

Principles for Rotation within Wales



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Introduction

Nurses, Midwives and Health Visitors and those that assist and support their roles are the largest workforce group within the healthcare setting. Their roles and influence are evident at every level of the service and the knowledge, skills and values they bring therefore have a significant impact on the delivery of dignified, and evidence based care. The vital role the workforce has in creating safe and effective care for those who rely on its services has been set out in the future vision for NHS Wales Together for Health (2009) which acknowledges that in order for this to be maintained in the future, staff must be enabled to work differently in a way they know will bring about better, more quality focussed services to patients and clients.

Furthermore, Standard 26 of the Standards for Health Services in Wales (WG (2010)) requires NHS organisations and services to evidence that their workforce is:

- provided with appropriate support to enable them to maintain and develop competencies in order to develop their full potential,
- able to demonstrate continuing professional development
- able to access opportunities to develop collaborative and team working.

The Post Registration Career Framework (2009) clearly sets the scene for a career structure that is responsive to the changing needs of clients and service delivery by advocating the development of new and existing roles and the creation of flexible career pathways. One of the ways of achieving this is for organisations to facilitate staff, as part of normal working practice, to undertake rotation to various care settings. Rotation creates an organisational culture which encourages the turnover of staff, reduces instances of 'static' teams and allows challenge, new ideas and evidence based practice to be introduced. Research has shown that with relatively little resource very experienced staff can be both retained in organisations and can contribute to innovation in career development as well as sharing experience for innovation across an organisation (Lucock and Coyne 2003).

Background

In order to meet the changing needs of clients and service provision, new and innovative ways of recruiting and retaining staff are essential. Planning and developing for health and social care requires a workforce strategy that facilitates this, with the aim of a well-educated and highly motivated nursing workforce that has access to the right support and development opportunities to enhance career provision (Newman et al, 2002)

The principles for job rotation in Wales aim to provide organisations with a flexible workforce with transferable knowledge, skills and experience to meet future service need. There is recognition that formalised rotation programmes may not fit all

employment situations therefore these principles seek to offer guidance and are for organisations to use flexibly to meet service need and local objectives. Each Health Board, NHS Trust or Organisation will need to consider the principles and how they can best be applied locally to meet workforce career development to provide the best possible outcomes for service users and their families.

Job rotation is a method of employee development through the planned replacement of employees for a set period of time with the aim of developing skills and knowledge and increasing motivation, job performance and productivity. Job rotation can occur laterally but can also involve a promotion (Zhen-Hua et al, 2011). Within the healthcare setting, rotational programmes have been introduced for both new registrants and experienced staff. For graduate nurses a rotational programme provides a framework of support during the transition period from student to registered nurse, including skill development and an opportunity to have 'taster' experiences in a variety of settings such as teaching, research, community and in-patient settings. For experienced staff, rotation offers a chance for staff who have worked in a speciality for many years to develop experience in other areas, with the outcome of a more flexible, generic, multi-skilled workforce.

Rotation has a number of benefits including strengthening the sense of community and commitment to wider department or organisational goals by employees having an understanding of others roles, departments and challenges (Allott, 2013). An employee who rotates develops experience more quickly and in a wider breadth of areas, therefore supporting the development of the employee as a generalist (Champion et al, 1994). Rotation is a method of succession planning and career development by selecting and preparing employees for management or specialist posts (Bellot, 2005). Rotation can be used to develop managers as generalists and as a result offers employees diverse work experiences which can be considered an important aspect of career development (Ostroff and Kozlowski, 1992).

There are a number of ways that rotation could be applied within organisations and these include a simple rotation such as from working nights to working days or could be more complex in nature where the rotation is between wards or between acute and community services. Rotation could also cross organisations such as the "revolving door" model as outlined in the Post Registration Career Framework, which enables staff to move between service and research/education settings.

The objectives of rotation are numerous and will vary depending on the organisation, service and workforce need. They include:

- Improved recruitment and retention
- Improve and expand skills base and knowledge to meet patient need
- Build team networking across departments
- Transferable skills and cross-cover working
- A culture of organisational challenge, learning and improvement;
- Succession planning and career development
- Meet individual nurses' development needs as identified in Performance Appraisal Development Review (PADR)
- Raise awareness of opportunities in the wider organisation

- Support the development of future leaders, managers, nurse specialists, and consultant nurses (Bellot, 2012: Varden, 2006)

Rotation would provide opportunities for staff to enhance their knowledge and skills and increase their ability to deliver person centred care. Ultimately, rotation assists organisations to achieve the objectives within Setting the Direction: Primary and Community Services Strategic Delivery Programme (2010) to provide service delivery models which establish the best possible conditions for patients, carers and NHS staff in a high quality system. In order to achieve these objectives there needs to be a cultural shift where opportunities for staff rotation between departments, directorates or even organisations form part of everyday working culture and are aligned to annual appraisal, revalidation and personal development.

