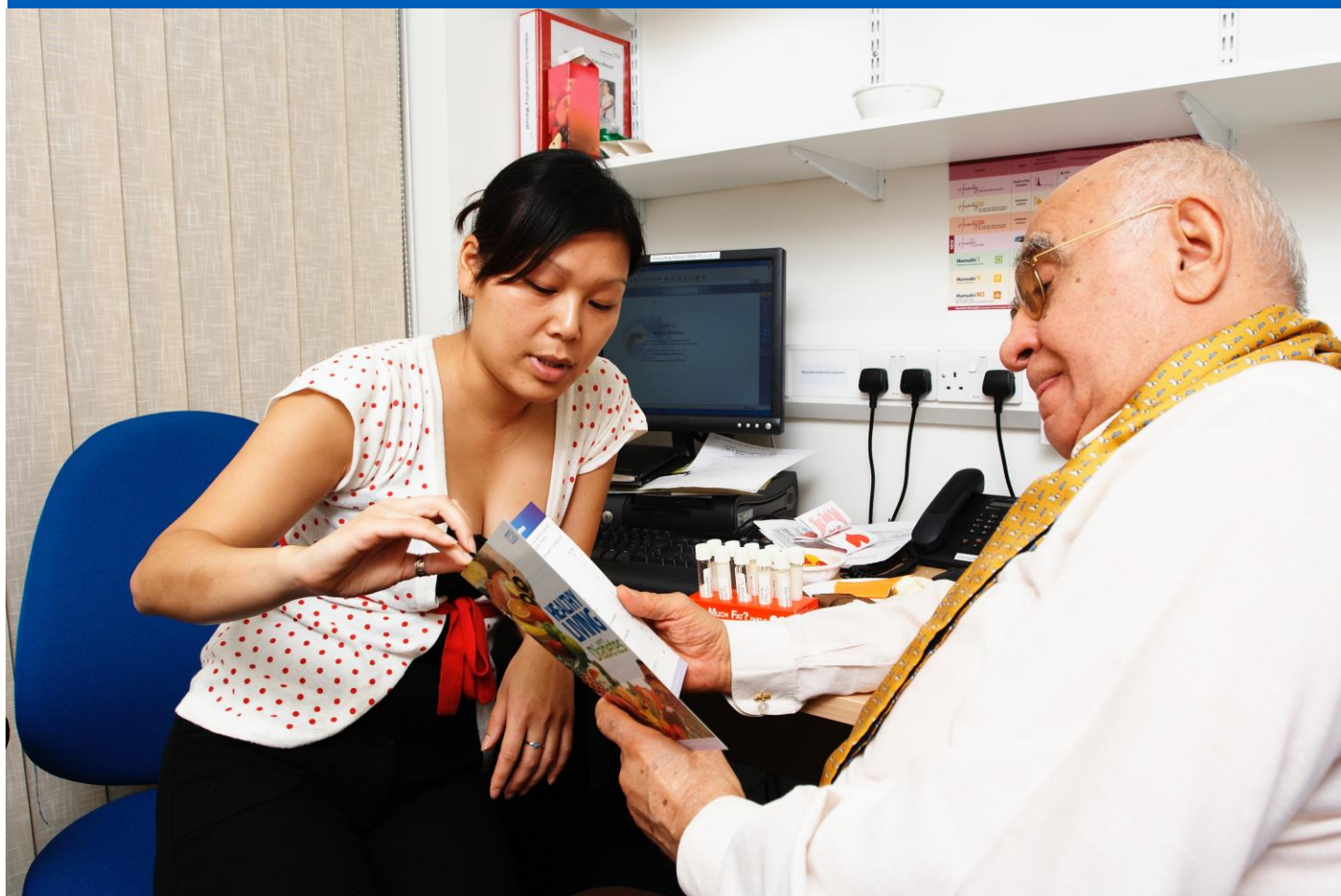


# ACCEND Programme briefing paper



**ACCEND: Aspirant Cancer Career and Education Development**

### What is ACCEND?

ACCEND stands for: **Aspirant Cancer Career and Education Development programme**

### Why do we need the ACCEND programme?

Never has the time to focus upon the cancer workforce been more vital.

