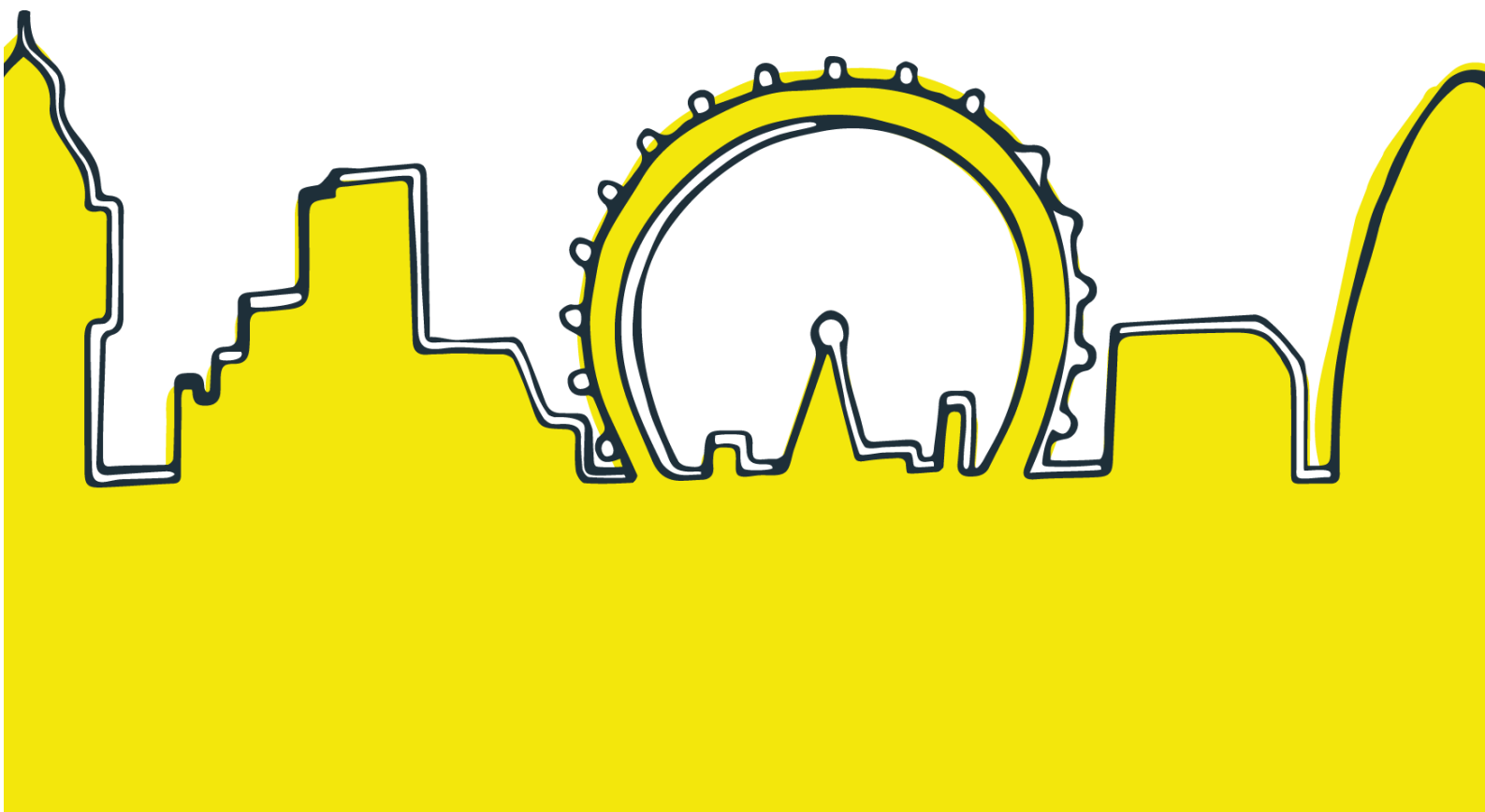


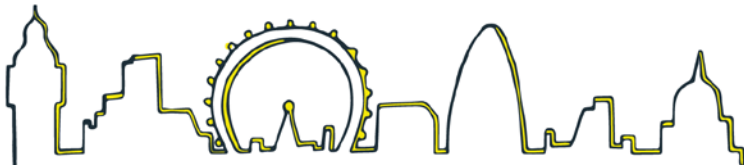
Learning Disability Nursing Workforce

Best Practice Guide
August 2020



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Introduction

CapitalNurse's vision is to 'get nursing right for London'; ensuring that London has the right number of nurses, with the right skills in the right place, working to deliver excellent nursing wherever it is needed. CapitalNurse recognise the vital part learning disability nurses play to ensure that people with a learning disability receive high quality care across London. The Learning Disability Nursing Workstream was set up working with learning disability nurse leaders working in higher education institutions (HEIs), clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) and healthcare providers in London.

The aim of the Capital Nurse Learning Disability Nursing Workforce Project was to focus on three key areas:

- inspiring future learning disability nurses
- recruiting and supporting newly-registered nurses
- facilitating progression of registered learning disability nurses

A learning disability is lifelong condition which significantly affects a person's ability to understand new or complex information or learn new skills (NHS, 2018). More information can be found on www.england.nhs.uk/learning-disabilities. Alternatively, Mencap has produced an explanatory video www.mencap.org.uk/learning-disability-explained/what-learning-disability.

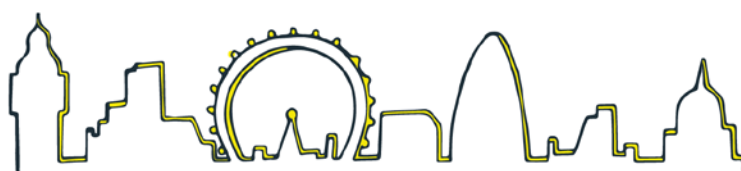
Registered learning disability nurses are specifically trained to support people with learning disabilities to maintain positive physical and mental health.

The NHS Long Term Plan (NHS England, 2019) identified that the level of health inequality that people with a learning disability experience and the impact this has on their health and life expectancy made it an area which needed to be improved upon. This will include more proactive care in the community and acute care, access to services closer to home for those with complex needs, and the delivery of highly- effective time-limited specialist learning disability inpatient services.

In recognition of the increased nursing resource that will be needed to meet the NHS objectives, The Interim NHS People Plan (NHS England, 2019) aims to increase clinical placements for student nurses and access to alternative training routes such as apprenticeships and incentives for shortage specialities such learning disability nursing. [The All-England Plan for Learning Disability Nursing \(2020\)](#), outlines NHS England and Health Education England's commitment to making sure we have enough learning disability nurses in the future and details how the NHS plans to improve the quality of care for people with learning disabilities or autism.

Learning disability nursing is experiencing the highest vacancy rate of all nursing groups. In September 2018 applications to study learning disability nursing had fallen to 54% of the 2015/16 figures.

London has the highest turnover of learning disability nurses of all regions in England. This has increased by 10% over the last year, with 69 whole time equivalent (WTE) nurses leaving London in 2018/19. Tenure is also a factor in



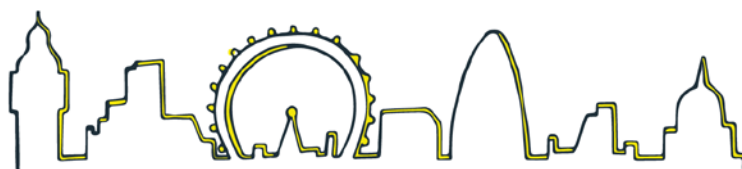
London, with learning disability nurses staying on average 5.1 years in an organisation, compared with between 7.6 and 11 years in other regions of England. In London 46% of the current learning disability nurses are aged over 50.

As part of ongoing revisions to the standards of proficiency which nurses are required to meet, the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) has strengthened competencies in relation to physical and mental health care.

Additionally, a greater emphasis will now be placed upon nurses possessing enhanced communication skills and, for learning disability and mental health nurses, a greater knowledge of physical health needs. Several universities have reflected these changes in their curricula from 2019.

This document summarises the work of this project and makes recommendations for employing organisations to continue to build on this work. This production of this best practice guide serves as a vital resource for enabling the development of stronger networks across the learning disability sector. It provides a helpful benchmark for the progression of new initiatives, while celebrating the unique contribution of learning disability nurses across the capital and beyond.

