51,355

NHS staff are likely to have experienced domestic abuse in the past 12 months, according to the charity SafeLives.

See below left

TWEET

‘Winter can be tough, but if we stay fit we can be prepared and help support those in need’

Viv Bennett
Public Health England’s chief nurse
@VivJBennett

To read more about the drive to vaccinate NHS staff against flu, go to rcni.com/flu-drive

IN BRIEF

A trailblazing group of women who campaigned to create England’s first nursing degree programme at the University of Manchester have reunited.

Go to: rcni.com/degree-pioneers

HEE redefines nursing associate responsibilities

By Petra Kendall-Raynor

Nursing associates will only be able to administer medicines if suitably trained and competent, in settings where it is deemed appropriate, and will be guided by employer medicines management policies, according to Health Education England (HEE).

The role is intended to bridge the gap between healthcare assistants and qualified nurses. But HEE’s plans were heavily criticised after a draft of the nursing associate curriculum, which was leaked earlier this month, revealed those in the role might be able to administer controlled drugs.

HEE has now published a final version of the curriculum and said it ‘recognises the strength of views in relation to the administration of controlled drugs by nursing associates’.

It will set up a group next year consisting of staff from across the health and care system to provide evidence-based guidance on this element of the job.

HEE director of nursing and deputy director of education and quality Lisa Bayliss-Pratt said the curriculum will ensure trainees are ready.

‘We will train these new nursing associates to understand medicines management and to administer medicines safely in a timely manner, within the confines of local employer policies.’

A total of 2,000 nursing associate roles will be created in England, with the first 1,000 due to start training at 11 test sites from December. The 2-year training programme will include practice placements in a variety of health and care settings.

RCN general secretary Janet Davies said while she was pleased the curriculum made it clear that role development and allocation of work must always take place under the right level of supervision, the college was ‘seriously worried’ about the speed at which the role was being developed. ‘This is such a significant change to the way care is delivered. It should not be rushed through,’ she said.

HEE supports regulation of nursing associates and said it was waiting for the Department of Health to confirm its position.

‘We will train nursing associates to understand medicines management’

Lisa Bayliss-Pratt

Go to tinyurl.com/nursing-associate-curriculum

IN BRIEF

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Nurse shortage in care homes ‘critical’

The care home sector in Scotland is facing an ‘intolerable’ shortage of nurses, with one in four nursing posts vacant, according to a new report.

An analysis by Scottish Care, which represents independent sector health and social care providers in the country, also found 98% of organisations were struggling to fill nursing posts.

Recommendations in the report include introducing a proper career pathway for nurses working in care homes, and nursing degree courses promoting care home working as a positive career choice.

RCN Scotland associate director Ellen Hudson said: ‘Care homes are under immense pressure and are facing an uphill struggle to recruit and retain nurses. The situation is critical.’

Go to tinyurl.com/scottish-care-report

SCOTLAND

Nurse shortage in care homes ‘critical’

Go to: rcni.com/degree-pioneers