



Royal College
of Nursing

R C N C O M P E T E N C E S

Adult congenital heart disease nursing

RCN guidance on roles, career pathways and competence development





Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all those who supported the development of this publication, including members of the British Adult Congenital Cardiac Nursing Association (BACCNA), and Royal College of Nursing (RCN) members. Particular thanks are also extended to the many nurses who provided invaluable comments throughout the career pathway and competence development process and also patients and their families.

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This publication is due for review in June 2017. To provide feedback on its contents or on your experience of using the publication, please email publications.feedback@rcn.org.uk

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Published by the Royal College of Nursing, 20 Cavendish Square, London W1G 0RN

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RCN competences:

Adult congenital heart disease nursing: RCN guidance on roles, career pathways and competence development

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1

Introduction

This publication aims to set out minimum standards for adult congenital heart disease (ACHD) nursing and includes recommendations for education and training underpinned by competency frameworks and career pathways. It is envisaged that it will also facilitate appropriate workforce planning in a structured way in what is acknowledged to be a growing, complex area of expertise (DH, 2006b) (ESC, 2010) (ACC/AHA, 2008). Additionally, this publication sets out a vision for adult congenital heart disease nursing that recognises the unique and complex nature of this specialty, and the need to ensure that patients and their carers receive expert care at all times throughout their lifelong follow-up.

The role descriptions and competence framework contained in this publication were developed by the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) and the British Adult Congenital Cardiac Nurses Association (BACCNA) to ensure that patients always receive a high quality of nursing care, management and education. In order to deliver this expert care, nurses must be deemed to function at an optimal level for their role. Moreover, evaluating clinical competence is essential to ensure that patients and their families have confidence in the cardiac nursing provision across the network. By formulating a competency framework from which ACHD nurses can work, it is envisaged that their development as practitioners will be enhanced by ensuring consistency across professional levels. Because different roles require varying levels of competence, depending on the nature of the work and level of responsibility, this framework considers roles spanning levels 5-9 of the career pathway (DH, 2006a).

ACHD review

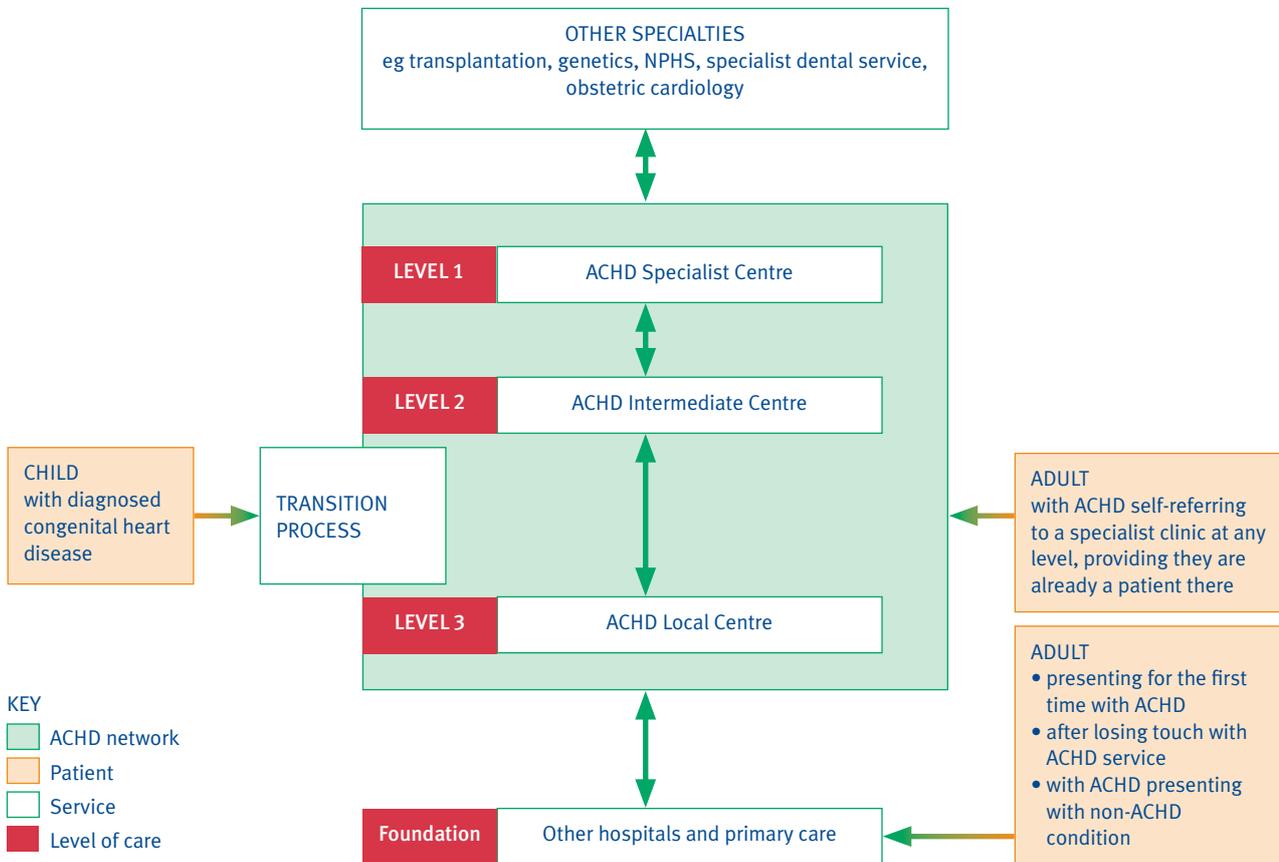
Due to advancements in congenital cardiac surgery, cardiology procedures imaging and medication, there are now more adults living with congenital heart disease in England than ever before. The number and complexity is growing each year. Congenital heart disease can affect all areas of a person's life and those living with the condition need specialist advice, support and lifelong care (Marelli et al, 2007). In the UK, specialist care for adults with congenital heart disease has not always developed in a planned and systematic way and excellent service provision is not always available everywhere. The ACHD Advisory Group, in collaboration with NHS England, aims to improve future NHS services for adults with congenital heart disease in England. NHS specialist commissioners have worked

closely with patients, clinical staff and other relevant stakeholders to provide and develop standards for future provision to ensure that every patient with this condition receives a world class standard of care regardless of where they live. This process will eventually lead to centres being designated to providing ACHD care. The ACHD Advisory Group included clinicians, professional associations and representatives from patient groups. This group, including the RCN, has proposed a network model of delivering specialist care together with national designation standards that all hospitals wishing to provide ACHD services will have to meet in the future.

The proposed changes mean that ACHD specialist centres providing surgery and interventions will not be 'local' for all patients and families. All adults requiring surgery or interventional procedures will be referred to one of these larger specialist centres. Geographically this may mean longer journeys for some patients, however ongoing management and investigations will take place within local or specialist cardiology centres closer to where they live.

In August 2012 the BACCNA began collaborating with the adviser in children and young people's nursing at the RCN to ensure nurses' voices were heard and to clarify the development of nursing roles within ACHD services.

This publication sits alongside *Children and young people's cardiac nursing: RCN guidance on roles, career pathways and competence development* (RCN, 2014).

Figure 1.1 – Proposed new model of care for adult congenital heart disease services (NSSCG, 2012)

ACHD nursing across the network

The successful implementation of these national standards and guidelines will require robust networking arrangements. This must be underpinned by a workforce of adequately trained and equipped nurses to ensure that patients remain at the heart of these changes and that they receive expert nursing care wherever their care is delivered.

ACHD nurses will therefore have a key role across the entire network and patient pathway. They will need to work closely with and be supported by a wide range of other health care professionals including (but not exclusively):

- ACHD cardiology and cardiac surgery
- paediatric cardiac teams including transition
- obstetric
- heart failure
- cardiac rehabilitation and physiotherapy
- occupational therapy

- community
- learning disability
- clinical psychology and mental health
- palliative care
- specialist pulmonary hypertension
- transplant.

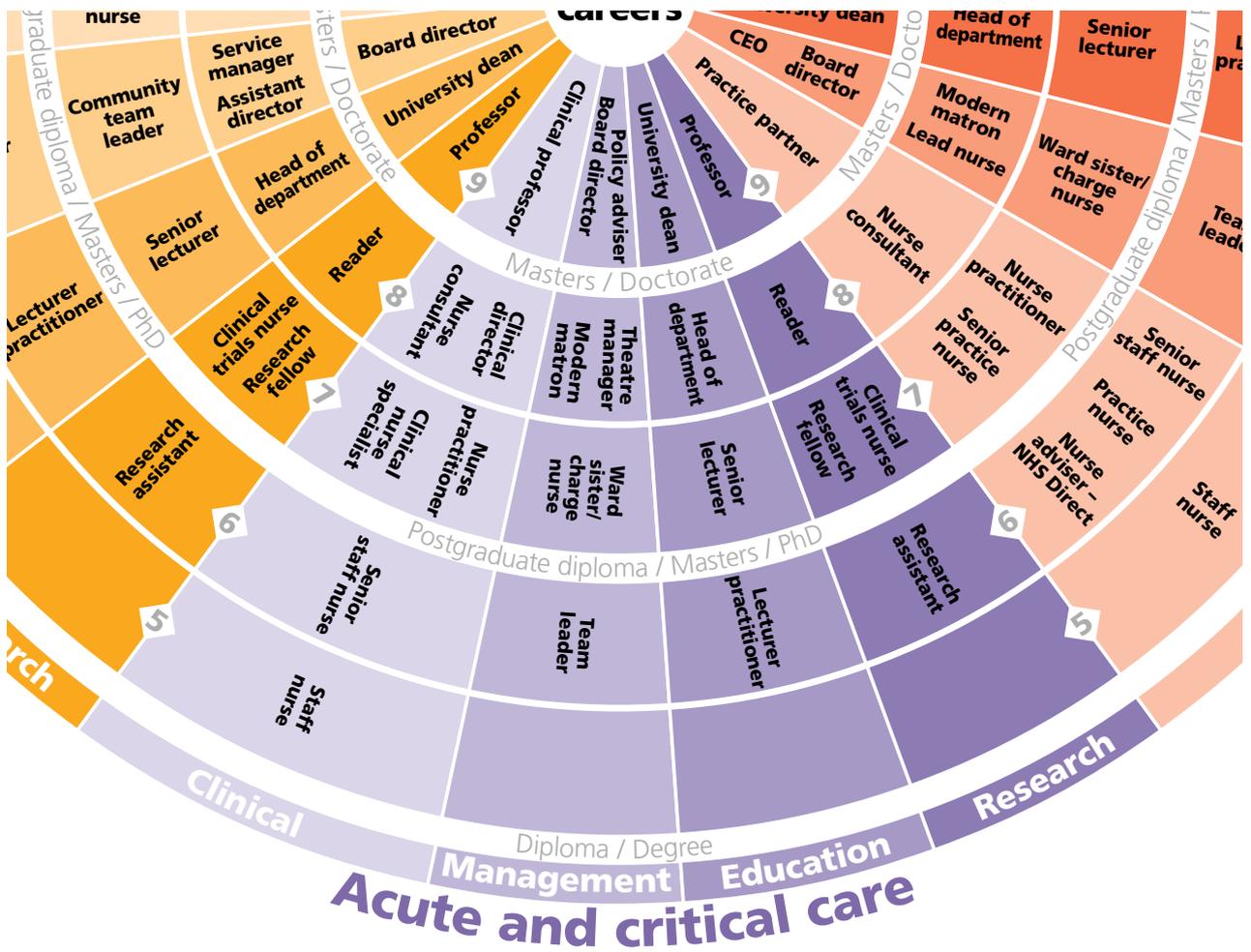
ACHD nurses will need to develop new and innovative ways of working that allow ACHD lead nurses, clinical educators, nurse consultants, nurse specialists, and advanced nurse practitioners to in-reach and out-reach from the ACHD specialist centre to the specialist cardiology centre and local ACHD centres. Excellent collaboration and communication will be essential through regular network meetings as well as national clinical meetings to ensure continuous service developments. Nurses working across the network in this way will need joint contracts across a wide range of NHS trusts in order to facilitate this way of working. Clear career pathways (see [Figure 2.2](#)) need to be in place to ensure service development, succession planning and consistency, in order to maintain a high standard of nursing care for adults with congenital heart disease.