Rotational pathways will be part of the broad spectrum of learning and development opportunities offered to staff aligned to the needs of the individual and the service. Benefits of rotation include:

- A nursing workforce that has the right knowledge and skills to deliver high quality patient centred dignified care in any setting
- The development of a generalist workforce
- Transferability of the workforce, with staff having the knowledge and skills to work across boundaries
- An opportunity to broaden the skill ranges of staff in areas outside of their normal practice
- A nursing workforce that is responsive to the needs of patients across all healthcare settings.
- To offer both newly registered and experienced practitioners (within all staff groups and at all levels) a structured and varied experience
- An opportunity to improve working relationships across services and organisations
- The potential to develop career pathways, opportunities for succession planning and support personal and professional development
- Helps achieve the strategic aims for nursing within Wales, which includes collaboration with the Higher Education Institutes

In addition successful rotation of staff has the potential to address the current inflexibilities and barriers in nursing that hinder integrated care for patients, restrict the ability to redeploy resources to shortage areas and limit career opportunities for staff (Modernising Nursing Careers, 2006). Any rotational opportunity enables staff and their managers to gain a clearer picture of their strengths and preferences and can help to inform future career progression.

Broad Principles for Job Rotation of Staff

A sub group of the All Wales Aligning Nursing Skills with Patient Need was set up to:

- Provide a forum for consultation and decision on an All Wales basis with respect to the principles of rotational pathways that facilitates nursing and midwifery staff to work across various care settings as part of best practice

- Explore the principles for a model within Wales, linking with published literature and underpinning with strategies/guidance
- Produce an options appraisal to the Chief Nursing Officer through the All Wales Aligning Nursing Skills with Patient Needs group on principles for rotation within Wales

A number of organisations have delivered formal rotational programmes in the past and the principles identified have been drawn from the lessons learnt from these organisations. Evaluation of some of these programmes had also taken place which was used to inform the principles.

Risks and Constraints

The scoping exercise identified a number of risks and constraints which will need to be considered if organisations choose to adopt rotation. Some of the risks are more applicable to formal rotational pathways, therefore by organisations adopting a blended approach to rotation, to suit local context, risks can be minimised.

- If rotational opportunities are not embedded in normal practice there is a risk that the full benefits both to staff and organisations will not be realised and that staff will become stagnant and competency will be harder to maintain
- New registrants who undertake a rotation immediately after registration may perceive it to be a repetition of pre-registration study and therefore still view themselves as students
- Experienced staff may not be clear around the opportunities for learning and development that rotation offers and therefore not want to leave their existing posts
- Lack of equality and fair treatment, staff on rotation not valued or made to feel part of the team
- Risk of unforeseen reorganisation and/or change in the political landscape and agenda
- A clearly defined manager is crucial to the governance, assurance and success of rotational opportunities
- Lack of clarity with regards to the rotational areas
- Financial pressures therefore organisations may need to think creatively within existing resources in order for staff to rotate to different areas.

Broad Principles for Job Rotation: These principles seek to offer guidance and are for organisations to use flexibly as a guide to meet service need and objectives. Each Health Board, NHS Trust or Organisation will need to consider the principles and how they can be applied locally.

Organisational

1	An organisational commitment will be required in promoting the principles of job rotation to ensure maximum benefits to the organisation, individuals and patients and to ensure that rotation of staff is embedded within service delivery models.
2	The principles should be aligned to Welsh Government, Health Board, NHS Trust or organisation service objectives and themes to ensure they take account of All Wales and locality specific requirements (see appendix 1)
3	Rotation will vary across organisations to meet the locality context. These could include rotation from nights to days, a clinical rotation within a department; a health/academic pathway or a health/social care pathway (see appendix 2)
4	For cross organisational rotation, by maintaining employment with one employer (providing there is reciprocity), individuals and employers should not lose out by rotational experiences.
5	Job rotation may take many forms and for each one, the department and staff involved should be clear as to what is expected of them and the benefits of undertaking a job rotational pathway.