This work was supported and informed from stakeholders through a combination of task and finish groups and engagement events and overseen by a steering group representing employers from all five London sustainability and transformation partnership (STP) areas, HEIs and other organisations representing nurses.



Inspiring Future Learning Disabilities Nurses

At an engagement event final-year learning disability student nurses were asked why they had chosen learning disability nursing. Some had chosen the programme due to:

- direct contact with a registered learning disability nurse while working in a direct care role
- their original course was full.
- meeting someone who was already in the role.

However, many said they had not heard of learning disability nursing until shortly before they started the programme.

Careers advice and guidance staff often have limited understanding of learning disability nursing. Last year Health Education England commissioned a new national career guidance document, ‘Choosing learning disability nursing’¹ This provides core information about learning disabilities and some case studies highlighting the variety of roles for registered learning disability nurses.

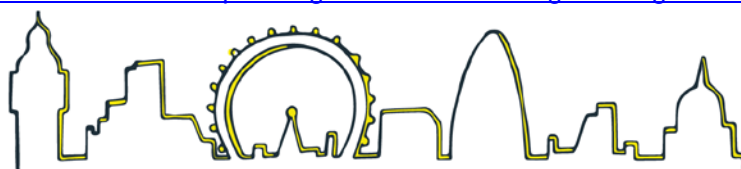
Ambassador roles

In order to enhance the profile of the learning disability nursing profession, a range of initiatives are underway to expedite change and increase the number of learning disability nurses. One such initiative is to increase the number of learning disability nurses in ambassador roles. This will ensure young people have more opportunities to meet registered learning disability nurses and hear about the wide variety of our roles.

An ambassador represents their role. This could include talking about their job at a careers fair or in schools. Nursing Now England offers support to ambassadors through the Nursing and Midwifery Ambassador Hub on FutureNHS at https://future.nhs.uk/nandm_ambassadorhub. This provides access to resources and a support network where advice or ideas can be shared. Due to the high vacancy rate and low number of university applications, learning disability nursing has been identified as one of their priority areas.

Ambassadors can find opportunities by registering with [Inspiring the Future](#), which connects volunteers and education providers securely online. Local schools and colleges use this platform to invite ambassadors to take part in careers fairs, networking or talks to about their role. The expectation is that an ambassador will

¹ ‘Choosing learning disability nursing’ (Health Education England, November 2019) can be found at www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/resources/choosing-learning-disability-nursing



undertake one event each year. For employers, supporting staff to be an ambassador can be a good way to inspire the future workforce. Information on how to become an ambassador is in Appendix A: How to become an ambassador.

Feedback from stakeholders suggested that potential ambassadors may not be confident to take on this role as they are not aware of all the changes in nursing education or may not have local knowledge. To support learning disability nurses to become ambassadors the following factsheets have been created Appendix B Key Facts Learning Disability Nursing, Appendix C Myth Busting Learning Disability Nursing and Appendix D Resources for Promoting Learning Disability Nursing. These can either be used in as handouts or as prompt to support the ambassador.

Work Experience

Capital Nurse has created a best practice guide as a pan-London resource for health and social care organisations to support the process of work experience in nursing. The guide includes:

- how work experience can benefit your organisation
- key facts and considerations in offering work experience for young people
- suggestions for different aspects of the work experience process
- activities the student can or should not be involved in and
- ideas for activities by fields of nursing that can be part of an insight day.

It is based on best practice examples and has been developed through an extensive stakeholder engagement exercise involving practitioners from organisations across London. Full guidance including an application form and information leaflet available at

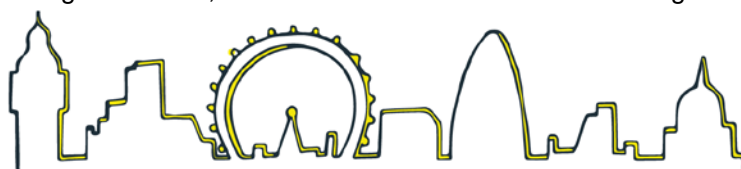
www.hee.nhs.uk/ourwork/capitalnurse/workstreams/routes-nursing

Apprenticeships

In 2017 the new role of registered nursing associate was introduced to the nursing family. This role is a generic role spanning across all four fields of nursing and prepares the registrant to work in both hospital and community settings. This also enables the apprentice the opportunity to experience a wide range of healthcare settings during their training. The qualification for this role is a foundation degree and the training typically takes two years to complete either as a full-time student or through an apprenticeship route. In 2019/20 enhanced funding was made available for organisations employing a trainee nursing associate who spent at least 50% of their role in a learning disability setting.²

Apprenticeship routes for registered learning disability nurses are becoming available and, although these can be longer, the apprentice is in a paid role within a healthcare setting during their training. For those who have completed a nursing associate programme it is possible to get accreditation of prior learning (APL) for

² For more on nursing associates, visit: www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/nursing-associates



up to 50% of the registered nursing degree apprenticeship programme and reduce the length of time required for the programme.

Health Education England and CapitalNurse: A learning disability registered nursing degree apprenticeship (RNDA) programme for London

A new learning disability nursing degree apprenticeship has been established via a pan-London partnership with support from HEE and CapitalNurse. This learning disability nursing degree apprenticeship programme will be provided by University of Hertfordshire. The programme, validated by the NMC and University of Hertfordshire, welcomes applications.

The learning disability nursing degree apprenticeship programme will be a flexible programme with a blended learning approach involving a mix of university-based learning, e-learning and work-based learning, with support from a peripatetic learning disability nurse tutor. It is a five-year part-time degree apprenticeship with entry options at year 1, 2 & 4. The RNDA is a strongly work-based programme, so apprentices can expect to be in supernumerary learning roughly 50% of the time and in their usual work role 50% of the time. It is anticipated that the first cohort in 2020 will all start at year 4 and therefore undertake a two-year programme to become registered nurses.

Apprentices will need to be full-time employees in an NHS Trust or in a health-commissioned service provider and have the support of their employer. They do not necessarily need to be working in a learning disability service, but experience in a learning disability service is very helpful for APEL purposes. Broadly the minimum entry level will be for experienced healthcare or other support workers with NVQ level 3 in Health and Social Care or equivalent (access) and Maths and English (Functional skills level 2 or GCSE C+). Applicants are also welcome who are nursing associates, assistant practitioners or healthcare support workers (HCSW) with a previous first degree.

For more information, contact:

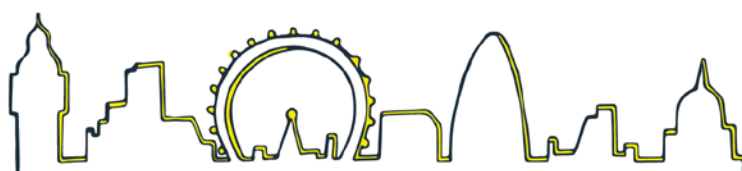
Paul Maloret, University of Hertfordshire, learning disability nursing programme lead – p.b.maloret@herts.ac.uk

Tim Bryson, project lead, Health Education England
tim@brysonconsultancy.co.uk

Overseas Nurses/Return to practice

Registration routes for nurses trained abroad and those wanting to return to practice are available for learning disability nursing.

CapitalNurse has developed pan-London resources for international recruitment at: www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/capitalnurse/overseas-nursing-recruitment



Recruitment and support in first year of registration

Recruitment

As part of the sessions during the engagement event with student nurses, delegates were asked about how they are pursuing future job opportunities. In particular, they were asked about which search terms they use when looking for jobs online.

NHS Job Search

To compare the effectiveness of the different search terms three searches were made on NHS jobs in August 2019, all focused on band 5 roles in London.

Searching for 'Community Learning Disability Nurse' returned 15 jobs, only five of which were aimed at learning disability nurses and none of them were community roles.

The search term 'LD nurse' returned only two jobs, but with better accuracy, as both job adverts were for learning disability nurses.

The best results come from searching for 'RNLD', which returned 16 jobs, all suitable for newly registered learning disability nurses. However, not all these adverts used the 'suitable for newly qualified' badge.

By comparison there were 374 band 5 nurse adverts with 36 specifically marked as suitable for new nurses, although many were for multiple vacancies or open days.