2

Career pathway for ACHD nursing

The health service and nursing roles are continuously evolving, providing opportunities for creative thinking in the development of innovative new roles that meet the needs of contemporary health care. The need for flexibility and the development of career pathways has been highlighted in *Modernising nursing careers: setting the direction* (DH, 2006a).

Figure 2.1 – Modernising nursing careers: setting the direction (DH, 2006a)



© Department of Health (2006a) *Nursing careers framework poster-shape a quality nursing workforce* – reproduced with kind permission.

For nurses working within the ACHD network there needs to be clear opportunities for academic and professional progression. Figure 2.2 demonstrates a career pathway relevant to ACHD nursing that follows a skills escalator approach, helping individuals to identify a relevant study path for their level of experience and qualification. For example, progression from staff nurse to ward sister/charge nurse indicates specific development of clinical knowledge and skills as well as

appropriate academic enhancement. The skills and knowledge required of nurses at varying levels is considered in the following sections to include nurses working at local, intermediate and specialist ACHD centres. The skills and knowledge required by nurses at varying levels is considered in Sections 3 and 4 of this document. The proposed structure and career framework encompasses clinical, management and leadership, education and research roles.

Figure 2.2 – ACHD nurse career pathway

Career pathway – ACHD nursing		
Band	Level	Activities
5 BSc	Newly qualified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidation of learning from registration. • Cardiac experience, including ACHD. • Interest in ACHD patients. • Engaging in patient and staff teaching at a ward level.
6 Start post-graduate qualification	Completed mentorship course; growing awareness of ACHD services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with ACHD patients on a regular basis. • Develop understanding of anatomical, physiological, psychological and lifestyle aspects of ACHD. • Participate in local developments. • Case management with support. • Participate in relevant local conferences.
7 PGCert/Dip MSc, MBA	Active contribution to ACHD service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACHD patients make up majority of practice. • Nursing at an advanced level of practice. • Ongoing professional and educational development. • Contribute to development of junior staff. • Case management which may include differential diagnosis, physical assessment, and prescribing. • Participate in relevant ACHD research projects. • Supervise graduate ACHD projects. • Succession planning. • Participate at relevant local, national and international conferences and developments.
8 MSc, MBA or start of professional doctorate or PhD	Contributing to development of ACHD services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As bands 5-7. • Case management. • Participate and lead local, national and international developments. • Supervise graduate and post-graduate ACHD projects. • Develop/lead relevant ACHD research projects. • Present at relevant local, national and international conferences. • Participate in relevant education programmes.
9 Professional doctorate or PhD	(Inter)-national reputation in ACHD nursing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As Bands 7-8. • Supervise post-graduate and doctoral ACHD projects at a national level. • Publication in relevant journals. • Presentation at relevant conferences. • Clinical contribution to service. • Evidence of ongoing clinical practice in service.

Developed using work undertaken previously and in line with *Developing the Role of the Clinical Academic Researcher in the Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professions* (DH, 2012a).

Purpose and scope of this framework

This framework focuses on knowledge, skills and competences that are enhanced or specific to nurses caring for adults with congenital heart disease. Although the intention is for this framework to have a stand-alone function, it should be used in conjunction with other frameworks that focus on the core skills and competences for all registered nurses.

Benefits of the framework

Helping nurses to:

- deliver consistently high standards of care
- identify their level of practice and plan their career in a more structured way
- pinpoint personal education and development needs
- realise their potential more effectively
- seize opportunities to influence the direction of nursing
- ensure a safe, high quality and effective service provision for adults with congenital heart disease and their families.

Providing employers with:

- a model to ensure consistently high standards of care across networks
- a clearer insight into the expertise and competence of staff, for example in the assessment of risk management
- guidance for undertaking organisational and workforce planning.

Ensuring the public receive:

- consistently high standards of patient care
- increased effectiveness of service provision
- improved access and care provision choice.

Using the framework

The framework should be used as a tool to guide practice and meet clinical aims and objectives. It can also be used for personal development plans and may be used by mentors and managers in the performance appraisal process.

The framework needs to be used in conjunction with local and national guidelines, incorporating the Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF) and National Occupational Standards. It should be used for:

- assessing clinical competence at differing levels
- developing personal goals and objectives
- performance appraisal
- supporting job descriptions and pay reviews/negotiations by detailing targets in accordance with local and national guidelines and policies.

When this framework is used as an organisational tool, the relevance of specific competences must be made clear. This document is a starting point and practitioners using the framework need to ensure that they keep up to date with changes in legislation, policy, and practice that can impact on their role in line with the NMC Code (NMC, 2008b).

3

Key nursing role standards across the ACHD network

Introduction

Specific nursing standards were developed and incorporated into the ACHD Advisory Group Standards (2013) to enhance the nursing care of adults with congenital heart disease. The standards have currently been graded as either mandatory or amber.

Mandatory

- Must be in place immediately upon designation.
- Any failure or change in status would prompt immediate review of designation status.

Amber

- Following designation, robust plans/intentions must be in place to achieve all outstanding standards within a timescale agreed with NHS commissioners.
- Any failure or change in ability to meet the standard within the agreed timescale would prompt immediate review of designation status.

Nursing care across the ACHD network

Nursing care across the network must be provided by a dedicated team of nursing staff that are trained and educated in the care of adults and young people with congenital cardiac medical, cardiology and surgical health care needs.

The nursing teams across the network (theatres, interventional suites, intensive care, hybrid theatre, high dependency care, wards, outpatient's department, assessment units etc) will be led by senior nurses with specialist knowledge and experience in this field of practice.

These senior nurses will be professionally accountable to the lead nurse for the network.

Cardiac intensive care units and high dependency care will be staffed according to national standards. All departments throughout the network will be staffed according to the number of patients, and the level of dependency and expertise required to ensure the delivery of high quality, expert nursing care.

ACHD lead nurse (Band 8)

Mandatory – at each specialist centre (responsible for one ACHD network)

As a senior member of the clinical team the ACHD lead nurse will contribute to the strategic development of the service across the ACHD network. They will be accountable for providing professional and clinical leadership, ensuring the provision and delivery of a high standard of ACHD nursing care including all patients requiring surgery and/or medical/ cardiology intervention treatment for congenital heart disease. They will be responsible for the delivery of ACHD nursing care at every level including the local and intermediate centres within their geographical area of responsibility. Networking across all levels of the service will therefore be a central component of the role, developing and building links between staff to ensure streamlined care for ACHD patients and their families and carers.

The post encompasses a lead role in shaping the vision and future development of the patient-focused specialist ACHD nursing service working across the network. The postholder will be responsible for supporting educational pathways and for ensuring the implementation of high quality, and evidence-based care, nurse education and training.

This post involves creating an efficient, comprehensive and integrated approach to multi-professional working. The postholder will be involved in the strategic development of the service across the network, in line with the individual hospital's protocols and guidelines and relevant national policies (see the example job description in [appendix 1](#)).

The ACHD lead nurse for the network will incorporate:

- management and leadership
- clinical outcomes
- supporting and promoting education and research
- quality assurance and monitoring of standards
- professional development.

ACHD nurse specialists (Band 7)

Mandatory

It is expected that ACHD nurse specialist roles will be working at a minimum AfC Band 7, but there may be a range from Band 6 to 8.

The ACHD Advisory Group Standards (2013) include the development of an ACHD specialist nursing team with a minimum of seven whole-time equivalent (WTE) nurses whose role will extend throughout the network. The precise number, above the minimum seven (in order to be able to deliver the wide ranging, complex care and support that is required), and the location of these nurses will depend on geography, population and the configuration of the network.

All patients will have access to an advice line and a named ACHD specialist nurse. At least three WTE postholders will be based at the specialist centre with other postholders based across the network to support outreach clinics and in-patient care within their catchment area. All postholders will be expected to spend a minimum of one day per week in the specialist centre to ensure that they keep up to date and are able to engage in service development.

The ACHD nurse specialist will be the single point of contact for the patient and will act as a co-ordinator of that patient's care across the network. They will also provide practical information, education and support for all patients with congenital heart disease including:

- patients requiring surgery or intervention including electrophysiology procedures (EP)
- patients requiring non-cardiac surgery or intervention
- patients with learning difficulties and their families/carers (having an awareness of and ability to implement the Mental Capacity Act 2005)
- young people transferring their care to adult services
- women with complex pregnancies, and women requiring specialist pre-conceptual counselling
- patients requiring transplant assessment

- inpatients and patients attending for outpatient follow-up across the network
- patients requiring end of life care
- patients requiring psychological support
- management and support for patients with complex cyanotic congenital heart disease
- management of complex anticoagulation problems
- patients requiring heart failure management
- patients with pulmonary hypertension associated with ACHD.

The role of the ACHD nurse specialist is complex. Each network will develop its own team of nurses to ensure that individual needs are met. ACHD nurse specialists will take a lead in developing areas specific to this role eg surgery, intervention, heart failure, obstetrics, specialist services for young people transitioning into adult services, learning disability, psychological support, cardiac obstetric services and end of life care. They will also be responsible for providing support in the form of outreach to the intermediate and local ACHD centres. They will act as an expert resource for the multidisciplinary team, providing specialist education in the community and of colleagues at all levels. The ACHD nurse specialist will practice autonomously and many may go on to develop advanced skills such as differential diagnosis, physical assessment and prescribing.

