Service Commissioners and Graduate Nursing

Five things you need to know:

1. By 2016, a degree will be the minimum requirement to register with the Nursing and Midwifery Council and therefore all newly registered nurses will hold a degree in nursing. Changes to the curricula will further develop the following qualities: leadership, autonomy, analytical and critical thinking, positive risk-taking and decision-making.

2. It is anticipated that this change will also be accompanied by a redistribution of the nursing workforce profile. There will be increased numbers of Band 4 assistant/associate practitioners to support fewer registered Band 5 nurses; but there will also be increased numbers of nurses at Bands 7 to 9 working at a level of advanced clinical practice (e.g. nurse practitioner, consultant). This model will also be valid for allied healthcare professionals.

3. Workforce planning linked to education and training programmes will be essential to drive services change and streamline pathways of care to deliver quality and productivity while meeting financial challenges (e.g. assistant practitioner instead of registered nurse; nurse consultant or nurse specialist instead of junior doctor/registrar or GP).

4. Changes in skill-mix can start from now and drive quality while generating savings. This can be achieved by upskilling some of the existing workforce and/or using them in different roles.

5. Nurse education will support the move of care to the community and the need to care for acutely-ill patients in their own homes by exposing current and future students more and more to community care while retaining placements in acute and high-dependency settings.

A more detailed Q and A on the programme in South Central is on online at: www.nesc.nhs.uk/primary_areas/healthcare_workforce/education_commissioning/modernising_nursingcareers/education_commissioning.aspx

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