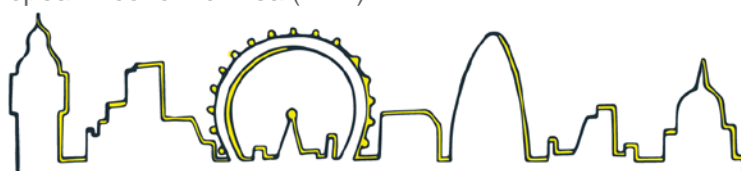
Feedback from final year students is that when they attended their higher education institution's job fair, there were limited numbers of learning disability nursing jobs available and that there needed to be greater representation from learning disability nurse employers. Top tips sheets have been created for both employers [Appendix E Top tips for recruiting newly registered learning disability nurses](#)

and student nurses looking for their first jobs [Appendix F Top tips for final year students looking for their first job](#)

OSCE³ Bootcamp

There is evidence that some acute hospitals in the London region are employing learning disability nurses, particularly in neuroscience and senior health wards. These nurses appear to be recruited through the same channels as nurses from the adult field. There may therefore be differencing expectations of learning disability nurses working in these environments.

³ The objective structured clinical examination (OSCE) is part of the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) registration process for nurses and midwives trained outside of the European Union (EU)/European Economic Area (EEA).



From discussions at the Capital Nurse Learning Disability Steering Group, members were unable to identify any acute hospital in the London region adapting its preceptorship pathway to accommodate learning disability nurses working in the acute section. As a result, one acute trust in the London region agreed to develop a working group in collaboration with the local faculty of health care sciences.

An initial meeting was held involving representatives from both organisations. This led to a better understanding of the challenges experienced by learning disability nurses working on acute wards and a greater awareness of how learning disability could be supported further. Observations from senior nurses in the acute sector indicated that learning disability nurses were not always confident in recognising or managing a deteriorating patient. Health care assistants sometimes had higher expectations of learning disability nurses when support was required with venepuncture, catheterisation and wound management. There was an acknowledgement that learning disability nurses were more likely to use methods of communication that engaged the patient more effectively, particularly for patients with dementia and acquired brain injury. Learning disability nurses were also likely to have already developed parental feeding skills, developed on pre-registration placements.

The trust's competency framework book for preceptorship nurses was shared with lecturers from the faculty. The purpose of this was to identify the competencies that newly qualified learning disability nurses were less likely to have achieved and those skills that were more likely to have been acquired. It was proposed that an 'OSCE Bootcamp' could be developed which would allow nurses to have more exposure to practising the skills less likely to have been achieved during their pre-registration training.

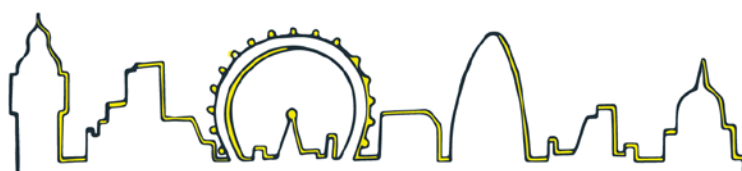
All newly qualified learning disability nurses working on the acute wards will be assigned a mentor and have an extended supernumerary period on commencement in post. Plans are in place for further discussion to involve the trust's training and development department, with a view to nurses being offered additional study days during their preceptorship phase.

The Trust is planning to recruit six newly qualified learning disability nurses to work in neuroscience and senior health wards. The project will be regarded as a pilot. A nurse from the learning disability liaison nursing team will facilitate peer supervision sessions so that these nurses have a platform to share positive experiences and opportunities to suggest ideas for improved experiences in practice. This information will then be feedback to the working group. It is envisaged that the project will be reviewed after one year.

Padraic Costello

Clinical Nurse Specialist Learning Disabilities

St George's University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust



Conference

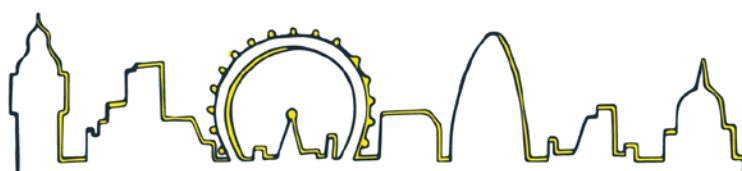
On 30 July around 140 delegates attended a conference at University of West London (UWL). The event which was co-hosted by University of West London and NHS England and Improvement London was one of the many events in 2019 to mark and celebrate 100 years of learning disability nursing. Among the attendees were learning disability nurses from a variety of settings and roles clinical leads, student nurses, service users and their carers.

The conference received positive feedback received in the evaluation. Overall experience was rated as very good by 87.5% and good by 12.5%. The conference heard from influential presenters about their research and current work. The workshops covered a wide range of topics and most delegates found them informative. Delegates reported that they had left with ideas on steps to take in practice to make changes and start new initiatives or projects. The conference also provided student nurses an opportunity to hear about the wide range of roles that learning disability nurses can do and meet potential employers.

Preceptorship

The NMC (2019) recommends that all newly registered nurses have a period of structured support to enable them to establish their professional role. The new CapitalNurse Preceptorship Framework provides a standard for high quality and harmonised approach to preceptorship across the capital. The resource has been launched to help all health and care organisations across London support staff with the transition from student nurses to registered practitioner. It describes the minimum of what is expected. The framework and resources to support preceptorship delivery are available at www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/capitalnurse/workstreams/preceptorship

At the engagement event it was identified that, as most newly qualified learning disability nurses will be working in an organisation that will predominately employ adult, child or mental health nurses, it is possible that the content of the preceptorship will focus on these areas of practice. Although newly qualified learning disability nurses felt that being included in the main preceptorship programme was beneficial, they asked that consideration was given to how the topic would relate to all fields, including when using scenarios and activities. They were also keen to have the opportunity to form support networks with other newly qualified learning disability nurses even if they were outside their organisation. Tip for preceptors and a links to current networks are in [Appendix G Top tips for supporting newly registered learning disability nurses](#)



Reflections on supporting learning disability nurses during Preceptorship

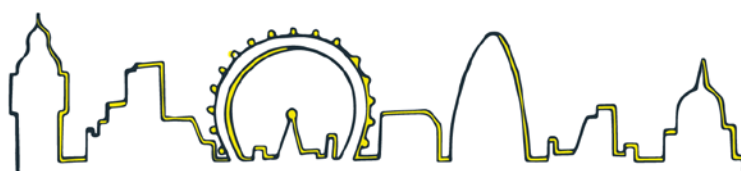
Learning disability nursing, like any branch of nursing is subject to the same standards that all Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) registrants must uphold. Therefore, it is proper for learning disability nurses have access to high quality preceptorship to begin to build confidence and competence through continued professional development (CPD) during their first year of practice. Using the resources available through CapitalNurse and Health Education England (HEE), leads and/or educators can start to build their preceptorship frameworks incorporating their own organisations values. CapitalNurse has produced detailed guidance and tools that are free to use. The self-assessments and reflections can enrich and provide individuality to the programme especially when based around the [CapitalNurse Career Framework](#) and [CapitalNurse Preceptorship Framework](#).

Our study days are based around these themes and can be relatable to all registrants. All newly registered practitioners (NRP), not just learning disability nurses, will have similar challenges and that is what we have focused on. The aim is to create a safe space for open conversations and shared learning from discussions and guided reflections. This protected time has been invaluable to open different solution focused approaches, honing critical problem-solving abilities.

Understanding that all NRP are different and acknowledging they will have different levels of experience and confidence are pivotal to tailoring your support for them individually. Use both formal and informal support systems when supporting learning disability (LD) nurses. For example, we use WhatsApp to keep in contact with our preceptees and this adds another layer of contact that is more in keeping with modern communication. To build up trusting relationships requires a degree of flexibility in your approach. The transition from student to NRP can be very daunting. Empowering the NRP to find novel answers and normalising their thoughts and feelings tells them that we have all experienced a degree of hardship, which we have overcome through taking responsibility for our own professional growth.

There are two aspects that I feel have assisted our own programme. Firstly, we have a dynamic programme, which is developing continuously based on attendee's feedback, comments and suggestions. Secondly, we value the importance of regular face-to-face contact and telephone conversations. From my personal reflections of what the role of a LD nurse is, there is no one competency or skill which will define competence. Such a varied daily role really supports using reflection and adaptations of available tools to help LD nurse apply the theory or policy to practice.

