowledge, values and skills to deliver high quality care.

¹ NHS England, 2015. Future in mind: Promoting, protecting and improving our children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. London: Department of Health.

THE AIMS OF THE GROUP

Children and Young People Nursing Academics UK was founded in 2016 to provide a vehicle for a strong unified voice for academics from higher education institutions across the four UK nations who are engaged in the initial preparation and further education of children's nurses. In this context 'children's nurses' are regarded as those who nurse children and young people across the 0-19 year spectrum but we acknowledge that the CYP terminology for each educational programme may differ.

The specific aims of the group are:

- To represent and promote the education, research and practice development of children's nurses
- To influence and respond to the UK child health agenda through well-informed debate, discussion and the dissemination of material that reflects our views on a range of issues
- To act as a source of consultation and advice to children's nurses and to others on matters of children's nursing, education and research
- To provide rapid and considered responses to the UK children and young people health agenda including the development of position papers
- To provide a means of sharing good practice and innovation
- To collaborate and communicate with other stakeholders in promoting these aims.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Membership

- Membership is open to all academics from UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) who hold a children's nursing qualification and who are engaged in the initial preparation or further education of children's nurses.
- Where a vote on any issue is required, each HEI will have up to 2 votes. Voting members will be agreed by each individual HEI and notification will be given to the chair prior to voting.

Leadership and Terms of Office

Chair

- Nominated by members of the group
- Elections to take place in the event of more than one nomination
- Normally a two year term of office which may be extended by one more year with the agreement of the membership
- No chair will serve for longer than three years in total

The role of the Chair

- To initiate and pull together task groups to respond to issues or requests for advice that arise between meetings
- To chair the meetings of the group
- To consider and approve all position statements and other documents emanating from the group prior to public circulation
- To liaise with the communications representative to maintain the web content and facilitate communication
- To maintain an up to date list of contacts and groups to whom position statements should be issued

Vice Chair

- Nominated by members of the group
- Elections to take place in the event of more than one nomination
- Normally a two year term of office which may be extended by one more year with the agreement of the membership
- No Vice Chair will serve for longer than three years in total
- The role is to deputise for the Chair, with no other unique tasks

At no time should the Chair and Vice Chair be from the same HEI

Representatives from Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales and England

- Nominated by members of the group
- Elections to take place in the event of more than one nomination
- Members from HEIs in each nation will be eligible to vote for the member in their own part of the UK
- Normally a two year term of office which may be extended by one more year with the agreement of the membership
- No representative will serve for longer than three years in total

The role of the representatives from each nation of the UK is to ensure that the differing nursing, health and social care contexts are adequately accounted for in each of the debates, discussions and position papers where appropriate, and to act as a local spokesperson on the forum's behalf on issues specific to that part of the UK.

Methods of Working

Frequency of meetings

Meetings are to be held twice a year

Location/Venue

The meetings will be hosted by member higher education institutions across the UK. With at least one meeting every two years hosted in Northern Ireland, Scotland, or Wales.

Format of meetings

It is anticipated that the agenda for each of the meetings will be circulated approximately one month prior to the meeting.

Standing items:

- Business (notes from previous meeting, matters arising, actions)
- Presentation(s) on specific topic agreed by the executive but proposed by members
- Research news
- Open forum where members can raise issues for discussion

INTERIM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The group is currently being organised by an interim committee Chaired by Dr Debbie Fallon (University of Manchester) with a view to establishing an elected committee by January 2017.