Rotation (possibly for six to twelve months) into the team will provide a development opportunity for level 6 (experienced/proficient) nurses, enabling them to learn about the role of the ACHD nurse whilst developing transferable knowledge and skills to support the work of the team. This development postholder would not be expected to undertake autonomous practice, but this approach will enable succession planning for the future of the ACHD specialist nursing team.

The ACHD nurse specialist is fundamental to the development of a high quality ACHD service, and as such should be resourced and maintained appropriately to cover the whole ACHD network. All young people, adults and their families/carers should have equitable access to their service throughout their journey.

Amber

Amber status has been given to the following standards relating to ACHD nurse specialist roles.

- Each congenital heart network should aspire to provide a minimum of seven WTE ACHD nurse specialists working in a functioning ACHD network, with a minimum of five upon

4

The future vision for nursing within the ACHD specialty

Introduction

The long-term vision for ACHD nursing includes a variety of highly specialised roles that will enable realisation of innovation: modernising nursing roles and developing contemporary career pathways that are fit for purpose and future practice. Developing a world-class service requires a planned, co-ordinated approach that will meet the dynamic needs of adults with congenital heart disease and their families, ensuring excellent care in a highly skilled and specialist field of practice.

Additional nursing roles

Within the ACHD network there will be a wide range of nurses working across all sectors who will come into contact with adult patients with congenital heart disease. Registered nurses working across the network will require a minimum level of competence, knowledge and skills to be able to assess adults with congenital heart disease, and recognise when and how to seek expert advice and support. Each ACHD network will be responsible for ensuring that their local community of staff knows how to do this. The level of expertise will increase from the local centre, then the intermediate centre through to the ACHD specialist centre. Supporting and educating various roles that require individual levels of education involves specialist competence, knowledge and skills such as when providing complex and palliative care to adults who are dependent on technology (such as those on long-term ventilation).

The posts highlighted within this section will demonstrate the following characteristics:

- expert practitioner
- professional leadership and consultancy
- educational preparation (minimum MSc)
- practice and service development, research and evaluation.

(NHSE Health Service, September 1999)

designation. The precise number and location of these nurses will depend on geography, population and size of the network.

- An ACHD nurse specialist should be present at all outpatient appointments to help explain the diagnosis and management plan and provide literature on their cardiac condition and lifestyle issues and support to the patient.
- Each local centre must have access to an ACHD nurse specialist.
- Each young person transitioning their care to adult services must have access to an ACHD nurse specialist who will be responsible for supporting them and co-ordinating their care.

Nurse staffing across the ACHD network

Amber

It is important to recognise the importance of transition and transfer to adult services. This document supports and fully recognises the role of a transition nurse as recommended in *Children and young people's cardiac nursing* (RCN, 2014). The ACHD advisory group recommendations clearly state that each patient transferring their care to adult services should have a named ACHD nurse specialist who is responsible for supporting and co-ordinating their care as they enter adult services. It is envisaged that this will be part of the ACHD nurse specialist role and they will work closely with the transition nurse until the patient is fully integrated into adult services, and is independent and self caring.

The transition nurse post whilst based primarily in children's cardiology could be jointly funded by the paediatric specialist centre and ACHD specialist centre. This would facilitate ease of working across the paediatric and adult services to ensure that support during transition is seamless and is maintained until young people are settled into the adult hospital environment.

Clinical professor of congenital heart disease nursing (CHD) (level 9) – national post

The post will reflect NHS and academic collaboration, leading and developing cardiac heart disease nursing research, and the implementation of evidence-based practice across all networks, paediatric and adult. The postholder will work collaboratively with other key nursing postholders such as lead nurses, consultant nurses, advanced practitioners and clinical educators to produce high quality research outputs. They will contribute not only to the academic development of staff and students within all organisations but progress the development of a dedicated nursing research-focused infrastructure within the NHS. The postholder will have a PhD in a relevant clinical practice discipline or equivalent professional experience, current professional accreditation as a nurse, and experience in specialist nursing practice.

ACHD consultant nurse (level 8)

Note: this role may focus on specific areas, for example, surgery, cardiac intensive care, arrhythmias, cardiology, heart failure, pulmonary hypertension, learning disabilities, end of life, teenagers and young adults, cardiac obstetrics, nurse-led clinics and transplant.

The ACHD consultant nurse is an autonomous practitioner with the delegated authority to practice independently, both professionally and organisationally. They will lead on developments of the ACHD services, linking closely with stakeholders, and maximising clinical capacity. This post will offer clinical leadership and incorporate both research and education into clinical practice. The postholder will cover the four domains integral to consultant nurse roles. The clinical component of care will include up to 50 per cent of their time (Woodward et al, 2005).

The consultant nurse will work in conjunction with consultant medical colleagues to develop and deliver a comprehensive service which reflects patient needs. The focus will be on the aspects of the service that must meet national targets, shaping service delivery and maximising the knowledge and skills of existing practitioners. This will require complex knowledge and expert skills with a strong emphasis on multi-professional collaboration.

They will provide highly specialised professional advice, consultancy and clinical expertise in practice. Leadership skills will promote both internal and external networking opportunities, facilitation, and management of change through collaboration.

As well as project-specific audit and research evaluation schemes, a contribution to research and clinical governance on a broader basis will be sought. The ACHD consultant nurse will support modernisation strategies through service development and engage in the education and development of ACHD nurses both in their existing role and in highly specialised roles. The ACHD nurse consultant will be expected to work in close collaboration with other key nursing postholders such as lead nurses, clinical educators and the professor, and hold an honorary academic contract with local higher education institutions.

ACHD advanced nurse practitioners (level 7)

ACHD advanced nurse practitioners are experienced clinical practitioners with a higher specialist level of clinical expertise and theoretical knowledge, having studied to at least MSc level. Higher level clinical decision making will be evident by the management of the postholder's own caseload, spending 80 per cent of their time in direct clinical practice (*Advanced nursing practice roles*, Scottish Government 2008). The postholder will liaise closely with the lead ACHD nurse and other key nursing postholders within the network. It is envisaged that there will be advanced practitioners across the network in all areas, including all wards, high dependency areas and intensive care units (according to local services and needs).

ACHD clinical nurse educator (level 7+8)

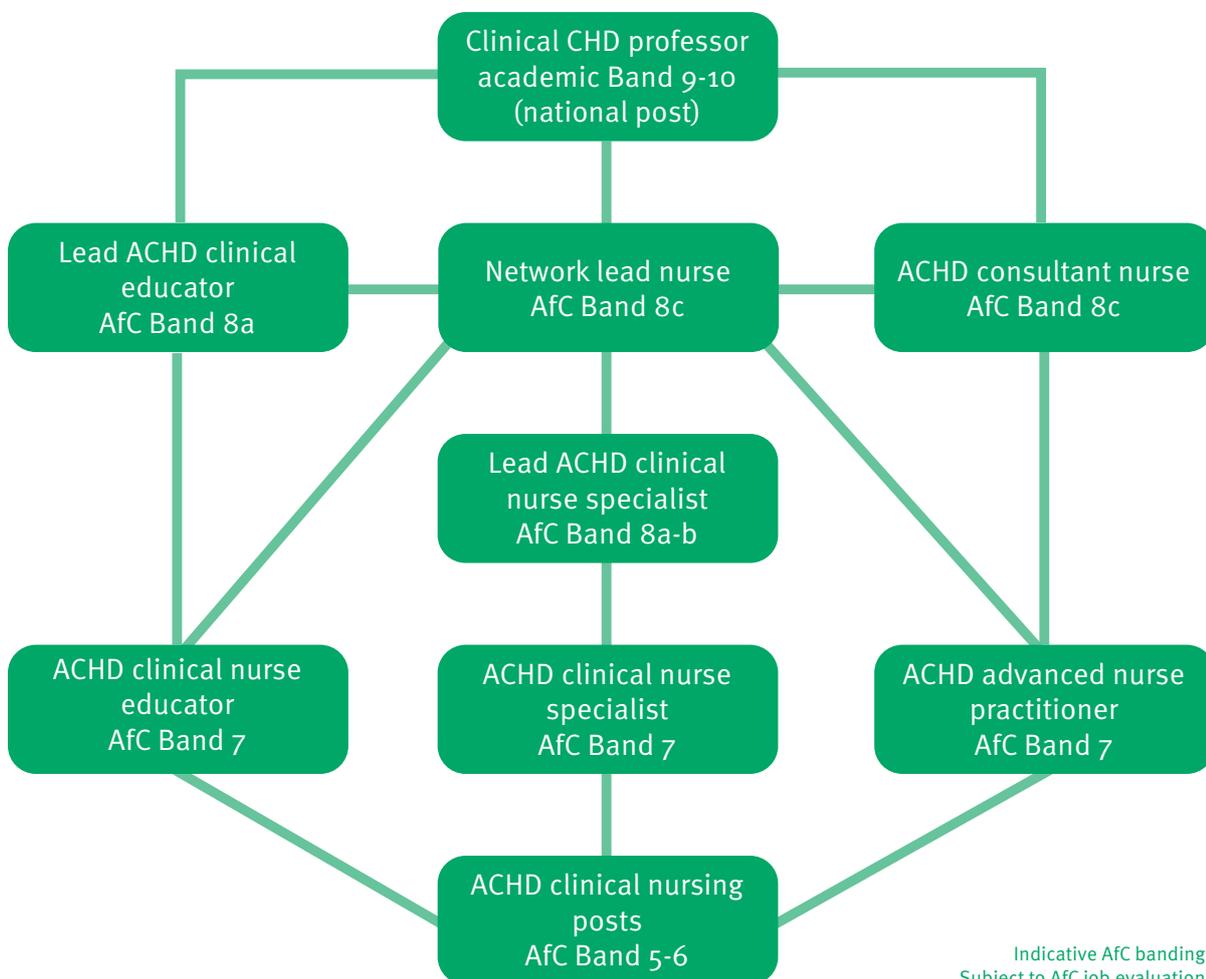
Amber

The ACHD standards advise that there should be one ACHD clinical nurse educator within the specialist centre. However it is envisaged that a team of educators will be required across the network in order to deliver standardised training and education within competence-based programmes. The competence programmes will commence with preceptorship for newly qualified nurses and must subsequently focus on the acquisition of knowledge and skills such as clinical examination, assessment, diagnostic reasoning, treatment, facilitating and evaluating care, evidence-based practice and advanced communication skills. Skills in teaching, research, audit and management will also form a part of the programme.

The aim of the lead ACHD clinical nurse educator is to lead the development and implementation of the nursing education vision across the network. The postholder will work autonomously to deliver an effective strategy for education and training within the context of evidence-based practice using research, audit, clinical guidelines and pathways of care. The effectiveness of the education process will be evident through the measurement of nurse-sensitive outcome measures. Close collaboration with the other ACHD nurse educators across the network will be essential.