Operational Management

6	Job rotation should be identified as part of an individual's annual Personal Appraisal Development Review (PADR) and revalidation for Registrants.
7	The duration of the period of job rotation and areas of rotation should be defined locally, with annual leave planned within this job rotation pathway.
8	There must be clearly defined roles, responsibilities and expectations for all those involved in the a job rotational pathway (department manager and employee undertaking the job rotation)
9	Any change to an employee's role or job description should occur following appropriate discussion and agreement with the employee, involving workforce and organisational development and staffside as appropriate.
10	For newly registered practitioners the first placement of the rotation should also be aligned to the preceptorship period.
11	Employees undertaking a period of job rotation should have a dedicated base from which they rotate to other areas.
12	A named manager will be required to have responsibility for all Human Resource aspects e.g. PADR, managing annual leave, absence, competence and capability.

Learning and Development	
13	Education, development and objectives for each job rotation should be agreed in line with PADR and KSF outline, with the personal development plan aligned to the four pillars: clinical practice, research, education and management and leadership.
14	Transferable skills development must be at the centre of an individual's development programme Undertaking a period of rotation should provide individuals with the opportunity to develop transferable skills within a culture of learning and development.
15	Any development associated with the pathway should be supported with appropriate opportunities.
16	Supervision and support mechanisms must be put in place for all staff working outside their normal work environment.
17	Learning and development should be agreed as part of rotational objectives and may a variety of forms e.g. work based learning, an accredited academic module or quality improvement to meet individual and service need
18	Job rotation should provide participants with opportunities to share good practice and learning amongst peers
Professional Accountability	
19	Individuals undertaking job rotation will be required to provide evidence of meeting PREP requirements though completion of their portfolio for their annual PADR and revalidation.
20	Individuals undertaking job rotation will have a named manager for each stage of the rotation to whom they are professionally responsible.
21	Individuals who undertake a formal rotation pathway must be made aware of the requirement for their commitment to the duration of the rotation (unless extenuating circumstances)
22	Individuals will be required to adhere to local and organisational standards and professional code of conduct including raising of concerns
Quality and Patient Safety	
23	Job rotation should achieve a level of improvement knowledge linked to improvement initiatives e.g. Improving Quality Together or other local agreed quality and service development

24	Job rotation should provide an opportunity for exposure to a broader field of experience with the outcome of a competent and flexible workforce
25	Job rotation should be part of the continuum of learning for career development and be used as a method for succession planning
26	Job rotation within or across departments should provide the individual with wider networking opportunities
27	Job rotation should contribute towards a continued culture of challenge, quality improvement and maintaining a learning environment
Evaluation	
28	Benefits to the individual as a result of job rotation should be evaluated as part of annual PADR and revalidation
29	Organisational benefits to patients, teams and the wider service, as a result of staff undertaking job rotation, should be evaluated locally.

Options Appraisal

1. Option One

DO NOTHING.

Advantages: None identified; Health Board, NHS Trust or organisation to continue with current arrangements

Disadvantages: Opportunities for learning and development are not maximised and the risk of stagnation of the nursing workforce is increased.

2. Option Two

LOCALLY DEFINED ROTATION TO MEET ORGANISAITONAL NEED

Advantages: Health Board, NHS Trust or organisation to develop a flexible nursing workforce with transferable knowledge and skills with the aim to deliver high quality patient centred dignified care in any setting and across boundaries. Examples of possible job rotational opportunities that can be developed at all levels are given in Appendix 2. These opportunities would be open to all registered nurses and healthcare support workers at all levels of practice, across all specialities.

Disadvantages: Risks are minimised if Risks and constraints identified within this paper.

3. Option Three

IMPLEMENT FORMAL ROTATIONAL PATHWAYS

Advantages: Offers the same advantages as option two.

Disadvantages: Requires a more structured approach to ensure the coordination of operational, logistical and governance aspects of a formal rotational pathway. Risks and constraints as identified within this paper.

Recommendations

These principles seek to offer guidance and are for organisations to use flexibly as a guide to meet service need and objectives. Each Health Board, NHS Trust or organisation will need to consider the principles and how they can be applied locally to best meet job rotational pathway opportunities. The examples detailed in the Appendices provide a guide as to possible areas/services where rotation would give added benefit not only to the service but also to the individual.

