

**Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann
Quality and Qualifications Ireland**

Validation Report of Expert Panel

Part 1 General Information

Provider	HSE Regional Centre for Nursing & Midwifery Education, Connolly Hospital, Blanchardstown (RCNME)
Date of Visit	11 October 2013
Programme submitted for Evaluation:	Psychosocial Interventions for Nurses
Leading to the award of:	Certificate in Psychosocial Interventions for Nurses (Level 8) Special Purpose 20 ECTS
Programme Recommended for Approval:	Certificate in Psychosocial Interventions for Nurses
Leading to the award of:	Certificate in Psychosocial Interventions for Nurses (Special Purpose, Level 8, 20 ECTS)

Panel of Experts

Name	Area of Expertise	Organisation
Dr Dermot Douglas, ChairFormer Secretary & Director of Academic Affairs, IOTI	Quality Assurance Programme validation Policy, procedures	Consultant
Dr Liam MacGabhann Director of Academic Practice DCU	Academic Practice and Psychosocial Interventions	School of Nursing & Human Sciences, Dublin City University
Ms Rosemary Smyth Director of Training & Development	Standards in mental health services and training provision'	Mental Health Commission
Ms Colette Harrison	Secretary	QQI

Summary

The Expert Panel (the Panel), having reviewed the documentation presented by HSE Regional Centre for Nurse & Midwifery Education (RCNME) Blanchardstown and considered the responses of the programme team during the course of the evaluation meeting, will recommend approval of the proposed **Certificate in Psychosocial Interventions** for Nurses to QQI, when the conditions identified in the report have been satisfied. The Panel has also identified a number of recommendations which the programme team should consider as the proposed programme is revised.

The attached report addresses issues raised by the Panel in the context of the review.

Part 2 Findings of the Panel

2.1 Introduction

The Regional Centres for Nurse Education (RCNME) were established by the Department of Health and Children in 2002 as part of the restructuring of undergraduate nurse education and training. Their focus is to address the continuing education and professional development needs of registered nurses and midwives within their geographic remit. RCNME Blanchardstown currently offers a range of awards validated by QQI as set out below.

Six Level 8 Special Purpose awards:

- Certificate in Telemetry Nursing
- Certificate in Cardiovascular Nursing
- Certificate in Respiratory Nursing
- Certificate in Diabetes Nursing
- Certificate in Nurse Authority to Prescribe Ionising Radiation (X - Ray)
- Certificate in Mental Health Legislation

In addition they also offer a Level 5 FET major award Health Service Skills.

RCNME also provides a range of continuing professional development programmes validated by An Bord Altranais.

2.2 Examination of the Programme

2.2.1 Education and Training Requirements

The panel was satisfied that the programme was consistent with RCNME's mission, that it does not constitute redundant provision and that it makes efficient use of resources. It is clear from the

rationale presented and the research undertaken that this programme will meet an identified need in nurse and midwife education and supports national policy on approaches to managing mental health.

2.2.2 Protection of Enrolled Learners

The Protection for Enrolled Learners arrangements pursuant to Section 25 of the 2012 Act is in place to provide learners with appropriate information.

RCNME has transfer arrangements in place with other HSE Centres for Nursing and Midwifery education in the unlikely event that the programme cannot be delivered by RCNME.

2.2.3 Quality Assurance Teaching and Learning

The submission clearly outlined how the programme had been developed in line with RCNME's QA procedures. The discussion with the programme team (Appendix1) confirmed this and it was clear that considerable effort was put in to developing the programme by all involved. The panel was satisfied that the QA procedures had been applied to the development of the proposed programme and that quality assurance mechanisms are in place to ensure its provision, ongoing monitoring and review.

2.2.4 Programme Titles and Award Titles

The Panel is satisfied that the title of the programme is clear, accurate and fit for the purpose of informing prospective learners and other stakeholders. However, there is a requirement to title the programme modules appropriately. It is not acceptable to title them as Module 1 and Module 2. Module titles (up to 42 characters including spaces) that accurately reflect the content should be used.