Cancer is a complex and significant disease (that includes around 200 types and subtypes of disease) that will affect 1 in 2 of us during our lifetime. In the United Kingdom (UK), the number of people living with a cancer diagnosis is set to double from more than 2 million in 2021 to 4 million in 2030. Cancer is also the most common cause of death in the UK (CRUK 2021). At the same time, the diagnosis, treatment and management of cancer are becoming more complex with the advancement of scientific and technological innovations, which have the potential to transform our ability to prevent, diagnose, treat and care for people affected by cancer (PABC).

The nursing and the allied health professional workforce make a critical contribution:

- To supporting people to live well with and beyond cancer as acknowledged in multiple cancer and workforce policies in the UK (NHS England, 2018; 2019; 2019b; HEE 2019; Macmillan Cancer Support, 2021a) including the NHS Long-Term plan (NHS England, 2019).
- To the delivery of cancer care and cancer services across primary, secondary, tertiary and community settings, and in supra-regional centres for patients with rarer cancers.
- To the entirety of the cancer pathway from prehabilitation, diagnosis and treatment into rehabilitation, recovery, living with and beyond cancer and end of life care (HEE, 2019; Macmillan Cancer Support, 2019; Macmillan Cancer Support, 2018a; 2018b; Andritch et al., 2017).

We know that significant parts of the workforce are under pressure now and, unless we act, we risk being without the right number of health professionals with the right knowledge, skills and capabilities to effectively deliver the NHS Long Term Plan (NHS England, 2019) ambitions for cancer and the independent Cancer Taskforce Strategy (CRUK, 2015).

Since 2017, there have been numerous calls to develop the nursing and allied health professional cancer workforce including establishing nationally agreed career pathways and levels of practice, including.

- Cancer Nursing on the Line Report (Macmillan Cancer Support 2021b)
- 'Exploring the Role of Allied Health Professionals in the Care of People Affected by Cancer: The Patient and Practitioner Voices' (HEE 2019)
- The NHS Interim People Plan (NHS England 2019)
- Macmillan AHP workforce survey report (2018b)
- The role of allied health professionals in supporting people to live well with and beyond cancer NHS England (2018)
- Cancer nursing census in England in 2017 (Macmillan Cancer Support, 2017)
- The NHS Cancer Workforce Plan (DH 2017)
- Thinking Differently Report (Macmillan Cancer Support 2017b)
- AHPs into Action report (NHS England 2017)

### What is the overall purpose of the ACCEND programme?

The overall purpose of the ACCEND programme is to provide guidance and direction on the knowledge, skills and capabilities required by all nurses and allied health professionals who care for people affected by cancer in generalist and specialist cancer services and roles as part of multi-professional teams across the four UK nations. The ACCEND programme will seek to address and provide solutions to key issues that challenge the cancer workforce both now and into the future.

### What are the aims of the ACCEND programme?

Using a national collaborative approach, ACCEND aims are to:

1. Attract Registered Nurses and Allied Health Professionals into a career in cancer care to secure the future specialist workforce.
2. Develop and promote a nationally agreed, multi-level education framework and career pathway for those nursing and allied health professionals aspiring to work at all levels in specialist cancer roles/services;
3. Use the agreed career pathway and education framework to ensure the future and existing workforce delivering general and specialist cancer care have access to relevant pre and post-registration education, learning and development opportunities which enable practitioners to achieve the underpinning knowledge, skills and competencies required for their role/service, wellbeing and career aspirations, and enable employers to deliver high quality services to people affected by cancer, support workforce transformation and the health and wellbeing of staff.
4. Enable all nursing and allied health professionals to evidence their knowledge, skills and capabilities in a national digital portfolio.
5. Promote the agreed career pathway and education framework and the range of pre and post-registration education, workplace-based and e-learning development opportunities through the creation of national e-learning cancer hub.

### Who is leading the ACCEND Proposal?

ACCEND is an ambitious UK-wide programme that requires key organisations and partners to collaborate and work together. In alphabetical order, this proposal has been developed by:

- Greater Manchester Cancer Alliance
- Health Education England
- Macmillan Cancer Support
- Royal College of Nursing Cancer and Breast Care Forum Steering Committee
- UK Oncology Nursing Society
- University of Central Lancashire
- University of West of England

Health Education England is leading and co-ordinating the programme, creating the programme and governance structure to ensure that the programme is delivered in the right way, involving the right people, with the right skills.