- Health Board, NHS Trust or organisation should introduce job rotation based on these principles, but taking into account the best model to suit local organisational context as the introduction of job rotation will facilitate a rich matrix of transferable skills within the nursing workforce

- Organisations should seek to embed job rotational pathways in every service area to ensure that it becomes part of the culture of normal working practice
- The principles should be used for all levels of practice and are transferable to other staff groups e.g. Allied Health Professionals or Healthcare Support Workers
- Rotation could be linked to the development of specialist or advanced roles and aspiring leaders and managers as it provides an opportunity for those already in post to broaden their knowledge and experience base
- Health Board, NHS Trust or organisations that implement job rotation based on these principles could participate in evaluation locally or on an all Wales basis. This would contribute to the knowledge, understanding and evidence base in relation to the benefits of job rotation for the individual, patients and the organisation

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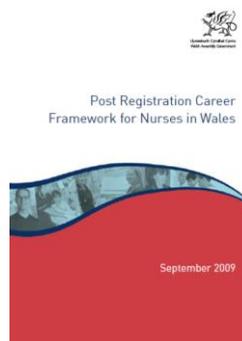
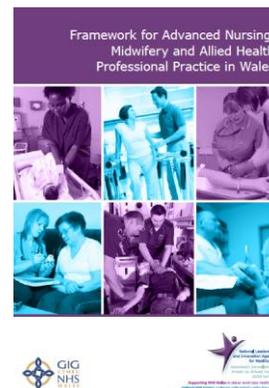
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Appendix 1



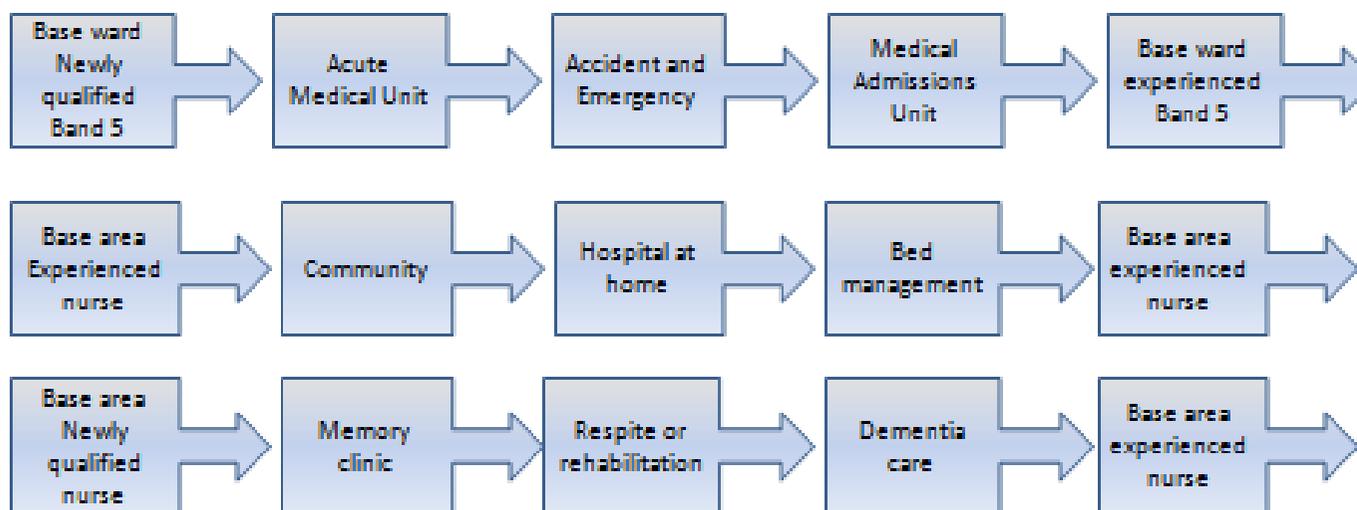
Examples of current Welsh policy documents which have potential to influence a rotational programme

Rotational programme



Appendix 2

Exemplar pathways for rotational programmes



Exemplar pathways for rotational programmes

Clinical Speciality
Rotational Pathway
Medical Ward Days
Medical Ward Nights
Out Patients

Interdepartmental
Rotational Pathway
Medicine
Surgery
Orthopaedics
A&E

Interorganisational
Rotational Programme
Local DGH
Satellite hospital
University hospital
Higher Education
Institute

Interagency Rotational
programme
Hospital
GP surgery
Social care