

Public Voice Forum

Date: 22 February 2023

Time: 14:00 – 17:00

Via MS Teams

Meeting notes

1 Welcome

- Alice Hood, Assistant Director Public Engagement, welcomed all attendees to the meeting and outlined the agenda, housekeeping items and the forum's agreed ways of working.

2 Regulation of advanced practice: a review

- Anne Trotter, Assistant Director, Education and Standards gave an introduction into advanced practice. She spoke about the diversity of roles in nursing and midwifery, what advanced practice is and what regulation of advanced practitioners could look like.
- Anne gave various case studies of professionals working in advanced practice.
- The Forum members were asked the following questions:
 - Have you ever heard of, or received care from, an advanced nurse (or midwife) practitioner? If yes, what was your experience like? And what health or care setting was this?
 - Do you see any benefits or drawbacks for the public in professionals in advanced practice roles having additional regulation? What are they?

Main themes emerging from the group discussion were:

- **Awareness** – there was relatively high awareness of this type of nursing and midwifery role but some members had no previous knowledge or awareness of being treated by a professional working at advanced practice levels.
- **Who's who** - it was generally thought that the lack of awareness of these roles reflected previous discussions, for example, people often being unaware of who is who when they are receiving care in hospital.
- **Positive experiences** – those members who said they had received care from advanced practitioners were very positive about the experience
- **Clearer communication** – people felt awareness could be raised so that people know what these practitioners do and how it differs from nurses and midwives generally

- **Additional regulation** – overall, it was thought that regulation of advanced practice is required. But some added that additional evidence gathering and work for revalidation shouldn't have a detrimental effect on the professionals' capacity to deliver quality person centred care.

Feedback from presenter, Anne Trotter:

It was a pleasure speaking to the Public Voice Forum to explore whether regulation of advanced practice is needed. Hearing about people's experiences of receiving care from advanced practitioners resonated with some of the evidence we know from other sources, too – for example, recognition of the advanced practice professional's ability to use their advanced knowledge and skill to provide continuity of care alongside their advanced communication skills.

This is only the beginning of these important conversations, and it was brilliant to bring the Public Voice Forum into our discussions at such an early stage. I am certain we will be back as this work progresses.

3 Voluntary Removal

David Abrahams, Head of Fitness to Practise Legislation and Policy, introduced voluntary removal and the NMC's plans to make some changes to the process and its application.

Main themes emerging from the group discussion were:

- **Language is important** – 'voluntary removal' does not accurately reflect the process. It doesn't clearly reflect that a fitness to practise concern was raised
- **Transparency** – as with language, it's important that the process and details of each case are clear, including on the register
- **Detail** – differentiating reasons for voluntary removal and the nature of the concern that had been raised is important
- **Accountability** – voluntary removal should not side-step proper investigation and shouldn't be a way for professionals to avoid the consequences of their actions. Likewise, it shouldn't make it difficult for members of the public to understand a concern that has been raised and its seriousness.

Feedback from presenter, David Abrahams:

It was great to present proposals on what we currently call 'voluntary removal' to the Public Voice Forum, and I appreciated the engaged and thoughtful feedback from Forum members. I was particularly struck by the feedback about the language we use, the importance of accountability and the need to consider the potential seriousness of the concerns raised very carefully before deciding whether we should conduct a full investigation.

We're now considering all the feedback we've received and are revising our draft guidance to make sure it reflects the key points that the Forum raised. We are

planning to publish revised guidance in April and will report back to the Forum on the outcome.

4 Members' stories

- Forum member Myra shared her story, including her previous nursing career, her time as a carer and how that led to becoming an advocate for carers.

5 Updates

- Alice Hood, Assistant Director, Public Engagement updated the group on issues previously discussed by the group including the public information campaign and the referral helpline.

6 Next meeting date

- 24 May 2023 virtual, 2:00 – 5:00pm.