The postholder will work closely with the lead nurse for the network and across multi-professional and specialised teams, to develop a highly regarded local and national nursing body of knowledge. The postholder will also work across the network and organisational boundaries (collaborating with other ACHD nurse educators and universities nationally) to support the educational development of a world class service, which is able to lead on educational and evidence-based resources across and beyond the network.

Figure 4.1 – Key nursing roles across the network



5

The Knowledge and Skills Framework for ACHD nurses

Introduction

The NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF) defines and describes the knowledge and skills which NHS staff need to apply in their work in order to deliver quality services. It provides a consistent, comprehensive and explicit framework on which to base the review and development of all staff. All job descriptions should have an appropriate KSF profile supporting the effective learning and development of the postholder in a variety of ways.

The KSF competences are presented in the following tables within this section. They cover:

- core dimensions for ACHD nursing
- specific dimensions for ACHD nursing
- knowledge
- skills.

The levels of competence, which had previously been based on Benner's novice to expert continuum, have been translated into this framework. The levels in this framework refer to competent, experienced or expert practitioners. They align to levels 5, 6 and 7 of the *Career framework for health* (Skills for Health, 2006). These levels refer to a lifelong learning

continuum and do not directly correlate to the Agenda for Change pay bandings.

Progression through the levels will be different for each nurse, depending on context, skill level, performance appraisal and individual objectives. However, it is envisaged that movement towards experienced (level 6) should occur after being in post for approximately 18 months to two years. Dependant on the patient population, workload, and individual needs, the ACHD nurse should be achieving 'expert' (level 7) status after approximately five years in post. It should be stressed that nurses should always be working to advance their practice (NMC, 2008b).

It is acknowledged that the competences contained within this document are not comprehensive and are therefore intended to be a basis for developing individualised competences locally according to need. Taking into account the vast number and variations of jobs that will exist within any ACHD network, it is impossible within the scope of this document to provide a complete competence framework for every single nursing post. It will be the responsibility of the ACHD educational lead and their team of clinical educators within the network to further develop these competences to ensure they are practical, thorough and relevant to each individual role and job.

5.1 Core dimensions

Key

	Yes
	No

		Practitioner level 5	Senior practitioner level 6	ACHD clinical nurse specialist level 7	ACHD advanced nurse practitioner level 7	Lead clinical nurse educator level 7	Consultant ACHD nurse level 8	Network lead nurse level 8	Clinical ACHD professor level 8-9
1	Knowledge of inter-professional working across ACHD service network, and clear understanding of role and position within the network (to influence care delivery)								
2	Active inter-professional working across the ACHD service network								
3	Time management skills for self								
4	Time management skills for others								
5	Lead on inter-professional working across the ACHD network								
6	Active role model within ACHD network								
7	Advocate for the ACHD patient								
8	To safely care for the ACHD patient according to your area of work								
9	Recognise when to seek support and advice								
10	Provide expert advice and support across multi-professional groups								
11	Clinical and professional leadership								
12	Empower patients, families and health care professionals								
13	Participate in nurse-led initiatives to advance the quality of patient care								
14	Develop and implement nurse-led initiatives to advance the quality of patient care								
15	Use role and position to evaluate resources and service delivery ensuring quality and efficiency, and identify shortfalls which impact on care delivery								
16	Change agent in practice, policy development and education								

5.2 Specific dimensions

Key

	Yes
	No

		Practitioner level 5	Senior practitioner level 6	ACHD clinical nurse specialist level 7	ACHD advanced nurse practitioner level 7	Lead clinical nurse educator level 7	Consultant ACHD nurse level 8	Network lead nurse level 8	Clinical ACHD professor level 8-9
1	Develop knowledge and skills to be able to actively promote heart health, including provision of advice on lifestyle, diet, exercise, medications, stress and psychosocial functioning (Skills for health framework: HWB ₁)								
2	Develop refined patient assessment skills in relation to ACHD patients – eg vital signs monitoring, fluid balance, management of abnormal heart rhythm								
3	Develop basic knowledge of altered anatomy and physiology in relation to ACHD to facilitate safe practice								
4	Develop knowledge of altered anatomy and physiology to an advanced level in relation to ACHD to facilitate safe practice								
5	Knowledge of the effect and interactions of common cardiac drugs and how to perform drug calculations								
6	Advanced life support skills								
7	Proactive medicine management in clinical practice according to agreed local protocols eg drug titration in heart failure								
8	Awareness of adolescent health, risk-taking behaviour and the effect on the young person with chronic health problems – specifically ACHD								
9	Awareness and assessment of complex psychological issues. Be able to initiate basic interventions and knowledge of when, where and who to refer on to								
10	Co-ordinate and prepare ACHD patients for investigations/ interventions/surgery (HWB 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)								
11	Exemplary documentation and data collection skills – care planning, record keeping, audit data collection (IK ₂ , 3)								
12	Ability to utilise data and audit cycles to affect care quality and outcome								
13	Expert practitioner, working in collaboration with core team to make care decisions								
14	Case manage patients with ACHD ensuring that it carefully reflects the latest evidence or research developments according to level of practice								
15	Provide consultancy for nursing and medical staff across the network, demonstrate advanced specialist knowledge of practice, clinical skill and problem-solving ability								
16	Involvement in research and audit within the ACHD speciality								
17	Develop and drive policy, protocol and pathway development for improved patient case management								

5.3 Knowledge and skills

5.3.1 Knowledge (levels 5-6)

Key

	Yes
	No

		Practitioner level 5			Senior/specialist practitioner level 6		
		Specialist centre	Intermediate centre	Local centre	Specialist centre	Intermediate centre	Local centre
1	Awareness of whole ACHD network and their role within it						
2	Awareness of the whole ACHD specialist multidisciplinary team						
3	Sound knowledge of normal cardiac anatomy and physiology and basic knowledge of altered anatomy and physiology in relation to ACHD and how it relates to specific area of work						
4	Sound knowledge of normal cardiac anatomy and physiology and moving towards advanced knowledge of altered anatomy and physiology in relation to ACHD and how it relates to specific area of work						
5	Basic knowledge of ACHD emergencies and how to treat them						
6	Understand risks, signs and symptoms of infective endocarditis						
7	Basic knowledge of the care needs of patients with heart failure related to ACHD						
8	Developing advanced knowledge of the care needs of patients with heart failure related to ACHD						
9	Basic knowledge of how to care for the cyanotic patient with ACHD						
10	Developing advanced knowledge of how to care for the cyanotic patient with ACHD						
11	Basic knowledge of how to care for the patient with arrhythmias related to ACHD						
12	Developing advanced knowledge of how to care for the patient with arrhythmias related to ACHD						
13	Understand the effects of medication in relation to ACHD						
14	Understand the long-term implications of heart transplantation and what the referral process is						
15	Awareness of other specialist teams eg learning disability, palliative care, obstetric etc						
16	Awareness of psychological needs of the ACHD patient						
17	Basic knowledge of PAH and how it relates to the ACHD patient						
18	Develop more advanced understanding of PAH and ACHD and how to care for these patients						
19	Understand the implications of the Mental Capacity Act and how it relates to ACHD patients with learning difficulties						
20	Basic knowledge of pregnancy-related issues in the ACHD patient						
21	Develop advanced knowledge of pregnancy-related issues in the ACHD patient						
22	Understand the need for appropriate preparation of patient for non-ACHD surgery or intervention including safe transfer to theatre						

5.3.1 Knowledge (levels 5-6) cont.

Key

	Yes
	No

		Practitioner level 5			Senior/specialist practitioner level 6		
		Specialist centre	Intermediate centre	Local centre	Specialist centre	Intermediate centre	Local centre
23	Knowledge of how to care for the ACHD patient during non-ACHD surgery or intervention						
24	Knowledge of how to care for the ACHD patient after non-cardiac surgery or intervention						
25	Understand the need for appropriate preparation of patient for ACHD surgery or intervention including safe transfer to theatre						
26	Knowledge of how to care for the patient during ACHD surgery or intervention						
27	Understand need for appropriate ACHD post-operative/post-intervention care for the patient						
28	Knowledge of complications post-cardiopulmonary bypass						
29	Knowledge and awareness of ventilation strategies specific to ACHD patients						
30	Knowledge of how to care for the ACHD patient requiring long-term advanced mechanical support (eg LVADs)						
31	Care of the stable long-term high dependency unit patient with ACHD						
32	Understand need for appropriate preparation of patient for ACHD-related investigations						
33	Knowledge of end of life strategies and how to relate them to the ACHD patient						

5.3.2 Knowledge (levels 7-9)

Key

- Yes
- No

		Specialist centre						
		ACHD clinical nurse specialist level 7	ACHD advanced nurse practitioner level 7	Lead ACHD clinical nurse specialist level 8	Lead ACHD clinical educator level 8	Consultant ACHD nurse level 8	Network lead nurse level 8	Clinical ACHD professor level 8-9
1	Advanced knowledge of altered anatomy and physiology in relation to specific ACHD							
2	Advanced knowledge of treatments, sequelae and residua in relation to specific ACHD							
3	Expert knowledge of ACHD emergencies and how to treat them							
4	Understand risks, signs and symptoms of infective endocarditis							
5	Understand risks, signs and symptoms of heart failure relating to ACHD							
6	Advanced knowledge and understanding of the complex care needs of the cyanotic patient with ACHD							
7	Advanced knowledge of complex arrhythmia management in the ACHD patient							
8	Advanced knowledge of adolescent health, risk-taking behaviour and how they relate to the young person growing up with ACHD							
9	Understand the implications and effects of medication relevant to the ACHD patient							
10	Specialist knowledge of pre- and post-operative management and potential complications specific to the ACHD patient							
11	Specialist knowledge of pre- and post-intervention management and potential complications specific to the ACHD patient							
12	Advanced knowledge of the management of problematic surgical wounds (thoracotomy, sternotomy)							
13	Advanced understanding of the long-term implications of heart transplantation and when referral is indicated							
14	Advanced knowledge of other relevant specialist teams and how and when to refer eg learning disability, palliative care, obstetric, PAH etc							
15	Specialist knowledge and understanding of the complex care requirements of the ACHD patient requiring long term advanced mechanical support							
16	Specialist knowledge of psychological issues in relation to the ACHD patient							
17	Specialist knowledge of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and how this relates to the ACHD patient with either permanent or fluctuating capacity							
18	Specialist knowledge of PAH in relation to ACHD and recommended treatment strategies with specific advanced anti-pulmonary hypertensive therapies							
19	Specialist knowledge of contraception and pre-conceptual counselling for the ACHD patient							
20	Specialist knowledge of the specific issues for the ACHD obstetric patient							
21	Understand the implications of non-cardiac surgery and co-morbidities in patients with moderate and complex ACHD							
22	Understand full range of “end of life” strategies and how they relate to the patient with ACHD							