Joe Lynch
Preceptorship Lead
Nurse Recruitment & Retention Team
Whittington Health NHS



Progression of registered learning disability nurses

London has the lowest proportion of Band 5 nurses, with more in higher bandings. The impact of this is that nurses of all fields working in London NHS organisations can progress to a Band 6 role sooner than those in other areas of England. (Based on ESR data analysed by HEE London, Workforce Planning and Intelligence, 2019.)

The progression for registered learning disability nurses is faster than their colleagues in other fields. In London NHS settings both these factors combine and as a result over half of registered learning disability nurses progress to a Band 6 role after three years. Progression to Band 7 was also ahead of the other fields, with approximately a third of having progressed to a Band 7 role within four years of qualifying as a registered learning disability nurse.

This may be due to the higher vacancy rate in London. However, the speed of this progression does raise questions about readiness for these senior roles and the impact on patient safety (HEE London, Workforce Planning and Intelligence, 2019). Therefore, although the faster rate of progression can be used to address concerns about cost of living in London, there is a need to ensure that learning disability nurses receive preceptorship during their first year of practice and are supported in to gain the capabilities they need to progress into more senior roles.

Digital Career Framework

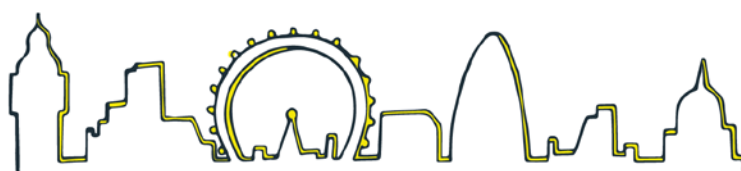
The CapitalNurse digital career framework is a self-assessment tool which trainee and registered nurses can use to measure and record their career progress and to reflect on their skills. They can track their online progress, choose to take feedback from peers and service users and explore their proficiency against nine domains, such as nursing practice, patient safety and teamwork. It can be used in career clinic sessions and is easy to upload for NMC revalidation.

The tool can be accessed at : <https://careerframework.hee.nhs.uk> and a guide on how to use the tool, including video support is available at: www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/capitalnurse/workstreams/career-framework.

Career pathway and capabilities

A selection of person specifications for learning disability roles at bands 5, 6, 7 in a range of clinical settings were reviewed, to identify the key capabilities required for career progression. A tool has been created that will enable individuals to keep a record of their competencies and record specific skills and activities they have developed. [Appendix H Capability Mapping and Self-Assessment Tool](#)

To support nurses to progress they should be given opportunities and encouraged to develop these capabilities with support in preparation for their progression to a more senior role. This can be done by accessing the Learning Disability Nursing Forums in London, working with their manager to identify areas for continued professional development, access to coaching and mentorship.



Opportunities for development at work

In our community team we encourage the band 5 nurses to learn useful skills by getting them to rotate responsibility for chairing and taking minutes in our nurses meeting. These are skills they will be expected to use in more senior roles and it's good to have this development opportunity in a supportive environment with their peers.

James Davies

Service Manager (Interim)

Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea Bi-Borough Health Partnerships for Adults with Learning Disabilities

Central London Community Healthcare

Responding to complaints, be it in relation to others or your team's practice, is an unfortunate but necessary part of the nursing leadership role. As a team lead, I would support nursing staff through this process and, in doing so, helped them to appreciate that reflecting on clinical practice, acknowledging stress or inconvenience to others and mapping out a meaningful, structured response are core leadership skills.

Robin Betts

Clinical Service Manager

Newham Health Team for Adults with Learning Disabilities

East London NHS Foundation Trust

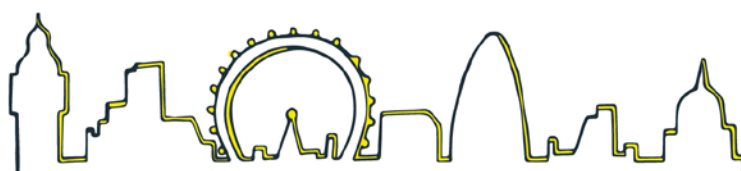
Depending on their work setting there is a range of specific clinical skills that nurses need to develop. For example:

- health facilitation and clinical assessment
- functional analysis
- positive behavior support
- crisis management and risk Assessment
- adapted mental state examination
- alternative and augmentative communication
- intensive interaction
- gentle teaching skills development.

Karina Marshall-Tate

Consultant Nurse | Learning Disabilities

South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust



Voluntary standards for education and practice

The Queen's Nursing Institute (QNI) is currently developing a resource to support community learning disability nurses including voluntary standards for education and practice. More information can be found at: www.qni.org.uk/nursing-in-the-community/practice-standards-models/qni-qnis-voluntary-standards-for-community-learning-disability-nursing-education-and-practice/

Rotations

CapitalNurse has developed best practice guidelines and template documents for a range of different rotational roles. A rotational post could be used to support nurses who wanted to develop the skills needed for senior roles, especially those in the community acute liaison settings. The guidance and templates are available at: www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/capitalnurse/workstreams

Leadership development

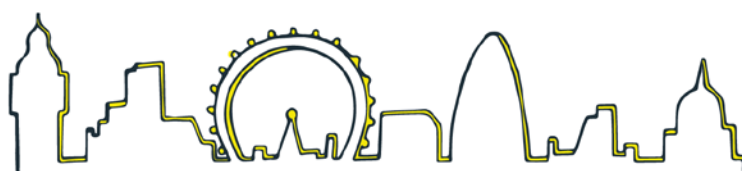
Leadership skills are key for career development and there are regular opportunities for formal programmes from the NHS Leadership Academy, which offers a range of programme based on the role – see www.leadershipacademy.nhs.uk/programmes - and the Foundation of Nursing Studies who offer an Inspire Improvement Fellowship at : www.fons.org/programmes/inspire-improvement.

The Foundation for Nursing Studies has also developed a 'Creating Caring Cultures' Programme for early career learning disability nurses at: www.fons.org/resources/documents/Learning-disability-nursing-programme-press-announcement.pdf

Advanced Clinical Practitioners

The multi-professional framework for advanced clinical practice in England was launched in 2017 and provides clear standards for nurses and allied health professionals (AHPs) who want to work in advance clinical roles. Skills for Health is developing a capabilities framework for nurses and AHPs who work with people with learning disabilities and/or autism, which is due later this year. For further details visit: www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/services/item/945-capabilities-frameworks

NHS England & Improvement is working with HEE on developing three new national enhanced awards for learning disability nurses



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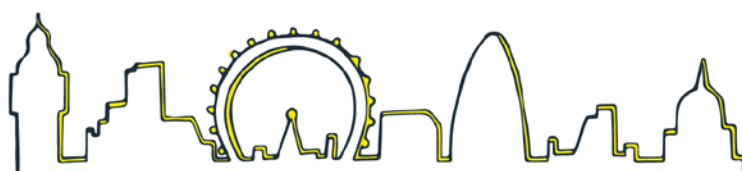
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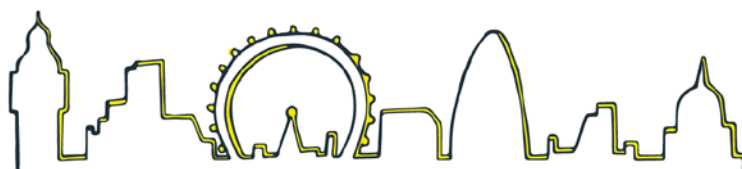
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NMC (2019) *Employers' responsibilities* available from www.nmc.org.uk/registration/guidance-for-employers/responsibilities accessed on 9 Feb 2020

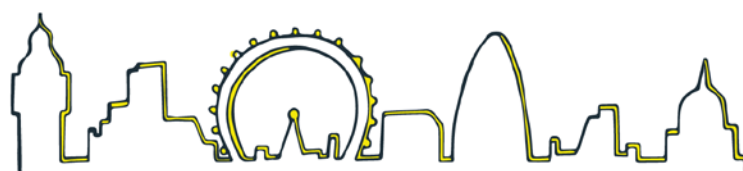
QNI (2020) *Community Learning Disability Nursing Education and Practice Standards* available from www.qni.org.uk/nursing-in-the-community/practice-standards-models/qni-qnis-voluntary-standards-for-community-learning-disability-nursing-education-and-practice/ accessed on 21 Feb 2020

