Title: Raising the Bar - Shape of Caring: a Review of the Future Education and Training of Registered Nurses and Care Assistants (Willis Report)

Agenda Item: 14

1 Purpose

The purpose of this paper is provide the Governing Body with information on the review published in March 2015 into nursing workforce education systems.

2 Background

Standards for education, training, conduct and performance of registered nurses are set by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) who also hold responsibility for investigating and taking action against any nurse who does not meet those standards. The quality and standard of patient care delivered by nursing and midwifery staff has been repeatedly raised as an issue through several national reports including Francis 2013, Keogh, 2013, Morecombe Bay 2014. Good quality education is important if nursing staff are to deliver the requisite standard of quality care whilst managing successfully the challenges of increasing complexity of clinical need, expectations of patients and delivery of care closer to home. Explicit within this report is the valuable and vital contribution that Care Assistants make to delivering nursing care and the need to focus investment on providing education and training to this group of staff to safeguard patient safety and wellbeing.

‘Shape of Caring: A review of the future education and training of registered nurses and care assistants’ was commissioned by Health Education England (HEE) in partnership with the NMC to review the current education system for nurses and care assistants and make recommendations that will support the development of the future nursing workforce to meet upcoming healthcare demands and challenges. The full report can be accessed via the following link:


In the report, chaired by Lord Willis, he highlights there are 1.3 million care assistants and half a million Registered Nurses in England stating the importance of investing in this essential workforce. He also acknowledges that the education and training of this workforce needs to reflect the changing care
environment, and equip the workforce to deliver high quality care. Some of the key findings from the report are given below:

- Patient centered care should be at the heart of all pre-registration nursing education and continuing professional development.

- There were no shortcomings found in nursing education that could be directly responsible for a decline in care standards.

- Nursing education needs to imbed patient safety and dignity as a top priority.

- Better evaluation of and research into nursing education programmes is necessary to ensure a programme that is fit for purpose.

- Recruitment campaigns need to widen their diversity in order to encourage the widest, best possible range of applicants.

- Universities need to recognise nursing as a practice and research discipline.

- Attention needs to be paid to developing a strategic understanding of the nursing workforce as a whole and as a UK-wide resource.

3 Themes & Recommendations

The review explored eight overarching themes and as a result made a total of 34 recommendations for different organisations to support the reports future vision for registered nurses and care assistants.

The 34 recommendations under the eight overarching themes have been summarised below:

- **Theme 1: Enhancing the Voice of the Patient and the Public**

  Increases in patient involvement in decision making and care planning have been seen through access to better information and development of knowledge. The report recommends that involvement of the patient should extend to developing the curriculum and resources for education and training of nurses and care assistants.

- **Theme 2: Valuing the Care Assistant Role**

  Emphasis is on valuing the Care Assistant role to improve patient care. Training for Care Assistants has been neither compulsory nor consistent in the type of training delivered, which is identified as a concern as Care Assistants make up a third of the frontline workforce in hospitals delivering hands on care to patients. The recommendation is to invest in Care Assistants, developing a career structure supported by an accredited training which will allow them to progress into a variety of health professional roles as well as ensuring that they develop skills within a competency framework.
• **Theme 3: Widening Access for Care Assistants who wish to enter Nursing**

This theme stresses the importance of developing partnerships with education providers to develop new approaches to enable Care Assistants to develop the necessary study skills to progress into higher education programmes. This is seen as vital to enable employers to “grow their own” staff into the health professions, bringing added benefits of job satisfaction, reduced turnover and flexible working.

• **Theme 4: Developing a Flexible Model**

The current model of delivering nurse training is widely seen as not fit for the future because the current fields of nursing do not equip nurses with the skills to care for patients across the spectrum of mental and physical health. The review recommends that focus is given to a 2 year core training for nurses that covers all aspects of mental health and physical care before nurses undertake a year in a chosen specialism.

• **Theme 5: Assuring a High-Quality Learning Environment for Pre-Registered Nurses**

Including advanced nursing skills such as diagnostic, prescribing and communication skills is viewed as an imperative to be able to deliver the requisite advanced nursing care to patients with complex needs. To support nurses developing these advanced nursing skills, mentorship will play a significant role. New ways of coaching and supporting nurses in practice will be required addressing some of the current issues relating to differences in the standard of mentorship provided nationally and expectations that every job role will be able to undertake the mentorship function regardless of ability.

