

AHPF statement on RCN PN

The AHPF is concerned that a recent RCN statement suggesting that Allied Health Professionals (AHPs) are being used to substitute for nurses in some cases may have caused unnecessary confusion and public alarm about safety.

The AHPF would like to reassure the public that there is no evidence of inappropriately qualified staff working with patients.

Both AHPs and nurses are registered, regulated and trustworthy professionals, and both have crucial roles to play in ensuring high quality patient care. AHPs and nurses regularly work together as part of a multidisciplinary team.

While the roles of nurses and AHPs are different, there are areas where either a registered nurse or an AHP may be equally qualified. For example:

- Managing multi-disciplinary teams involving both nurses and AHPs
- Senior roles without direct patient care responsibility
- Some specialist clinical/ advanced roles where both AHPs and nurses have had the requisite specialist training e.g. some aspects of respiratory or cardiac care.

Annex – note for editors

The Allied Health Professions Federation (AHPF)

The AHPF's Vision is: "The AHP workforce is positioned to improve the mental and physical health and well-being of the population". Our mission is: "The Federation provides collective AHP leadership and representation to influence national policy and guidance at a strategic level.". In all areas, the AHPF promotes parity between mental and physical health.

The Allied Health Professions Federation (AHPF) is made up of 12 professional bodies representing Allied Health Professionals (AHPs):

- The British Association for Music Therapy (BAMT)
- The British Association of Art Therapists (BAAT)
- British Association of Dramatherapists (BADth)
- The British Dietetic Association (BDA)
- British Association of Prosthetists and Orthotists (BAPO)
- British and Irish Orthoptic Society (BIOS)
- Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT)
- Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP)
- The College of Paramedics (CoP)
- The Royal College of Podiatry (RCPoD)
- Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT)
- Society and College of Radiographers (SCoR)

AHPs are the 3rd largest workforce in the NHS (after doctors and nurses) and deliver high quality services across health and social care. There are over 150,000 AHPs working within a range of surroundings including hospitals, people's homes, clinics, surgeries, the justice system, local authorities, private and voluntary sectors, and primary, secondary, and tertiary education.

AHPs focus on consistent, person-centred, preventative, and therapeutic care for children and adults. They are registered, regulated and trustworthy professionals performing a crucial function in the NHS and social care. The breadth and depth of AHP skills and reach make them ideally placed to lead and support transformative changes.