5.3.3 Skills (levels 5-6)

Key

 Yes

 No

		Practitioner level 5			Senior/specialist practitioner level 6		
		Specialist centre	Intermediate centre	Local centre	Specialist centre	Intermediate centre	Local centre
1	Be able to observe and assess patients in relation to their cardiac heart disease and act appropriately within specific area of work						
2	Recognise importance of altered signs and symptoms in relation to ACHD and appropriately seek expert advice						
3	Perform non-invasive vital signs appropriately, understanding underlying anatomy and physiology (eg non-invasive BP in right arm in patients following coarctation repair)						
4	Perform 12 lead ECG and recognise deviations from normal for the ACHD patient and seek expert advice as appropriate						
5	Observe continuous ECG monitoring and recognise deviations from normal for the ACHD patient and seek expert advice as appropriate						
6	Perform arterial/CVP monitoring and recognise deviations from the normal for the ACHD patient and seek expert advice as appropriate						
7	Safely care for the cyanosed patient and know when and how to seek expert advice						
8	Maintain/record accurate fluid/colloid balance and be able to relate it to the specific ACHD patient and situation						
9	Safe administration and knowledge of side effects of medications used in ACHD						
10	Be involved in the assessment and preparation for ACHD patients requiring transplantation						
11	Recognise when patients require complex management and support and refer on to specialist services appropriately						
12	Be able to access information for patients, relatives and staff about ACHD conditions						
13	Be able to communicate with the ACHD patient and their family						
14	Preparation of the ACHD patient for non-cardiac surgery or intervention including safe transfer to theatre						
15	Preparation of the ACHD patient for ACHD surgery or intervention including safe transfer to theatre or catheter lab						
16	Pre-operative/anaesthetic management including surveillance intra- and post-operation						
17	Identify physical post-operative problems and act appropriately						
18	Recognise the acutely ill ACHD patient and act appropriately						
19	Be able to care for ACHD patients requiring assisted ventilation						
20	Recognise when referral to other teams is required to, eg palliative care, learning disability, community etc						
21	Ability to refer the ACHD patient to the appropriate team with support of senior ACHD nurse practitioner						
22	Ability to refer ACHD patient to the appropriate team independently						
23	Care for the ACHD patient with PAH and recognise when and how to seek expert advice and support						
24	Organise and plan the timely discharge of ACHD patients from clinical areas						
25	Participate in planning and undertaking internal and external transfer of the ACHD patient						
26	Be able to provide care for the young person with ACHD following their transfer of care from paediatric to adult setting						

5.3.4 Skills (levels 7-9)

Key

	Yes
	No

		Specialist centre						
		ACHD clinical nurse specialist level 7	ACHD advanced nurse practitioner level 7	Lead ACHD clinical nurse specialist level 8	Lead ACHD clinical educator level 8	Consultant ACHD nurse level 8	Network lead nurse level 8	Clinical ACHD professor level 8-9
1	Observe and assess patients according to their ACHD condition and co-morbidities							
2	Advanced clinical assessment skills, diagnostic reasoning, history taking and independent prescribing skills in relation to ACHD							
3	Record vital signs and act appropriately when outside normal parameters for individual ACHD patient							
4	Perform ECG recording/monitoring and recognise deviations from the normal for the ACHD patient and act appropriately							
5	Perform arterial/CVP monitoring and recognise deviations from the normal for the ACHD patient							
6	Provide specialist care for the cyanosed patient							
7	Safe administration of medication used to treat ACHD patients							
8	Able to utilise pre-agreed protocols for medicine management eg in the setting of heart failure							
9	Assessment and preparation for transplantation							
10	Recognise when complex support is required for patients with ACHD and use advanced communication skills to promote collaborative and co-ordinated care							
11	Provide appropriate information for patients with ACHD, as well as for staff and relatives							
12	Specialist pre-assessment skills in preparation for ACHD surgery or intervention							
13	Specialist management of the ACHD patient during surgery or intervention							
14	Specialist management of the ACHD patient post-surgery or intervention							
15	Identify physical post-operative/intervention problems and act appropriately							
16	Identify pulmonary hypertensive crises and act appropriately							
17	Assess and manage emergencies in the ACHD patient							
18	Actively manage the ACHD patient in intensive care or high dependency requiring assisted ventilation techniques. Troubleshoot equipment malfunction effectively							
19	Apply ventilation strategies in response to blood gas analysis in line with local policy and according to specific ACHD conditions							
20	Appropriate referral to other nurse specialist teams for shared care when indicated							
21	Manage the complex ACHD patient with heart failure							
22	Manage complex ACHD patients requiring non-cardiac surgery							
23	Organise and plan timely discharge of complex ACHD patients from clinical areas							

5.3.4 Skills (levels 7-9) cont.

Key

	Yes
	No

		ACHD clinical nurse specialist level 7	ACHD advanced nurse practitioner level 7	Lead ACHD clinical nurse specialist level 8	Lead ACHD clinical educator level 8	Consultant ACHD nurse level 8	Network lead nurse level 8	Clinical ACHD professor level 8-9
24	Manage and support young patients with ACHD following the transfer of their care to adults and in the immediate period afterwards until fully independent – acknowledging the impact of adolescent health development and risk-taking behaviour							
25	Provide individualised specialist advice and information regarding pre-pregnancy counselling related to specific ACHD conditions							
26	Provide individualised specialist advice and support during and following pregnancy in relation to specific ACHD conditions							
27	Able to provide specialist case management for patients with learning disabilities and their family							
28	Able to provide cognitively appropriate material to help people with learning disabilities make their own decisions							
29	Able to assess and record mental capacity							
30	Able to chair and record outcomes of best interest meetings							
31	Able to support and manage patients receiving specific anti-PAH therapies in relation to ACHD							
32	Engage and liaise with specialist PAH team for advice and support as appropriate							
33	Able to provide expert lifestyle, exercise and activity advice for patients with ACHD including those with HF and PAH							
34	Recognise when patients are approaching end of life, referring to appropriate services in a timely manner and know when to recommend registration on Gold Standard Framework							
35	Work collaboratively with palliative care teams across the network							
36	Work collaboratively with community nursing teams as appropriate and when necessary							
37	Excellent report writing skills together with a strong record of publication, to include peer-reviewed journals							
38	Evidence of ability to apply research to practice and implement evidence-based care							
39	Well developed research skills and ability to develop an evidence base that impacts on policy and practice							
40	Responsible for the continuing specialist professional development and education of all levels of nursing staff across the network							
41	Able to develop training programmes specifically designed to ensure all nursing staff meet core competences with regard to ACHD – to include robust mechanisms for assessment and evaluation							
42	Able to take an active role in teaching, presenting and disseminating knowledge across the ACHD network							
43	A national reputation in the ACHD care setting and a record of participation in local and national conferences							
44	Excellent interpersonal and advanced communication skills							
45	Excellent ability to work independently							

5.3.4 Skills (levels 7-9) cont.

Key

	Yes
	No

		ACHD clinical nurse specialist level 7	ACHD advanced nurse practitioner level 7	Lead ACHD clinical nurse specialist level 8	Lead ACHD clinical educator level 8	Consultant ACHD nurse level 8	Network lead nurse level 8	Clinical ACHD professor level 8-9
46	Excellent ability to work as team leader							
47	Able to motivate staff							
48	Able to work under pressure							
49	Able to develop and implement a strategic vision for clinical academic ACHD nursing							
50	Good research practice/research governance skills							
51	Production of research proposals and grant applications							
52	Significant experience as a principal investigator							
53	Substantial success in securing external research funding							
54	Supervision of research staff							
55	Successful supervision of post-graduate research students							
56	Able to provide strategic leadership to develop capacity and capability in ACHD research across the network							
57	Able to develop business cases, providing evidence to NHS specialist commissioners to ensure ongoing funding of ACHD work across the network							
58	Able to project manage change							
59	Lead workforce planning and ensure cover for whole network across all levels of nursing							

6

Education and learning for ACHD nursing

The future provision of education and training will reflect the dynamic evolution of the service and the role of individual professionals to deliver contemporary health care.

Accessible and flexible modes of learning need to expand and should encompass the utilisation of in-house courses including objective structured clinical examinations (OSCE), residential courses, and online learning to enable knowledge and skills acquisition.

The table below provides an overview of the expected education and learning needs for cardiac nurses across the network from AfC band 5-8, and focuses on:

- core knowledge and skills
- continuing development – knowledge and skills
- means of acquiring knowledge and skills.

Education and learning for ACHD nursing

Post/title	Core knowledge and skills	Continuing professional development	Recommended educational institution
Band 5 (newly registered)	<p>Introduction to cardiac setting.</p> <p>Commence standardised workbook across all areas of the network:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • normal anatomy and physiology • cardiac pathophysiology • pharmacology. <p>Clinical logbook and reflective diary of cardiac experience gained during rotation and supernumerary shifts (clinic, community, high dependency, intensive).</p> <p>Acquisition of basic skills – vital signs, performing ECGs etc.</p>	<p>All mandatory learning, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic life support • drugs: oral, enteral, IV • safeguarding • moving and handling • fire and security • electronic patient record • conflict resolution. 	<p>In-house training supported and monitored by educational leads.</p>

Education and learning for ACHD nursing cont.

Post/title	Core knowledge and skills	Continuing professional development	Recommended educational institution
Band 5 (first 18 months after registration)	<p>IV administration competences dependent on where working (for example peripheral IV or central lines such as HDU/ITU).</p> <p>Patient group direction training.</p> <p>Mentorship preparation in line with NMC standards (NMC, 2008a).</p> <p>Common congenital heart defects – pathophysiology, aetiology, epidemiology, pharmacology, psychosocial and sequelae.</p> <p>Care/management of adult with CHD/transplant/acquired/inherited diseases/thoracic – according to clinical environment (ward, HDU, ITU).</p> <p>Awareness of wider multidisciplinary team (MDT) and roles.</p> <p>Recognition of illness and deterioration.</p> <p>Device management/technology – including mechanical ventilation.</p> <p>Self awareness of communication styles and interpersonal skills.</p> <p>Basic ECG interpretation and rhythm recognition.</p> <p>Development of specialist skills eg how and when to take corrected citrate INRs and when to use IV filters.</p> <p>Awareness of Mental Capacity Act (2005) and how this affects practice.</p> <p>Flexible working with young people.</p> <p>Pre- and post-operative care and interventional care.</p>	<p>Relevant study day training.</p> <p>Mentorship training from student supervisor.</p> <p>Degree-level standalone modules.</p> <p>Network-led modules: eg advanced ECG courses.</p>	<p>In-house study events.</p> <p>Higher education institutions.</p>

Education and learning for ACHD nursing cont.