## What will ACCEND deliver?

As shown in figure 1, the ACCEND proposal involves 5 work-streams focused on:

- Development of a nationally approved career pathway and education framework for nursing and the allied health professions providing care to PABC in general and specialist services
- A national career and education development programme for:
  - Pre-registration nursing associates, nursing and allied health professional students
  - Post-registration early career, enhanced, advanced and strategic/consultant level nursing and allied health professionals providing cancer care in specialist roles/services
- A digital individualised portable e-portfolio which aligns to the knowledge, skills and capabilities for the different levels of practitioner and their selected career pathway.

As Figure 1 illustrates, the proposal:

- Incorporates a range of learning opportunities: workplace-based, accredited modules/courses, e-learning, action learning sets, coaching, professional and academic supervision.
- Recognises attainment of specialist knowledge and skills at all levels of practice
- Focuses on learning related to the four pillars of professional practice – clinical practice; leadership and management; research/evidence-based practice and quality improvement; and specialist cancer focused education
- Provides opportunities for accessible interprofessional learning; uni-professional learning; role-specific learning.
- Aligns to national frameworks for cancer careers and advanced level roles

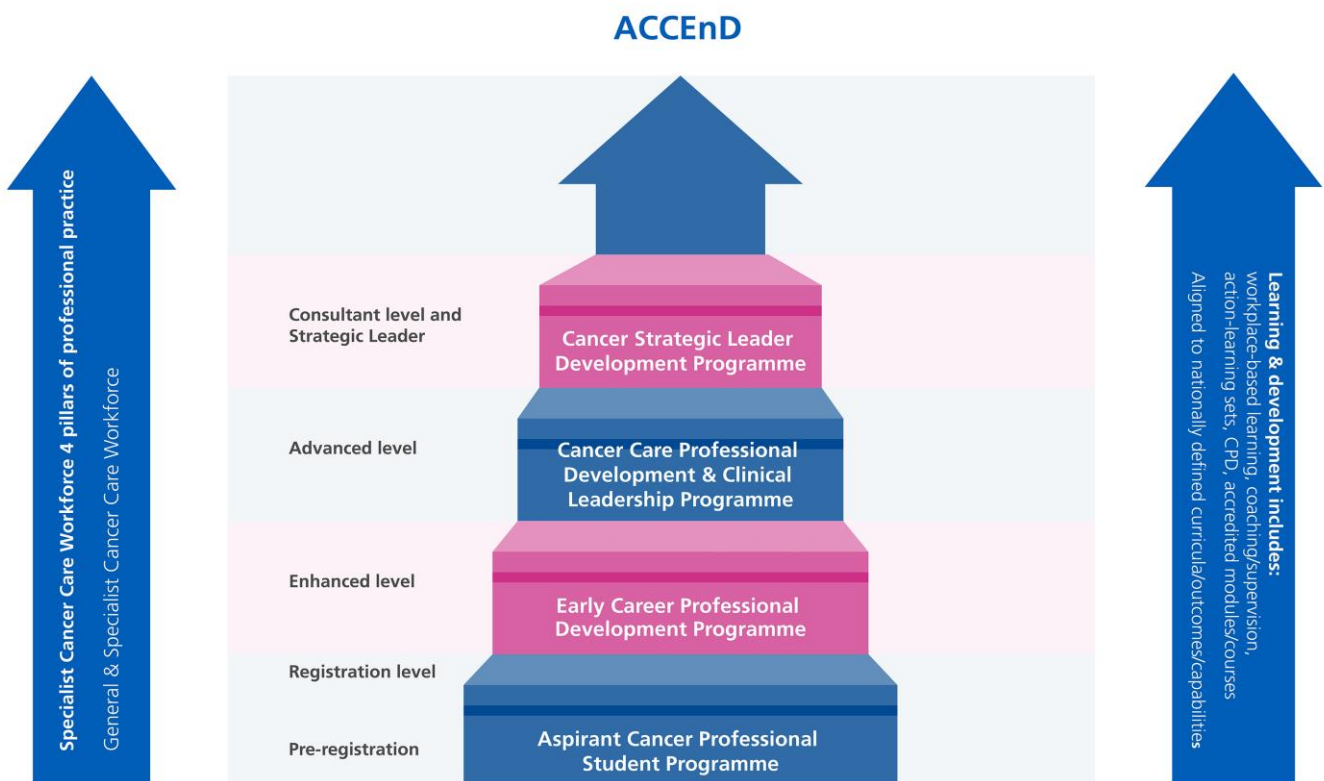


Figure 1: ACCEND proposal

ACCEND Steering Group 09/2021



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