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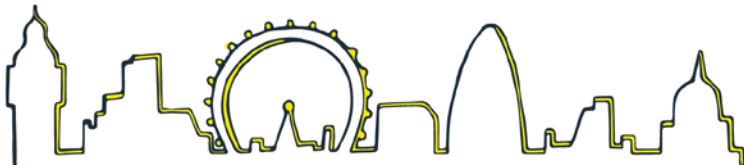
Acknowledgements

Roy	Adeduwon	London South Bank University
Robin	Betts	East London NHS Foundation Trust
Avey	Bhatia	St George's University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Carol	Blues	Surrey and Borders NHS Trust
Mark	Bradley	Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust
Tim	Bryson	Health Education England
Chris	Caldwell	CapitalNurse
Voyta	Camek	Skills for Care
Josephine	Carroll	Central North West London NHS Trust
Julie	Combes	Health Education England
Giselle	Cope	Foundation of Nursing Studies
Padriac	Costello	St George's University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
James	Davies	Central London Community Healthcare NHS
Nazma	Deen	University of East London
Joanne	Delree	London South Bank University
Dawn	Dullaway	London Higher
Lydia	Dye- Stonebridge	London Higher
Gary	Etheridge	Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospital NHS Trust
Jane	Evans	Voluntary Organisations Disability Group
Nikki	Fowler	University of Greenwich
Renee	Francis	London South Bank University
Michael	Fullerton	Care Management Group
Eileen	Gavin	Health Education England
Denise	Gentry	South West London and St George's NHS Trust
Dean	Gimblett	CapitalNurse
Trish	Griffin	Kingston and St George's University
Angie	Hack	Queen's Nursing Institute
Avril	Hocking	University of Greenwich
Kathryn	Jones	Health Education England
Perpetua	Kamwendo	NHS England and NHS Improvement
Lynette	Kennedy	London Borough of Camden
Chiedza	Kudita	University of West London
Dorothy	Kupara	University of West London
Marie	Lancett	Health Education England
Joe	Lynch	Whittington Health NHS Trust
Reeny	Mariampilla	Barnet Haringey and Enfield Haringey NHS
Karina	Marshall-Tate	South London and Maudsley NHS Trust
Karen	Morse	Skills for Care
Maud	Sarpong Ankrah	
Clare	Scott	Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health NHS Trust
Jemma	Sharples	NHS England and NHS Improvement
Olatokunbo	Shorinwa	London South Bank University
Ruwani	Trabelsi	South London and Maudsley NHS Trust
Rhofri	Williams	Care England
Karen	Evans	Author (CapitalNurse Learning Disability Lead)



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Appendix A

How to become an ambassador

There are two ambassador programmes that learning disability nurses may find helpful to join if they want to help raise the profile of learning disability nursing.

NHS Ambassadors

The NHS Ambassadors scheme encourages people working and/or studying in healthcare to volunteer one hour per year to speak in schools about their roles or participate in careers events and activities.

To register as a volunteer with Inspiring the Future visit:

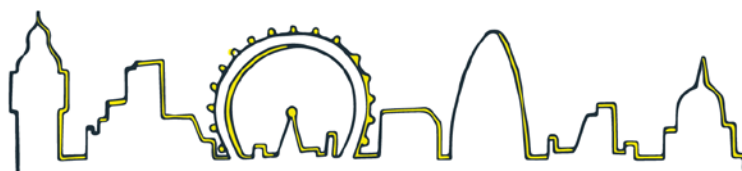
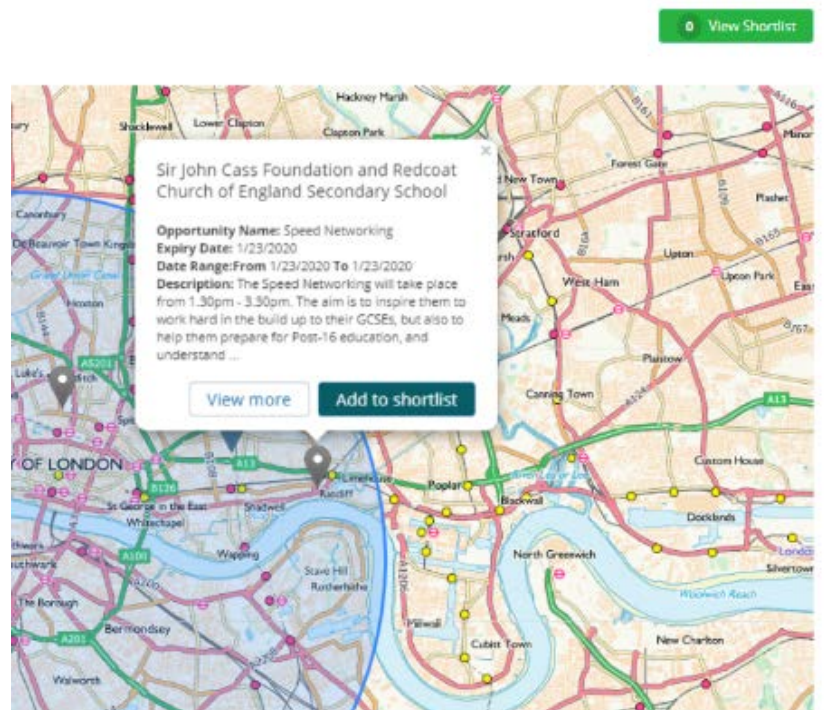
<https://educationandemployersprogrammes.force.com/s/signupitf?type=volunteer&campaign=NHS+Ambassadors>

Once signed up volunteers and education providers are connected securely online and local schools/colleges may invite volunteers to take part in a careers fair, career networking or a lunchtime talk to local school children about their role. Typically, volunteers will go into schools just once a year to speak with young people.

Anyone who is interested in a career in nursing should be encouraged to sign up at www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/nursing-registration to get more information.