Post/title	Core knowledge and skills	Continuing professional development	Recommended educational institution
Band 6 – Ward/ITU/HDU	<p>Management of ventilated adult (weaning and extubation) (ITU staff).</p> <p>Management of adults requiring technical support (eg, peritoneal dialysis, left ventricular assist devices, extra corporeal therapies).</p> <p>Transfer/emergency transport.</p> <p>Advanced life support skills.</p> <p>Leadership of team of nurses.</p> <p>Research.</p> <p>Clinical decision making.</p> <p>Complex discharge planning.</p> <p>Interpretation of altered vital signs in conjunction with anatomy and physiology.</p> <p>Further knowledge of more complex congenital heart defects – pathophysiology, aetiology, epidemiology, pharmacology, psychosocial and sequelae.</p> <p>How to care for women pre and postnatally.</p> <p>End of life care.</p> <p>Management of complex cyanosed patients.</p>	<p>Advanced life support for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cardiac assessment (degree/ Masters level) • advanced respiratory management (degree/Masters level) • extra corporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO) course • transplant co-ordination. <p>Stand alone modules (Masters level), for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • management of altered cardiac function • management of arrhythmias • an integrative approach to adult congenital heart disease. <p>The adolescent and young adult with congenital heart disease.</p> <p>Transfer of patients.</p>	<p>Resuscitation Council.</p> <p>Higher education institutions.</p> <p>In house for relevant units.</p> <p>Higher education institutions.</p> <p>Regional in-house (such as for credit accumulation transfer scheme).</p>
Band 7	<p>Critical analysis, synthesis, evaluation.</p> <p>Non-medical prescribing.</p> <p>History taking.</p> <p>Advanced clinical assessment skills, diagnostic reasoning, and independent prescribing skills in relation to ACHD.</p> <p>Presentational skills.</p> <p>Autonomous practice.</p> <p>Advanced communication skills.</p>	<p>Masters level education, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MSc cardiovascular practice (BHF) • MSc advanced nursing practice • MSc advanced clinical nursing practice. <p>Advanced communication skills training.</p>	<p>Higher education institutions.</p> <p>Higher education institutions/ BHF.</p>
Band 8	<p>Research skills.</p> <p>Management skills (process mapping/ change management skills).</p>	<p>Masters level PhD.</p> <p>NHS management courses.</p>	<p>Higher education institutions.</p>

Appendix 1

Example job description: ACHD lead nurse for network

Role description: ACDH lead nurse for network

Example job description

Grade: AfC BAND 8c*

*Indicative AfC banding level subject to AfC job evaluation.

Professionally accountable to: Head of nursing (specialist centre).

Responsible to: ACHD strategic management board within network or equivalent.

Minimum qualifications: Registered nurse. Accredited teaching qualification. MSc (nursing).

Minimum experience: Five years' experience of nursing at a senior level in a relevant field.

Role purpose

- The postholder is responsible for providing professional and clinical leadership and support to ACHD nurses across the entire network. They will ensure the provision and delivery of a high standard of ACHD nursing to patients requiring medical, interventional or surgical care for adult congenital heart disease.
- The post encompasses a lead role in shaping the vision and future development of ACHD nursing services across the network. This will include providing a supportive environment across the network that ensures the implementation of high quality evidence-based care, nursing education, and training at every level.
- The role involves creating an efficient, comprehensive and integrated approach to multi-professional working across the network. The postholder will be responsible for providing clear leadership to the network by developing new ways of working with adults with congenital heart disease. They will work collaboratively with all members of the MDT in ensuring the advancement of patient-focused care and support.

- The postholder will be responsible for working collaboratively with nurse managers within individual centres across the network, in order to maintain high standards of nursing care for adults with congenital heart disease and maintain and resolve matters involving issues of clinical governance or patient complaint as appropriate.

Management and leadership

- Develop productive working relationships and practices across the network, working in partnership with other relevant agencies and organisations.
- Evaluate clinical nursing practices and service delivery across the network and work with nurse managers to implement change where necessary.
- Chair and participate in network meetings.
- Collaborate with other ACHD lead nurses nationally.
- Proactive in service development and improvement across the network.
- Provide clinical leadership across the ACHD network in anticipating and identifying key strategic issues and priorities for ACHD nursing, including development of new roles and acting as a facilitator in managing the change.
- Influence and be innovative in the strategic delivery of services, articulating the necessary resources required and assisting in identifying potential sources of funding.
- Evaluate how services are provided for ACHD patients and how these may be redesigned to better serve theirs and their carer's needs.

Clinical responsibility

- Ensure high quality, evidence-based nursing care is delivered to all patients.
- Lead in the promotion and development of nursing skills across all grades of nursing staff throughout the network.
- Ensure the delivery of expert ACHD specialist nursing care to patients from initial presentation to medical/surgical intervention including transition to adult services across the network.

Education

- Responsible for supporting educational pathways to ensure the implementation of high quality, evidence-based care, nurse education and training.
- Support course director/module leader for relevant continuing professional development (CPD) courses in ACHD specialist nursing.
- Excellent teaching and presentation skills at both a local and national level.

Research

- Support clinical research studies within the field of ACHD nursing, focusing on improving the clinical outcomes of adults with congenital heart disease.
- Promote and raise the profile of ACHD nursing research/audit within the network.

Quality assurance

- Audit and measure service against delivery against national standards, to identify shortfalls and take measures to ensure continuing improvement.
- Participate in the activities of professional bodies and associations to develop and revise ACHD practice guidelines and protocols relevant to ACHD nursing, in line with national recommendations.
- Proactive in the management of clinical risk.
- Co-ordinate clinical quality groups across the ACHD network and ensure timely and accurate communication of outcomes.

Professional development and leadership

- Actively engage in clinical supervision, reflection and self awareness, and continuing professional education by identifying own learning needs.
- Build professional links and represent the ACHD network both nationally and internationally.
- Promote a culture of shared governance across the network.
- Maintain professional NMC PREP requirements for continued registration.
- Reflect the principles laid down in the NMC's *Code of Conduct*.
- Provide professional and clinical advice and support to ACHD nurses across the network.

Appendix 2

Example job description: ACHD lead clinical educator

Role description: ACDH lead clinical educator

Example job description

Grade: Minimum AfC Band 8a*

*Indicative AfC banding level subject to AfC job evaluation.

Responsible to: Directorate head of nursing.

Professionally accountable to: ACHD lead nurse/ACHD consultant.

Essential qualifications: Registered nurse. Accredited teaching qualification. MSc in Advanced practice (clinical nursing).

Minimum experience: Five years' experience of nursing ACHD patients and relevant teaching experience.

Role purpose

- To promote a learning environment that optimises ACHD clinical development and facilitates a best practice principle for patient care across the network. The postholder will be responsible for the continuing specialist professional development and overall performance of all staff in the network. They will develop standardised learning objectives and competences throughout the network to ensure that all care delivered to patients is evidence based as far as possible and is equitable regardless of where it is delivered.

Summary of duties and responsibilities

- Develop a competence-based training programme for all levels of nursing staff throughout the network.
- Standardise training across the network by the development of in-house training programmes that are available and relevant to all grades of staff.
- Lead a team of practice educators and oversee the vision for training and development across the network.

- Participate in and advance the audit and research process including the identification of research questions, data collection and analysis as well as the implementation and dissemination of findings in relation to education and training.
- Participate in the education of nursing and medical staff both within and outside the organisation.
- Collaborate with medical colleagues and work together to deliver a first class education system.

Management

- Provide consultancy for all nursing staff across the organisation and network, demonstrating specialist knowledge of practice, clinical skill and problem solving ability.
- Act as a change agent in practice and policy regarding the education of staff.
- Advise on best practice within specialty on a local and national basis.
- Develop and implement nurse-led initiatives to advance the quality of patient and family care.
- Collaborate nationally with equivalent postholders to drive and deliver a national approach to the education of staff.
- Involvement at a strategic level to ensure that education is underpinned and supported by commissioners with appropriate funding.

Clinical leadership skills

- Provide a vision for education across the network and promote a culture of lifelong learning.
- Lead a team of clinical educators – to ensure that the vision for education is delivered.
- Work across the multidisciplinary team to ensure collaboration of education and training.
- Engage in staff development through clinical supervision, motivation and role modelling.

Clinical practice

- Excellent time management.
- Provide clinical support to all levels of staff.
- Have an advanced, in depth knowledge of anatomy and physiology, complex congenital heart disease and the many scenarios that patients may encounter.
- Act as an expert practitioner, demonstrating advanced clinical skills in health assessment, diagnosis and complex care planning.
- Able to teach, using expert presentation skills.

Research skills

- Continue to update and re-assess policies and procedures related to patient care, utilising an evidence-based practice approach, disseminating information network wide through education.
- Participate in research projects established within the organisation and liaise with research nurses.
- Continually update own knowledge on research activities in ACHD both within the organisation, regionally, nationally and internationally.
- Participate in and advance the audit and research process, including the identification of research questions, data collection and analysis as well as the implementation and dissemination of findings.

Training and education

- Develop standardised evidence-based competences that are relevant to nursing roles across the network.
- Monitor preceptorship and develop a workbook for newly registered staff to ensure that they undertake/experience a minimum amount of learning within the first 18 months that is standardised throughout the network and in line with national recommendations.
- Develop educational programmes in-house, regionally across the network, and nationally that deliver the overall vision for nurse education.
- Disseminate expertise and knowledge through presentation and lectureship, outside of the network.
- Act as a mentor/supervisor for colleagues undertaking further training at an advanced level.

Communication

- Ensure all relevant information regarding education and training is effectively and adequately recorded.
- Communicate the vision for nurse education with managers, commissioners and ACHD lead nurse.

- Develop and promote links with relevant universities and higher education institutions in order to deliver the high standard of education required.
- Work closely with the ACHD consultant nurse for the network to deliver relevant in-house training programmes across the network.

Quality

- Monitor and develop standards of nurse education with regular auditing.
- Participate in risk management assessment.
- Audit current education practices and make recommendations for changes in practice.
- Enable staff to develop and progress their careers through relevant education and training programmes.
- Continue to develop self and role through clinical supervision, reflection and self awareness, continuing professional education and effective stress management.
- Have a track record of reputable publications.
- Contribute to the national agenda to develop congenital cardiac nursing and education.
- Continue to network and forge professional links in both the UK and abroad.

Appendix 3

Example job description: ACHD advanced nurse practitioner

Role description: ACDH advanced nurse practitioner

Example job description

Grade: Minimum AfC Band 7*

* Indicative AfC banding level subject to AfC job evaluation.

Responsible to: Directorate head of nursing.

Professionally accountable to: ACHD lead nurse/ACHD consultant.

Essential qualifications: Registered nurse. Accredited teaching qualification. MSc in advanced practice (clinical nursing).

Minimum experience: Five years' experience of nursing ACHD patients.

Role purpose

- To provide advanced nursing practice to adults with congenital heart disease through and at all stages of an illness trajectory, delivered with autonomy of decision making and therapeutic action. This practice encompasses a documented responsibility for clinical leadership leading to the advancement of nursing practice. The postholder is responsible for the promotion of high quality, evidence-based practice within their caseload and the achievement of development, research and audit goals throughout the specialty.