• **Theme 6: Assuring High Quality, Ongoing Learning for Registered Nurses**

To ensure that nurses can meet the future needs of patients, investment in and providing opportunities for education and training needs to occur throughout a nurse’s career. The review acknowledges that much can be learned from other health professional groups such as medical staff to develop a career framework that will enable achievement of practice based learning to be recognised.

• **Theme 7: Assuring Sustainable Research and Innovation**

The review identified that there are inadequate numbers of nurses in the workforce leading research and evidence based practice. Advancements in quality improvement and patient care will be benefitted by a nursing workforce that includes clinical – academic posts as this will encourage questioning and challenge to standards of practice with a resultant improvement in patient outcomes.

• **Theme 8: Assuring High-Quality Funding and Commissioning**

The review highlights the need to move away from the more traditional provision of workforce planning based on current NHS professions and move to a future of
commissioning innovatively around practice based populations. This recommendation is to review the education budget to best plan for funding and improving equitable access to pre and post qualifying courses, encouraging shared learning across health and social care boundaries to improve patient care. Engagement in lifelong learning is seen as an opportunity to reduce attrition amongst nursing staff who currently have limited access to opportunities for training and career progression.

4 Current challenges facing the NHS workforce

Health care is becoming more complex with public expectation higher than ever before. Nurse attrition during the three year registered nurse training course is currently 34% in England and rates of retention in the first two years of qualifying are decreasing. The effect of this is a shortage of trained nurses across many specialities. These recommendations provide a robust framework to shape the caring workforce, driving consistent standards and developing clear education pathways for care assistants. Preceptorship, mentorship, skills acquisition and improving practice experience are also highlighted in the review emphasising the need to value nurses throughout their careers, along with an emphasis on developing the current workforce to drive innovation and change.

5 Next Steps

The implications of the report will be considered by national bodies including Health Education England and the Nursing & Midwifery Council. Bristol CCG will be considering the implications of the report and will continue to engage with national and regional workforce events and support regional and local work.

Through monthly contract meetings with providers Bristol CCG regularly reviews workforce issues with providers focusing on turnover rates and their recruitment initiatives. The CCG will ask for assurance from its commissioned services that they have reviewed the recommendations and are assessing the applicability of these on their services. The CCG will also share the findings of the Report with the Locality Executive Group Nurse representatives and support any specific areas within the practices.

6 How have service users, carers and local people been involved?

Not applicable to this paper.

7 Implications on equalities and health inequalities.

This paper has no negative implications on equalities and health inequalities

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8 Evidence Informed Commissioning
Not applicable to this paper

9 Financial Implications
No financial implications to the CCG

10 Legal implications
There are no legal issues raised in this paper

11 Risk implications, assessment and mitigation
The risks are associated with the attrition of trainees resulting in a lack of a registered nursing workforce. Risks are also associated with the recruitment and retention of both the registered and unregistered nursing workforce resulting in nurse shortages across many specialties. The recommendations in this paper address the issues of attrition, alternatives to the registered nurse workforce and through promoting career development models the retention of nurses.

12 How does this fit with Bristol CCG’s Operational Plan or Strategic Objectives?
The requirement to have a sustainable workforce is essential to support high quality care and delivery of all clinically based objectives.

13 Recommendation(s)
The Governing Body is asked to note the paper.

Bridget James, Head of Quality
8th July 2015

Alison Moon, Transformation and Quality Director
8th July 2015

Glossary of terms and abbreviations

| Health Education England (HEE) | Originally established as a Special Health Authority in 2012, HEE are now a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB), as of 1 April 2015, under the provisions of the Care Act 2014. HEE was established to improve the quality of healthcare for the people and patients of England through education, training and lifelong development of staff. |
| Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) | The NMC regulate nurses and midwives in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. They exist to protect the public and set standards of education, training, conduct and performance so that nurses and midwives can deliver high quality healthcare throughout their careers.

The NMC makes sure that nurses and midwives keep their skills and knowledge up to date and uphold their professional standards. They have clear and transparent processes to investigate nurses and midwives who fall short of our standards. They maintain a register of nurses and midwives allowed to practise in the UK. |