After the event you can log the session on the nursing and midwifery hub

https://future.nhs.uk/nandm_ambassadorhub/view?objectId=5940771

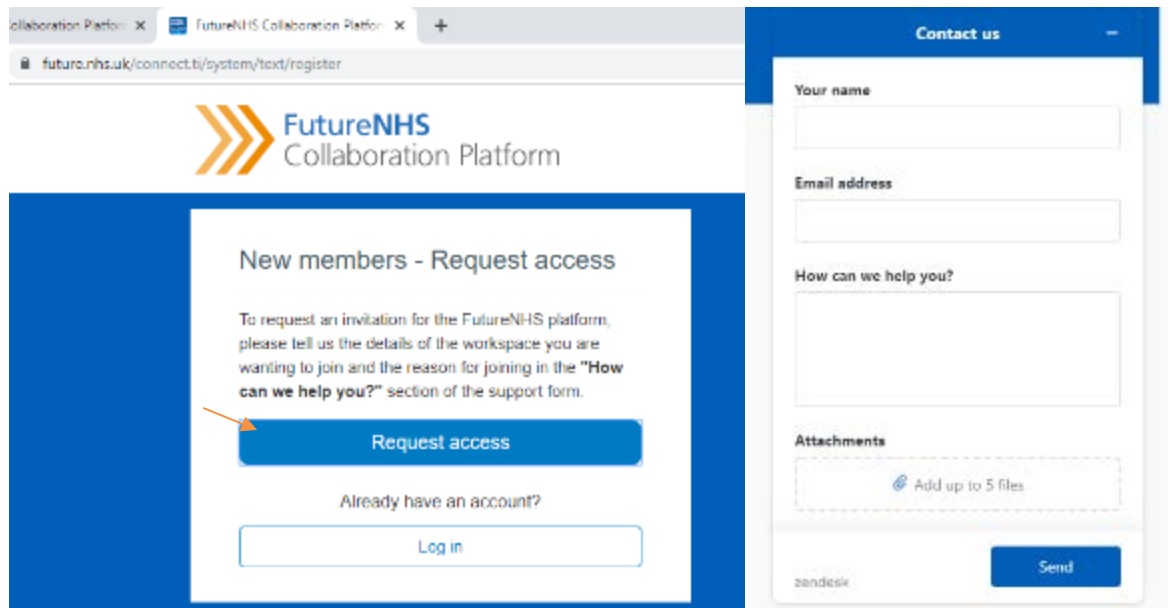


Nursing and Midwifery Ambassador Hub on FutureNHS

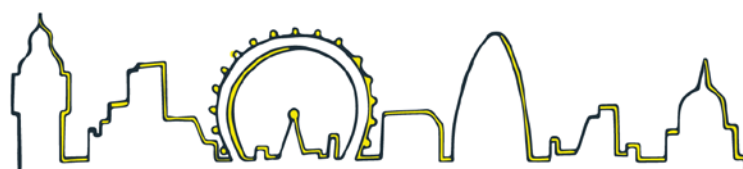
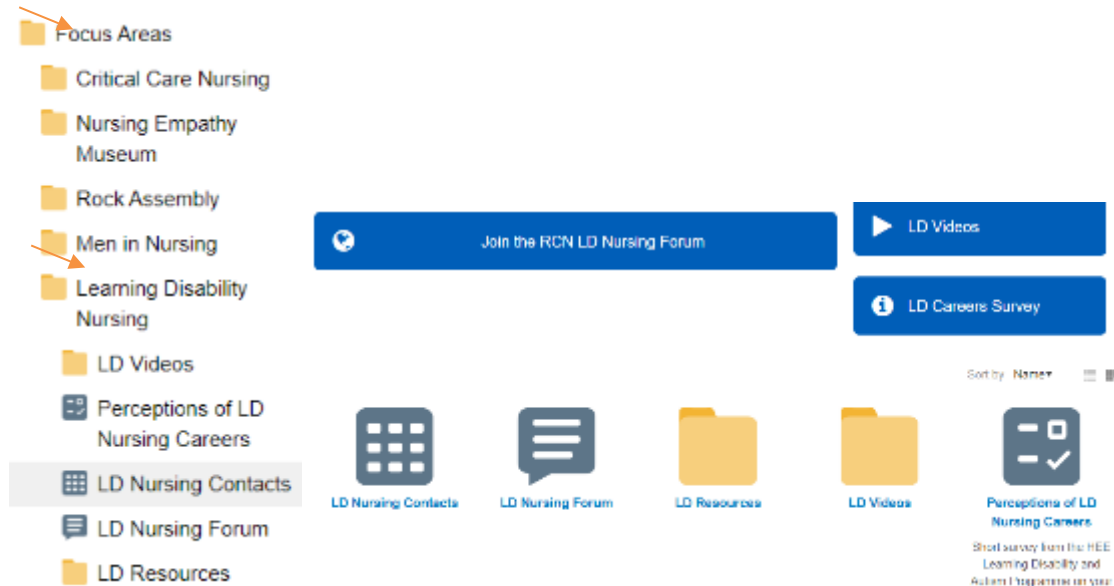
Learning disability nurses may also want to join the Nursing and Midwifery Ambassador Hub on FutureNHS as this will give them access to resources and a support network who they can contact for advice or ideas.

You can access the Nursing and Midwifery Ambassador Hub here https://future.nhs.uk/nandm_ambassadorhub/

If you do not have a FutureNHS account, you will need to use the contact form and request to join



In the folder menu on the left-hand side you can find Learning Disability Nursing under Focus Areas, inside there are folder for resources, videos a forum and contacts database



To add items such as resources you next need to ask to join the workspace you will then see the actions section at the bottom of each page

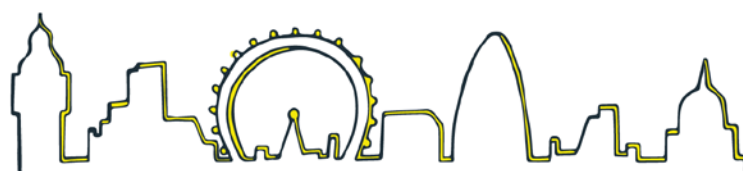


Actions

- Create a new item
- Modify folder properties & permissions
- Move items to...
- Copy folders
- Download all documents
- Leave workspace

I would encourage you all to add yourself to the contact database and subscribe for update using the icon near the top right-hand corner of each page

Name	Job Title	Employer	Responsibility	Email Address	Direct Dial	Mobile	Location	Remarks
Jo Welch	Lecturer in Learning Disability Nursing	University of Winchester	Nurse	Jo.Welch@winchester.ac.uk	01962075227		Winchester	Just started a learning disability nursing programme at Winchester Univ alongside mental health and adult nursing
Karen Evans	Learning Disability Nursing Workforce Lead	Capital Nurse	Nurse	karen.evans@hew.nhs.uk		0749181256	London	Capital Nurse Learning Disability Nursing Workforce project in 2020 - raising awareness the role of learning disability nurses the range of care opportunities and



Appendix B

Key Facts Learning Disability Nursing

What do registered learning disability nurses do?

- Help people with learning disabilities across the age span to maintain their physical and psychological health and wellbeing, and to live their lives as fully and independently as possible.
- Provide health education adapted to the person's cognitive ability and support them to manage their health, especially for those with long-term conditions
- Offer help support and guidance to families, carers and friends (if appropriate)
- Work closely and collaboratively with other health, social work and educational professionals, and all members of the learning disability care team.

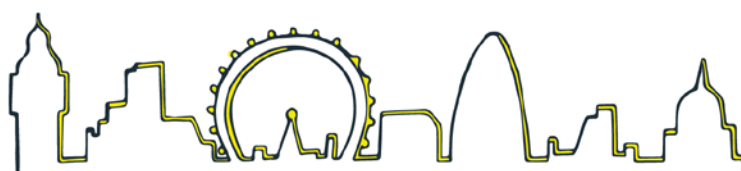
Where do registered learning disability nurses work?

- Many registered learning disability nurses work in local community services where a lot of care is provided.
- Supporting transition back to the community from inpatient settings
- There are also many opportunities to work in residential and educational settings
- Specialist services such as with people neurodevelopmental needs, autism or ADHD, people with a forensic history or risk
- There are liaison roles both in hospitals and primary care settings, supporting access to mainstream health services
- There are also roles in commissioning, public health and research.

How long will it take to train?

For most people the training is three years; for those who already have a degree this may be reduced to two years. Due to NMC regulations on the training there must be a minimum of 2300 hours theory and 2300 practice placements.

Apprenticeship routes for registered learning disability nurses are becoming available and, although these can be longer, they are paid roles within a healthcare setting as part of their workforce planning.



What are the entry requirements?

This varies across the universities, but you'll usually need:

- 5 GCSEs at grades 9 to 4 (A* to C), including English, maths and a science and
- 2 or 3 A levels, or a level 3 diploma (BTEC diploma or BTEC Extended diploma) or Access to Higher Education Diploma in health, science or nursing

[For more see: https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/job-profiles/learning-disability-nurse](https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/job-profiles/learning-disability-nurse)

If you do not have these qualifications, you can consider completing an Access or Foundation year. These still require maths and English at minimum level 4(C) GCSE or equivalent (Functional skills level 2 in literacy and numeracy). Support to achieve these may be available at your local college. More information on what to do if you are unsuccessful in your first application can be found here

www.londonmedicine.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/A5_Keep_Going_screen_only.pdf

In 2017 the new role of registered nursing associate was introduced to the nursing family. This role is a generic role spanning across all four field of nursing and prepares the registrant to work in both hospital and community settings. The qualification for this role is a foundation degree and the training typically takes about two years to complete either as a full-time student or through an apprenticeship route.

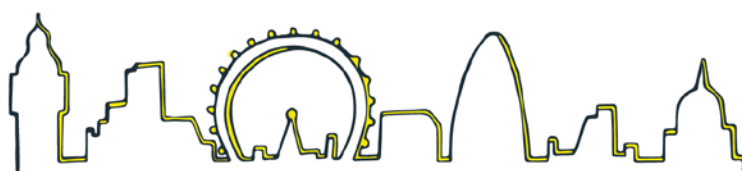
Following completion of a nursing associate programme it is possible to progress onto a registered nursing programme and accreditation of prior learning (APL) can be used to for up to 50% of the course thus reducing the length of time required for the programme.

What can I do now?

If you are interested in a career in nursing you can sign up to receive further information at www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/nursing-registration.

Whichever training route you are interested in, a good way to enhance your application is by volunteering in a health care setting or somewhere that provides a service to people with learning disabilities, such as a special school or daytime activity programme. You will gain some relevant experience and it is a great way to find out if this is the right this profession for you.