2.3 Particular Aspects of Programme Provision

2.3.1 Unity

The programme has an underlying unifying theme and the modules are explicitly linked. Discussions with the programme team further assured the Panel that the content of the first programme module would prepare learners appropriately for the challenge of the clinical practice module. The Panel recommended clarifying the programme documentation to ensure that it was clearly understood that the latter part of Module 1 is taken in tandem with 'Module 2', this makes them co-requisite modules in the context of this programme. It should also be made clear that 'Module 2' cannot be

taken in isolation. The panel also recommended the addition of new content on medication management and the integration of care planning.

2.3.2 Teaching and Learning

The proposed approaches to teaching and learning were indicated and discussed with the programme team. The Panel considered the approaches proposed and agreed they would enable learners to achieve the learning outcomes for the programme.

The Panel recommends that the amount of self-directed learning required in relation to the contact hours should be reviewed to ensure that learners are clear about the commitment required.

As a significant approach on the clinical practice module is reflection, the Panel recommends that guidance on the reflection required by the learner be made more explicit.

Blended and e learning should be listed as teaching strategies as they are used in the programme.

2.3.3 Teacher-Learner Dialogue

The modes of interaction between the teaching staff and the learners were elaborated upon satisfactorily. The Panel was assured that the programme team had given due consideration to the experience and skills of the clinical supervisor to ensure their effectiveness in the clinical practice module. The Panel recommended that this understanding be reflected in the programme documentation by clearly articulating the skills and experience required of the clinical supervisor.

The Panel noted the importance of the role of the module coordinator in ensuring appropriate management of the module. Consequently the Panel recommended that the role of the module coordinator should also be specified in the programme documentation.

2.3.4 Standards

The panel discussed the award standards and learning outcomes of the programme and it is satisfied that that the majority of the learning outcomes are appropriate to a Level 8 award. However, the Panel require the programme team to review and revise the listed programme and module learning outcomes in the context of the NFQ outcomes for Level 8 awards to ensure that the appropriate standard is *clearly* reflected in the final documentation.

2.3.5 Learner Assessment

The assessment methods proposed are capable, amongst other things, of demonstrating attainment of the standards of knowledge, skill or competence, determined by QQI, for the related award. The importance of ensuring that the timing of all assessment is appropriate and will ensure that all the learning outcomes are assessed at the appropriate time was discussed with the programme team. The panel recommended that the final revised document should provide more clarity about how each element of the proposed assessment contributes to the achievement of the award. This is particularly relevant in the case of the Clinical Practice Portfolio where it needs to be specified how the portfolio will be assessed.

In keeping with best practice, the Panel recommend that the programme document provides a clear strategy and process for greater involvement of service users in the assessment of learners.

2.4. Access, Transfer and Progression

The programme incorporates procedures for access, transfer and progression.

The access requirements proposed were considered by the Panel to be too broad given the specialised nature of the programme. It is considered important that all those on the programme should be working with people with mental health difficulties. This was discussed with the programme team. The Panel requires the access criteria proposed to be amended to require those entering the programme to be in one of the following categories:

- Registered Psychiatric Nurses with at least one years' experience.
- Registered nurses and midwives working in the Mental Health Services with at least 2 years' experience in that service.
- Other registered nurses and midwives in specified roles identified with the delivery of mental health services with at least 2 years' experience in that service .

The Panel noted that, in the unlikely event that the programme could not be completed that learners could transfer to HSE Regional Centre for Nurse and Midwives Education, Tullamore.

The achievement of the Certificate in Psychosocial Interventions may be used for progression to more broadly based major awards.

2.5 Staffing and Physical Resources

The Panel discussed the availability of staff and resources to provide the programme in an effective manner. It was satisfied by the assurances of the programme team that the necessary staffing levels will be in place and was generally satisfied with the level of qualifications and competence of the staff concerned.

