



**FACULTY OF
PAIN MEDICINE**
of the Royal College of Anaesthetists

Faculty Response on Training Supervision for Allied Health Professionals within Pain Services when Assessing New patients

Multidisciplinary team work is at the core of contemporary pain management. Supporting and training colleagues from non-medical professional backgrounds to undertake tasks usually under the responsibility of doctors, presents both opportunities and challenges. National directives place such extended scope working as an important change for the NHS to adapt and evolve to meet future need.

The Professional Standards Committee has received a query relating to whether the Faculty is producing guidelines on training supervision for physiotherapists and nurses working within Pain Services when assessing new patients.

This is one of a number of recent enquiries to the FPM which seem to be prompted by changes to patterns of service delivery, configuration of and roles within multidisciplinary pain teams.

The primary role of the Faculty of Pain Medicine of the RCoA is to oversee standards of training and practice for pain specialists and trainees who are anaesthetists.

In recognition of best contemporary practice, the Faculty supports a multidisciplinary approach to pain management informed by evidence-based methods and research. It supports fellows and members by publishing good practice documentation directly produced by the Faculty and by contributing to or endorsing policy and guidance documents from other organisations.

As a Medical Faculty embedded within the Royal College of Anaesthetists, it cannot set standards or generate guidance for other professions. Generally, this would fall to their professional body to produce such guidance.

The first edition of CSPMS UK 2015 collated standards and recommendations drawn up by representatives of professional groups working in pain management services, including Nurses (Chapter 5.4), Occupational Therapists (Chapter 5.5) and Physiotherapists (Chapter 5.7). These chapters provide guidance on overarching standards of practice, not specific advice on training or professional conduct of other professions.

As an overriding principle, there is no justification for extended scope work to be undertaken to a lower standard than that of a medical practitioner. Therefore, if such work is to be supported by Faculty Fellows, processes must be in place to enable appropriate standards of training and supervision.

A recent publication prepared by the Faculty for pain interventions may prove useful for members of the FPM who are supporting or training colleagues from other professional backgrounds. This provides advice on pain interventions by non-medical practitioners (Extended Scope Practitioners, ESPs) [<https://www.rcoa.ac.uk/sites/default/files/FPM-ESP-guidelines.pdf>]. This document usefully offers guidance on the general aspects of delivery of training and supervision, while affirming the position of the FPM on role enhancement. Ultimately, matters of clinical Governance remain a matter of local policy but advice is provided to help Fellows identify the requirements for such practice to be supported.

Additionally, regarding the subject matter of this query, "Conducting Quality Consultations in Pain Medicine"

[\[https://www.rcoa.ac.uk/system/files/FPM-CON-QU-CONS-2015.pdf\]](https://www.rcoa.ac.uk/system/files/FPM-CON-QU-CONS-2015.pdf) offers a comprehensive outline of best practice to be used when teaching consultation skills.

There may be a need for developing guidance on training supervision of non-anaesthetic and non-medical staff to undertake new consultations through a collaborative approach with other organisations. While there are no plans to undertake this work currently, the PSC will give further consideration to this issue and encourage Fellows and Members of the Faculty to volunteer their interest in preparing such a publication or contribute to this debate.

Further reading:

1. A review of current developments in NHS Scotland is a publication of an Allied Health Professions Strategy [http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/media/3155433/nesd0346_ahp_strategy_2014_6.pdf]. This offers clearer information on AHP educational matters [<https://www.england.nhs.uk/ahp/about/>].
2. NHS Wales broadly addresses educational matters [<http://gov.wales/docs/phhs/publications/160926postregistratio nframeworken.pdf>].