You can find out about volunteering on www.do-it.org and many NHS organisations have volunteering opportunities. You can find the contact details of local NHS services on www.nhs.uk/service-search



Appendix C

Myth Busting Learning Disability Nursing

Myth: All nurses work in a hospital and wear a uniform

This depends on the role (and sometimes the organisation). In community roles, uniforms are generally not worn because they would draw additional attention to the registered learning disability nurse when supporting someone. Therefore, you may have passed a registered learning disability nurse and not even realised.

Myth: ‘Learning disability nurses’ are not as qualified as ‘normal’ nurses

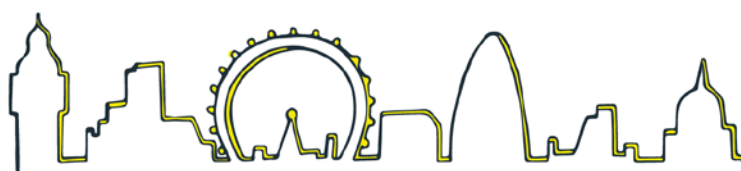
Registered learning disability nurse is one of the four fields of nursing on part 1 of the NMC register (Adult, Child and Mental Health are the others).

When they first register, learning disability nurses have core nursing skills as well as the skills required to support people with learning disabilities. As with all nurses, registered learning disability nurses continue to develop a whole range of advanced skills as required in their specific work setting.

Depending on the setting, the specialist skills could be supporting people with complex physical health needs, including those who need medical equipment to support with eating or breathing. In other settings, it may be supporting people experiencing severe emotional distress or difficulties expressing their needs to develop skills and strategies, so they can lead more full and independent lives.

Myth: People with a learning disability are more violent and dangerous to work with

Some people with a learning disability can become frustrated when they are unable to express their needs or be understood by other people. This frustration can present as behaviour that is perceived as aggressive and sometimes people nearby can get hurt; however, this is rarely the intention of behaviour. The key role of the learning disability nurse in these situations is to reduce the source of frustration and support the development of alternative methods of expressing needs and feelings. The NHS has a zero tolerance towards aggressive behaviour towards staff so this should not be an occupational hazard.



Myth: There aren't any jobs for learning disability nurses

This isn't the case as registered learning disability nurses can work in a variety of areas and settings, such as:

- learning disability community teams
- learning disability inpatient services/assessment and treatment
- schools
- care homes
- acute liaison in general hospitals or primary care
- prisons
- mental health settings
- neuro-disability settings
- rehabilitation
- general wards
- safeguarding
- lecturing at universities
- practice education
- corporate nursing

Myth: Learning disability nursing doesn't pay well

The current starting salary for newly registered learning disability nurse working in the NHS at the time of writing is nearly £28K in outer London and just over £29K in inner London.

A recent review of workforce data showed that within London 23% of registered learning disability nurses had progressed to a Band 6 role (salary circa £36K) in their first year and this rose to 38% after three years and 26% had progressed to Band 7 (c.£44K) within four years registering.

Myth: I'll get into debt

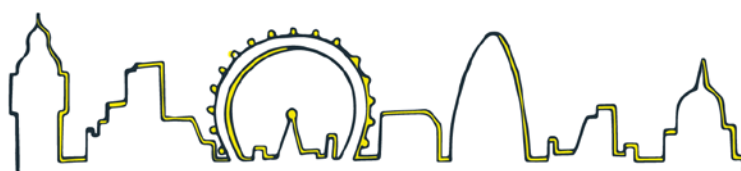
Lots of people worry about whether university is affordable, but it is important to know that you don't have to pay money upfront and the amount you eventually pay back will depend on how much you earn. In this respect, loan repayment is more like a tax than a commercial loan.

You will repay 9% of any income you earn each year above £25,000. If your income drops below £25,000 or you take a break from work, you will not pay back the loan again until you are again earning over the threshold amount.

Loans are paid back automatically out of your pay packet, so you don't have to worry about missing repayments. The loan gets written off 30 years after you become eligible to repay, so if you are a mature student there is a fair chance that you will never have to repay the full amount

<https://thefundingclinic.org.uk/undergraduate/>

Money Saving Expert Martin Lewis has published some good advice on student loans which explains the system well: www.moneysavingexpert.com/students/student-loans-tuition-fees-changes.



Myth: I'm not eligible for a loan because I already have a degree

Most students cannot take out a second student loan, but the Government has made a special exception for healthcare students. If you already have a degree you can take out a second loan on the same terms as other students.

The same basic repayment arrangement will apply even when you have two loans so you will not pay back more than 9% of your income over £25,000. The repayment amount is simply split proportionally according to the outstanding balance of each loan. Again, any remaining loan amount will be written off after 30 years.

More detailed information can be found at: www.studentloanrepayment.co.uk.

If you already have a degree you may be able to qualify as a healthcare professional through a fast-track postgraduate degree route
<https://thefundingclinic.org.uk/undergraduate>

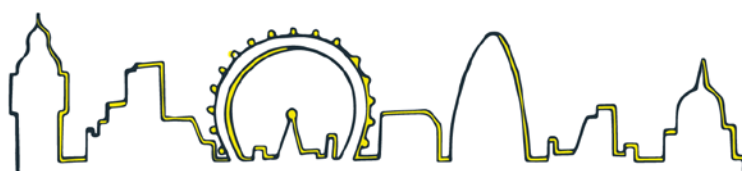
In addition, in December 2019 the government introduced a non-repayable payment of £5,000 per year for all nursing students from September 2020. Those studying learning disability nursing will receive an additional £1,000 and additional funding will be available in some circumstances. Further details on who can access the support can be found at: www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/nursing-careers/annual-nursing-payments

Myth: The programme is being stopped

Unfortunately, there have been some years when a university has not been able to recruit enough students to form a cohort but lots of work is being done to encourage more people to study learning disability nursing.

In London, five universities are currently offering one or more courses in pre-registration Learning Disability Nursing:

- University of Greenwich
- Kingston University, London
- London South Bank University
- University of Hertfordshire
- University of West London



Appendix D

Resources for Promoting Learning Disability Nursing

CapitalNurse Learning Disability Nursing

www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/capitalnurse/workstreams/

Choosing Learning Disability Nursing

Health Education England – Health Careers

www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/resources/choosing-learning-disability-nursing

www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/resources/careers-nursing

Celebrate Me

Foundation of Nursing Studies


www.fons.org/resources/documents/celebrate-me-report.pdf

www.fons.org/resources/documents/Celebrate-Me/Postcards-to-the-CNO.pdf

RCN - website (stories)

www.rcn.org.uk/professional-development/become-a-learning-disability-nurse

www.rcn.org.uk/professional-development/become-a-nurse

www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3o-xhDvg-U – RCN 

Info on student loans

<https://thefundingclinic.org.uk/>

Nursing Now England

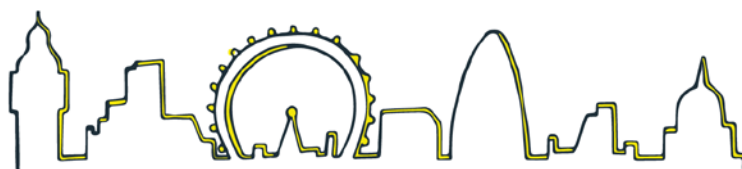
Nursing and Midwifery Ambassadors

<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources/> (login required)

https://future.nhs.uk/connect.ti/nandm_ambassadorhub/view?objectId=15788528 (login required)

Inspiring futures (HEE)

<https://www.inspiringthefuture.org/volunteers/> (login required)



London HEIs

University of Greenwich

www.gre.ac.uk/undergraduate-courses/eduhea/learning-disabilities-nursing-bsc-hons

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?feature=share&v=fcbPEW5EJac> 