Summary of duties and responsibilities

- Deliver an advanced level of care to adults with congenital heart disease in an unsupervised and autonomous context founded upon an expert knowledge base within the specialty.
- Participate in risk management assessments and the development of evidence-based strategies to improve the quality of care both for the individual patient and the target population.
- Promote the advancement of advanced nursing practice in the field of ACHD.

- Participate in and advance the audit and research process including the identification of research questions, data collection and analysis as well as the implementation and dissemination of findings.
- Participate in the education of nursing and medical staff both inside and outside of the organisation.
- Communicate with patients, carers and other health professionals using advanced skills.
- Collaborate with medical colleagues and work together to ensure the delivery of safe, high quality care at all times.

Management

- Provide consultancy for all nursing staff across the organisation and network, demonstrating an advanced generalist as well as specialist knowledge of practice, clinical skill and problem-solving ability.
- Act as a change agent in practice, policy development and education.
- Advise on best practice within the specialty on a local and national basis.
- Develop and implement nurse-led initiatives to advance the quality of patient and family care.
- Develop and drive integrated care pathways for improved patient case management.

Clinical leadership

- Embrace the organisation's policies on the expansion of the nurse's role.
- Case manage adults with congenital heart disease, ensuring that this carefully reflects the latest evidence-base or research developments.
- Advocate for the rights and desires of the patient and family within the health care domain, promoting choice and ethical decision-making in partnership.
- Use advanced communication skills to promote team assessment planning and evaluation of collaborative and co-ordinated care.
- Engage in staff development through clinical supervision, motivation and role modelling.

Clinical practice

- Make autonomous clinical decisions.
- Provide clinical support to all levels of medical staff.
- Have an in-depth knowledge of anatomy and physiology to facilitate advanced clinical assessments.
- Act as an expert practitioner, demonstrating advanced clinical skills in health assessment, diagnosis and complex care planning.
- Ability to interpret the results of investigations and to seek consultant discussion or inter-specialty referrals.
- Manage effective therapeutic care, evaluate progress, and plan comprehensive discharge planning throughout the illness trajectory.
- Undertake both a supplemental and independent prescribing role for adults with congenital heart disease.

Research skills

- Continue to update and reassess policies and procedures related to patient care, utilising an evidence-based practice approach, disseminating information organisation and network wide.
- Participate in research projects established within the organisation and liaise with research nurses.
- Continually update own knowledge on research activities in ACHD both within the organisation, regionally, nationally and internationally.
- Maintain a professional resource role within ongoing clinical trials.
- Contribute to and maintain clinical databases for the effective audit of practice and its outcomes.
- Participate in and advance the audit and research process, including the identification of research questions, data collection, and analysis as well as the implementation and dissemination of findings.

Training and education

- Participate in hospital-wide educational programmes.
- Disseminate expertise and knowledge through presentation and lectureship, outside of the network.
- Act as a mentor/ supervisor for colleagues undertaking further training at an advanced level.

Communication

- Ensure all relevant information is effectively and adequately recorded.
- Provide and receive highly complex information from and to patients, their families and health care professionals including sensitive discussion of emotive issues, in a competent and transparent manner.
- Effectively manage highly emotive situations of shock, anger and grief using advanced communication skills.

Quality

- Monitor and develop standards of nursing care, utilising patient and professionals' views.
- Participate in risk management assessment.
- Audit current care perspectives and make recommendations for changes in practice.
- Enable patients to exercise their rights and promote their equality and cultural diversity.
- Continue to develop self and role through clinical supervision, reflection and self-awareness, and continuing professional education and effective stress management.
- Have a track record of working for reputable publications.
- Contribute to the national agenda to develop congenital cardiac nursing and advanced practice.
- Continue to network and forge professional links in both the UK and abroad.

Appendix 4

Example job description: ACHD lead clinical nurse specialist

Role description: ACDH lead clinical nurse specialist

Example job description

Grade: ACHD CNS AfC band 7-8a*

*Indicative AfC banding level subject to AfC job evaluation.

Professionally accountable to: Directorate head of nursing.

Responsible to: ACHD lead nurse.

Essential qualifications: Registered general nurse. Accredited teaching qualification. Practicing at Masters Degree level, with a view to working towards such a qualification.

Minimum experience: Five years' experience of caring for patients with adult congenital heart disease.

Key relationships

- MDT team within ACHD network, ACHD nurse consultant, ACHD clinical educators, all cardiac nurse specialists (ACS, arrhythmia, heart failure, cardiac surgery nurse practitioners); paediatric congenital cardiac services, cardiac obstetric service, learning disability teams, radiology etc.

Job purpose

- The postholder will be responsible for delivering a high standard of specialist nursing care for patients with ACHD throughout their treatment and follow up across the network. They will ensure that every patient has access to a nurse specialist who will become the primary point of contact for the patient.
- The postholder will manage a team of nurse specialists who will be involved in the management of patients undergoing congenital and non-cardiac surgery, cardiology interventions, complex pregnancies, heart failure and work up for cardiac transplantation. They will also be responsible for ensuring that all young people moving to the adult service have access to appropriate support and information as well as supporting patients with learning difficulties.

- They will be responsible for the development of highly specialised areas of work such as the management and support of patient with pulmonary hypertension associated with congenital heart disease. They will be inspirational leaders who are able to develop services according to the ACHD network's strategic direction and delivery of service and according to local need.
- The postholder will ensure appropriate ACHD provision for relevant patients (as identified by local commissioning, national and international clinical guidelines) both during inpatient stays and via out-patient contact. They will work across divisional, organisational and professional boundaries, encouraging inter-disciplinary and inter-agency working for the benefit of improved patient outcomes. The postholder will contribute to enabling timely discharge of patients within agreed protocols. They will work with the service lead to maintain systems to ensure that patients with ACHD are identified early and are treated in line with ACHD guidelines irrespective of their geographical location.
- They will ensure that data is collected as required for audit and research, ensuring robust systems are maintained for recording required information. They will use relevant systems and processes to monitor clinical outcomes and activity in line with the divisional operational plan.

Summary of duties and responsibilities

- Be the first point of contact and principle key worker/advocate for adults with congenital heart disease and their families.
- Have primary responsibility for the provision of specialist nursing care for adults with congenital heart disease and their families, practicing autonomously as a core member of the wider multidisciplinary team across the network.
- Demonstrate advanced communication skills with patients, carers and members of the multidisciplinary team from primary through to tertiary care settings, ensuring that information is appropriate, timely, delivered sensitively and based on individual needs.
- Ensure that ACHD patients and their carers receive care and support that is of a high professional standard by providing

highly skilled physical and psychological assessment/care/support/information and advice to both in-patients and out-patients by all the nurse specialist.

- Act as principle liaison for a wide range of MDTs including GPs and community health teams to ensure the smooth provision of service across the network.
- Provide telephone advice line for patients, their carers and other clinicians across the network on clinical and lifestyle issues, preventing inappropriate admissions to hospital.
- Provide specialist nurse-led clinics to enable continuing monitoring of complex patients with ACHD eg heart failure, pulmonary hypertension, psychological assessment, and support.
- Provide patients with relevant understandable written information.
- Signpost patients where to access a wide range of help and support with benefits, lifestyle issues, mental health and psychological issues, insurance etc.
- Provide cardiovascular health education, advice and guidance regarding patient diagnosis, risk factor management and treatment plan to both health care professionals and patients.
- Provide a specialist ACHD nurse-led pre-operative assessment clinic, including planning, implementation and evaluation of individualised patient care.
- Develop services specifically for those young people transitioning their care into adult care, and communicate closely with the transition nurse to support all patients.
- Provide tailored and specific care for patients with learning difficulties and their families, taking into account the principles laid down in the Mental Capacity Act 2005.
- Ensure complex case management of patients with ACHD and facilitate effective and timely discharge.
- Act as a resource for all health care professionals within own trust, other acute trusts, primary care settings and throughout the network regarding ACHD care.
- Identify gaps in evidence and/or practice knowledge that requires resolution through research, and initiate and undertake or assist in relevant research activities as appropriate.

Clinical practice

- Provide specialist nursing advice, information, practical and psychosocial support to patients and their families.
- Be the designated first point of contact and principle key worker for patients, their families, and health professionals across the network ensuring referrals are prioritised and managed appropriately.

- Manage own caseload. Work autonomously to make clinical decisions in assessment, diagnosis and treatment of patients from across the network.
- Support the transition process by developing and providing information that is relevant to young people in a variety of different formats in relation to diagnosis, investigations, treatment and support throughout their care pathway.
- Facilitate discharge planning to ensure continuity of care and effective communication across the network throughout the ACHD care pathway, collaborating with community nursing services where necessary for complex and palliative care.
- Use advanced communication skills to impart sensitive, complex and potentially distressing information to patients and their families and provide them with advice and emotional support in hospital and at home.
- Communicate in ways that empower patients and their families to make informed choices about their health and health care, enabling informed consent.
- Act as an advocate for individual patients and their families.
- Assess and identify the complex health and psychosocial needs of individual patients and their families, and plan programmes of care to meet these needs, make referrals and collaborate with other professionals as appropriate.
- Use clinical judgment and autonomous decision making concerning the interpretation and analysis of information from a variety of sources.
- Maintain adequate patient's documentation to NMC requirements for all patients seen and advice given in any practice setting.
- Work autonomously and promote nurse-led clinics in a variety of specialist areas related to ACHD according to the need within the network.

Leadership and management

- Work collaboratively and in partnership with other health care professionals, offering appropriate leadership, guidance and supervision to colleagues.
- Lead the development of nurse-led initiatives in conjunction with medical and nursing colleagues to advance the quality of ACHD care across the network.
- Participate in strategic planning of future quality service development, including policy planning, both locally and nationally.
- Develop and implement standards of care, practice guidelines, and integrated care pathways, continually evaluating the quality of patient care.

- Demonstrate the ability to manage own workload independently, as well as leading a team of nurse specialists.
- Participate in Department of Health work on the development of the adult congenital heart disease services locally and nationally.

Training and education

- Identify the specific information and support needs of ACHD patients and carers and respond to those needs.
- Participate in education for all patients with ACHD and their families and carers at an appropriate level for each individual, to encourage self care and participation in the planned program of treatment and care.
- Work with patients to devise suitable educational and information materials regarding ACHD diagnostic and treatment procedures at local, regional and national level.
- Participate in specific specialist ACHD education and training programmes across the network for all groups of staff including at a national level.
- Demonstrate an ongoing awareness of current developments within ACHD research and practice, and the implications these may have on nursing care and future education programmes.
- Take responsibility for own personal and professional development and identify needs and objectives through the annual appraisal process.
- Exercise a high degree of personal and professional authority and act as an expert for all disciplines of staff.
- Share good practice, networking locally and nationally. Contribute to the wider development of practice through publication and dissemination.

Evaluation and research

- Demonstrate ability to critically analyse and apply research-based findings to ACHD nursing practice.
- Record all patient information using relevant manual/computerised systems to ensure that robust clinical audit is possible to inform treatment.
- Participate in relevant audit, research and development activity, on a uni-professional/multi-professional basis.
- Work with colleagues to ensure that relevant research trials are identified and patients given the opportunity to participate if they meet relevant inclusion criteria.
- Collaborate with other key professionals such as ACHD nurse educators, ACHD consultants and ACHD professors in initiating and undertaking evaluation of the service, including patients views via satisfaction surveys and audits to evaluate service provision.

Professional development

- Be proactive in developing and improving own knowledge, skills and attitudes in structured ways, including accessing clinical supervision.
- Share good practice through creating positive opportunities to network locally, regionally and nationally, and contribute to the wider development of practice through publication and dissemination.
- Participate in staff appraisal, staff development and in-service training activities across the network in line with the KSF.
- Work with others towards achieving shared goals; ensure that the team's purpose and objectives are clear.
- Work within agreed trust policies and adhere to the NMC's *Code of conduct*.

Appendix 5

Example job description: Consultant ACHD nurse

Role description: ACDH lead clinical nurse specialist

Example job description

Grade: Minimum AfC Band 8c*

* Indicative AfC banding level subject to AfC job evaluation.

Responsible to: Directorate head of nursing.

Professionally accountable to: ACHD lead nurse.

Essential qualifications: Registered children's nurse. MSc advanced nursing practice (clinical).

Minimum qualifications: Five years' experience of caring for adults with congenital heart disease.

Job purpose

- As lead clinical nurse for adults with congenital heart disease, the postholder will work across the network and beyond to strengthen the nursing input and improve care and outcomes for ACHD patients in a variety of settings. An expert nurse practising at a highly advanced level, the postholder will contribute significantly to developing nursing practice, knowledge, skills and roles within the ACHD network. The postholder will be an expert resource, health educator, teacher and leader for multidisciplinary teams inside and outside the trust and the wider network. They will work across the organisation and professional boundaries to bring about improvements in care and treatment outcomes.
- The postholder should forge strong links with local higher education providers and the lead ACHD clinical educator to enable development of appropriate educational and training programmes for all clinical staff caring for ACHD patients. These links should also enhance the postholder's abilities and opportunities to conduct research and further develop their research skills. They will have a role in encouraging nurses and allied health professionals to embrace audit and research in order to evaluate and improve patient care.
- In addition to the leadership role in this specialist area, the consultant nurse will support and work with the divisional

management team, ACHD lead nurse, and specialist commissioners focusing on the corporate strategic professional agenda. This may involve working on corporate professional issues and will involve acting as an expert and senior role model.

Main duties and responsibilities

Clinical expert function

- Demonstrate advanced interpersonal skills in caring for ACHD patients and their families.
- Demonstrate advanced clinical knowledge and skills in assessing and caring for ACHD patients and their families.
- Work directly with nurses and other clinical health professionals in all areas supporting and developing their skills in caring for ACHD patients.
- Demonstrate expertise in all aspects of patients needs from initial assessment through to acute in-hospital care to follow-up in primary care for ACHD patients.
- Demonstrate advanced practice functions including clinical history taking, physical assessment, and ECG interpretation.
- Demonstrate advanced clinical decision-making skills in referring patients for further tests, investigations, interpreting results and discharging to GP.
- Work effectively and collaboratively with nursing, medical and therapy staff in setting and monitoring multi-professional standards, and promoting evidence-based practice and a culture of learning.
- Develop and establish clinically effective standards of care, protocols and guidelines to enhance care of ACHD patients in a variety of settings.
- Utilise evidence to enhance the contribution of nursing in caring for cardiology patients.

Leadership and consultancy

- Act as lead clinical nurse representing the ACHD network for regional developments in cardiology and within cardiac nursing.
- Demonstrate appropriate leadership style and skills, which enable a multi-professional culture for learning and practice development.

- Be a skilled facilitator for staff, clinical practice, and organisational development for ACHD services and broader cardiac issues.
- Lead developments in processes for referral, admission and discharge of ACHD patients.
- Be highly motivated and demonstrate a style of leadership which promotes advances in nursing practice and encourages innovation.

Education and practice development

- Facilitate links with local higher education facilities in collaboration with lead ACHD educator to develop education programmes for nurses in ACHD care.
- Create opportunities for lifelong learning and professional development of all health care professionals.
- Monitor practice developments in care provision locally, nationally and internationally, and consider how and whether new developments may be applied to ACHD patients.

Research and audit

- Support the clinical professor of ACHD nursing in leading the development of non-medical research across the ACHD network.
- Identify appropriate research opportunities in all areas of ACHD nursing and pursue relevant sources of funding, developing collaborative bids wherever possible.
- Act as a resource for colleagues wishing to embark on research projects.
- Lead practice innovation enabling continuous improvements in delivering high quality, patient-focused care.
- Support nurses and other health care professionals in adopting an enquiry based, critical appraisal approach to caring for ACHD patients.
- Actively disseminate research findings and information through publishing, conference/seminar speaking and local or national networking.
- Represent non-medical research interests at divisional level.
- Work with other clinicians in identifying and implementing clinical audit methods to assist in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the ACHD services across the network.
- Develop partnerships with colleagues and networks with statutory and voluntary agencies and higher education institutions to identify and develop collaborative research opportunities.

Professional and personal development

- Demonstrate personal mastery relating to clinical and technical skills in ACHD by maintaining and updating knowledge and skills base.
- Act as a positive role model to inspire those caring for ACHD patients to improve and develop services that will deliver life enhancing improvements across the ACHD network and beyond.
- Demonstrate a reflective ability supported by appropriate clinical supervision.
- Take personal responsibility to maintain and/or develop a portfolio of skills in line with the requirements of the post.
- Maintain and further develop a national and international profile as a consultant nurse in ACHD.

Appendix 6

Example job description: Professor in congenital cardiac nursing (national post)

Role description: Professor in congenital cardiac nursing (national post)

Example job description

Grade: Academic grade 10 (level 9).

Responsible to: Dean of faculty.

Minimum qualifications: PhD in a relevant discipline or equivalent professional experience

Purpose:

- Responsible for establishing pre- and post-registration nursing education programmes within an educational institution. The postholder will lead on the development and implementation of university and faculty strategy and policy on postgraduate education. They will work autonomously, leading teams of educationalists and faculty staff at a national level. The postholder will design and lead educational programmes to ensure standardisation of higher education in this field across the country. They will lead work at a national and international level in the development of health care educational policy and practice. They will provide strategic direction, leadership and management of applied research in congenital cardiac nursing.

Main duties and responsibilities

Generic:

- Strategic leadership for effective co-ordination and development of entire learning and development provision through strategic partnerships with service providers, commissioners and other stakeholders, leading on applying business techniques to secure funding.
- Ensure evaluation and assessment processes are congruent with organisational and statutory requirements.
- Lead the development and delivery of a national vision and direction for learning and development within the field of ACHD nursing.

- Engender an active, creative and adaptive culture of evidence-based practice nationally.
- Promote and champion a culture of learning and development throughout the nation, encouraging and contributing to processes which support a range of inter-professional learning and development opportunities.
- Instigate and ensure collaboration and co-operation nationally and internationally within the spirit of lifelong learning, and make significant contributions to national and international debates on education learning and development policy and practice.
- Blend of clinical, management, educational, and research components.
- Provide strategic leadership and vision on applied research in collaboration with other senior staff to ensure the continuing academic health of the discipline.
- Lead and develop a team of academic staff, research fellows, assistants and students focused on delivering national and international applied research outputs.
- Lead and undertake applied research activity at national and international level commensurate with the seniority of the post and the norms of the discipline.
- Obtain, plan and manage the resources needed to deliver applied research projects, oversee progress in all aspects of work, and prepare and present management information in line with university procedures and the needs of external funders.
- Undertake, as appropriate to the demands of the post, research, teaching, scholarly activity, supervision of research students and administration.
- Promote and encourage open communication at all levels and co-ordinate activities at a national level.

Post and role specific:

- Build and lead a team of applied researchers in the field of ACHD nursing and related areas.
- Seek and obtain funding to support the development of applied research activities in ACHD nursing.

- Contribute to the design, teaching and operation of postgraduate and undergraduate courses and modules as appropriate.
- Conduct and publish personal research and supervise research students in the field of ACHD nursing.

Research, publications and special interests

- Significant record of research and publication or other forms of dissemination.
- International reputation in ACHD.

Job-related skills and aptitudes

- Excellent applied research skills.
- Sophisticated awareness of changing policies in ACHD field.
- Organisational skill and ability to meet deadlines.
- Ability to teach to a range of CPD, undergraduate and postgraduate students.

Interpersonal skills and strategic leadership skills

- Ability to develop a high-performing team to deliver individual and team outputs and targets.
- Leadership style which promotes collaboration and open two-way communication.

Other

- Commitment to promoting the values that underpin the discipline and applied research activities.
- Commitment to developing the discipline to build and preserve a high profile national or international reputation for the university.

Appendix 7

Example person specification: ACHD lead nurse

Criteria	Essential (lead nurse ACHD)	Desirable
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registered nurse. Masters degree in a health-related discipline. Further/higher education teaching qualification. Management qualification. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PhD, or working towards.
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum of five years post-registration experience at a senior level in a relevant field. Teaching undergraduate and post-qualification levels in academic and clinical settings. Leadership and management experience of a clinical team. Reputation for professional excellence. Recognition as an innovator in relevant field. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production of research proposals and grant applications. Evidence of change management resulting in improved care. Representation on relevant regional, national or international committees.
Research, publications and special interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant record of publication or other forms of dissemination (such as policy or service delivery) in a relevant field. Presentations at national and international meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involvement in national development/project.
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of self directed career-long learning. Clinical knowledge of ACHD or relevant field. Critical appraisal skills. Ability to teach to a range of academic levels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research governance.
Interpersonal skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership style and advanced communication skills. Flexibility. Excellent interpersonal skills, able to communicate effectively with all levels of health service provider. Ability to work autonomously. Excellent leadership qualities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to develop a high-performing team to deliver individual and team outputs and targets.
Job-related skills and aptitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness of changing policies in ACHD care. Project management skills – meeting deadlines. Clinical governance and risk management. Excellent IT skills. Excellent organisational skills. Excellent presentational skills. Proven ability to apply research to practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic leadership skills.
Other requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commitment to promoting the values that underpin the specialty. A commitment to develop nursing to build and preserve a high profile reputation nationally or internationally for the network. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Honorary contract with higher education institution.

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June 2015

Review date: June 2017

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Published by the Royal College of Nursing

20 Cavendish Square

London

W1G 0RN

020 7409 3333

Publication code: 004 522

ISBN: 978-1-910066-89-8