<https://vimeo.com/359318891> 

London Southbank University

www.lsbu.ac.uk/study/course-finder/learning-disability-nursing-bsc-hons

www.lsbu.ac.uk/study/course-finder/learning-disability-nursing-pgdip

https://youtu.be/xnltB6VYr_k 

Kingston University and St George's, University of London

www.healthcare.ac.uk/courses/nursing/learning-disability-nursing/

www.kingston.ac.uk/undergraduate/courses/nursing-registered-nurse-learning-disability/

www.kingston.ac.uk/postgraduate-course/learning-disability-nursing-msc/

<https://youtu.be/t1DIuWOtpBA> 

University of Hertfordshire

www.herts.ac.uk/courses/learning-disability-nursing

www.herts.ac.uk/courses/msc-nursing-learning-disabilities

<https://youtu.be/DQNvmVQpkPs> 

University of West London

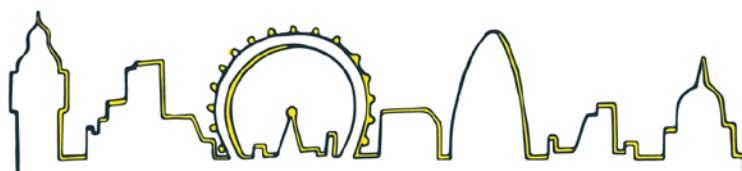
www.uwl.ac.uk/course/undergraduate/learning-disabilities-nursing?start=182&option=33

[www.uwl.ac.uk/course/postgraduate/pgdip-nursing-learning-disabilities-](http://www.uwl.ac.uk/course/postgraduate/pgdip-nursing-learning-disabilities-london?start=182&option=33)

[london?start=182&option=33](http://www.uwl.ac.uk/course/postgraduate/pgdip-nursing-learning-disabilities-london?start=182&option=33)

[www.uwl.ac.uk/course/postgraduate/msci-nursing-dual-registration-learning-disabilities-](http://www.uwl.ac.uk/course/postgraduate/msci-nursing-dual-registration-learning-disabilities-and-mental-health-london?start=182&option=33)
[and-mental-health-london?start=182&option=33](http://www.uwl.ac.uk/course/postgraduate/msci-nursing-dual-registration-learning-disabilities-and-mental-health-london?start=182&option=33)

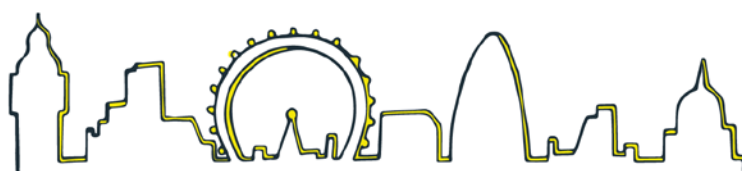
<https://youtu.be/jWPsF7jnuCo> 



Appendix E

Top tips for recruiting newly registered learning disability nurses

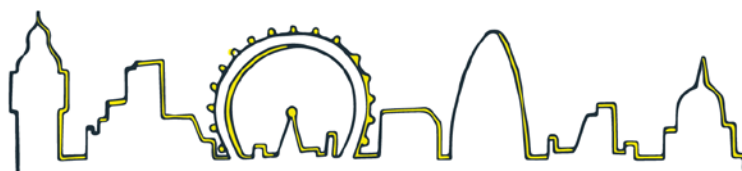
- Job adverts on NHS jobs should include 'RNLD' in the title if suitable for learning disability nurses.
- Job adverts on NHS jobs should use the 'suitable for newly qualified nurses' badge if appropriate.
- Where possible, roles that are suitable for newly qualified nurses should be advertised to coincide with time students qualify.
- Ensure the representatives who attend jobs fairs (especially those at partner HEIs) are aware of the opportunities for registered learning disability nurses with in their organisation.
- Liaise with HEIs and student nurses to share job vacancies.



Appendix F

Top tips for final year students looking for their first job

- Most nursing jobs are advertised on NHS jobs and TRAC.
- Try multiple search terms such as 'RNLD' and 'learning disability nurse'.
- Use the search function and set up email alerts.
- Don't limit the search too close to your home.
- Don't limit to band 5, as some roles outside of the NHS roles do not use this banding and will not be found.
- Also consider band 6 roles, especially if you have management experience.
- You can also look on the websites of trusts or other organisations you're interested in.
- During the year there are numerous jobs fairs which give you a chance to find out more about organisations.
- When on placement introduce yourself as a final year student and use the opportunity to network.



Appendix G

Top tips for supporting newly registered learning disability nurses

Preceptorship

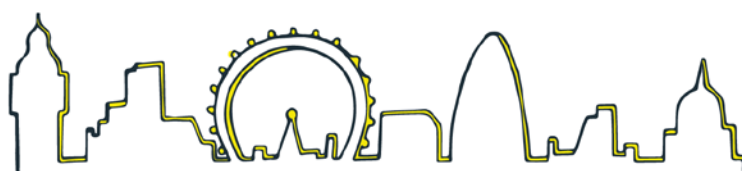
- All topics discussed in preceptorship sessions should include learning disability nursing as well as the other fields, for example, in scenarios.
- Newly qualified learning disability nurses should be supported to meet and network with other preceptee RNLDs in local employers. This is especially important for those who did not graduate from a local HEI and therefore may not know other learning disability nurses locally.
- Newly qualified learning disability nurses should be made aware of local RNLD network or forums they can join based on the roles in which they are working.

Support networks

Currently there are two networks in London which newly registered learning disability nurses may wish to access, depending on their setting:

- *Community Learning Disability Nurse Network*
For nurses working in community settings
Contact Lynette Kennedy at: Lynette.Kennedy@camden.gov.uk
- *Inpatient Nurse Network*
For nurses working in inpatient (mental health) settings
Contact Daniel Turner at: Daniel.turner@sabp.nhs.uk

It is hoped that other networks may be established in the future.



Appendix H Capability Mapping and Self-Assessment Tool

	Band 5/Newly Registered Nurse	Date	Band 6/Approx. 1-2 years post registering	Date	Band 7/Approx. 2-4 years post registering	Date
<i>Core</i>	Communicates verbally and in writing with colleagues and service users and their families about their own work		Communicates complex and sensitive information and liaises with external stakeholders		Presents ideas with clarity and in a persuasive and influential style to multiple stakeholders	
<i>Clinical Practice</i>	Assesses, plans, delivers, records and evaluates nursing care and risk assessment strategies		Provides quality nursing care that is responsive to service users' needs, without close supervision		Uses specialist assessment tools and develops nursing complex integrated care plans	
	Has an awareness of core clinical nursing skills and approaches and applies them appropriately within planned care		Able to select the correct clinical nursing skills and approaches and incorporate them in to planned care		Able to provide specialist advice and support to others using clinical skills and approaches in complex situations	
	Supports therapeutic and recreational groups, activities, initiatives and projects		Facilitates or leads therapeutic and recreational groups and activities, initiatives and projects		Co-ordinates therapeutic and recreational groups and activities, initiatives and projects	
	Participates in service user meetings i.e. care and treatment reviews/ care programme approach/ continuing health care		Represents service user at meetings i.e. care and treatment reviews / care programme approach or lead on continuing health care assessments		Acts as duty senior/clinical lead i.e. managing referrals rota, coordinates care and treatment reviews/ care programme approach meetings / continuing health care assessments	
	Has an awareness of safeguarding processes for adults and children and reports concerns or incidents using appropriate systems		Supports others to follow safeguarding processes for adults and children and report concerns or incidents		Acts as safeguarding investigator / enquiry officer and handles health and safety incident reports, complaints and Learning Disabilities Mortality Review (LeDeR) review completion	

<i>Leadership and Management</i>	Acts independently and makes professional and autonomous decisions within established procedures		Organises and prioritises own workload and develops and runs processes and procedures.		Takes responsibility for the efficient and effective use of nursing resources and prioritise team caseloads	
	Works and liaises with members of the integrated multi-disciplinary team		Delivers and delegates tasks and manages the immediate team or shift		Chairs meetings and represents the team at external meetings	
	Provides clinical supervision to other members of the team		Completes appraisal of other members of the team		Recruits and selects new staff	
<i>Education</i>	Acts as a practice supervisor for learners on placement		Acts as practice assessor for learners on placement			
	Designs and delivers bespoke training to small groups including colleagues or service users and their families or carers		Designs and delivers education and training to multi-disciplinary staff		Supports practice development in clinical areas	
<i>Research</i>	Has an aware of current research and present information and to different audiences		Interprets research and applies findings and recommendations to clinical practice		Engages in and supports clinical research projects	
	Participates in clinical audit and quality improvement projects		Leads on clinical audits and small quality improvement projects		Designs audits and contributes to policy and procedure development and implementation	

<i>Clinical Skills (add as needed)</i>						