A key element of this programme is the clinical work placement. The Panel and the programme team discussed the importance of the criteria for the selection of clinical practice assessors. The Panel recommended the use of group assessment and the involvement of service users should be considered.

2.6 Information to Learners

This section, 4.10 in the programme submission document, in the main deals with information that will be provided to Directors of Nursing and learners who have been accepted onto the programme. General information on the programme, its rationale, the level and type of award, the minimum entry requirements, the teaching and assessment strategy etc. should be made publicly available on the Centre's website so that prospective learners can make appropriate judgements about the programme and its implications for them.

Part 3 Recommendation

The panel of experts recommend to QQI the validation of the programme:

- **Certificate in Psychosocial Interventions for Nurses**

for the purposes of the award of:

- **Special Purpose Award, Level 8 (20 ECTS)**

Subject to:

The Conditions outlined below and QQI's general conditions of approval under Section 84 Transition and Savings Provision, 2012 Act.

3.1 Conditions

The panel of experts require that the RCNME should take note of the following conditions and that a satisfactory response to those conditions shall be received before the validation is considered by QQI.

RCNME is required to:

- C1: Amend the access requirements to the programme. The following categories of nurse will be permitted to access the programme:
- Registered Psychiatric Nurses with at least one years' experience.
 - Registered nurses and midwives working in the Mental Health Services with at least 2 years' experience in that service.
- Other registered nurses and midwives in specified roles identified with the delivery of mental health services with at least 2 years' experience in that service.
- C2: Clearly Map the programme Learning Outcomes to the relevant NFQ standards and sub-strands for the Level of award being sought (Level 8). Map the module Learning outcomes to the Programme Learning Outcomes and map Assessment to the specific Module and Programme Learning Outcomes.
- C3: Appropriately title the two modules in the programme.
- C4: Remove the disconnect between the indicative content and the learning outcomes in Module 2 by redesigning on the basis of achievement of the stated Learning Outcomes and the Model of Learning and assessment proposed.
- C5: In the Clinical Practice module it needs to be made clear exactly what contribution the portfolio will make to the grade awarded. Currently the document states that it will (a) contribute in partial fulfilment of the requirement to pass the project and (b) make a 'significant' (but unspecified) contribution to the grade awarded.
- C6: Specify the minimum level of qualifications/experience in (a) Nursing and (b) Psychosocial Intervention (c) student supervision required by Clinical Supervisors.

- C7: Specify the role and responsibilities of supervisors and who can supervise the programme, the panel was of the view that consideration of a wider pool of supervisors and co-supervision [i.e. between nurses and other professionals skilled in psychosocial intervention] could enhance the programme)
- C8: The Proposed programme schedule needs to be revised to address missing fields; to include appropriate and meaningful module titles and to properly reflect the assessment strategy - as no final examination is envisaged.

3.2 Recommendations

RCNME is advised to:

- R1: Clarify the programme documentation to ensure that it was clearly understood that the latter part of 'Module 1' is taken in tandem with 'Module 2', this makes them co-requisite modules in the context of this programme . It should also be made clear that 'Module 2' cannot be taken in isolation.
- R2: Consider the addition of content on medication management and the integration of care planning.
- R3: Make more explicit guidance on the reflection required by learners to succeed on the programme.
- R4: Include blended and eLearning as teaching strategies.
- R5: Develop criteria for clinical practice supervisors and the module co-ordinator.
- R6: Consider the introduction of some required texts or reading that will support the achievement of specific learning outcomes in each of the modules. The current indicative lists are too broad for such a focused programme.
- R7: Review the amount of self-directed learning required in relation to the contact hours.
- R8: Review the criteria for the selection of clinical practitioner assessors. Consider the use of group assessment and the involvement of service users in the assessment of learners.
- R9: Reference Data Protection requirements in the terms of reference for exam boards.

- R10 Consider the introduction of a compulsory Reflective Learning Journal to support independent learning; provide the learners with insight into their learning; and enhance their ability in 'Learning to Learn'. This could become part of the assessed element of the Clinical Practice portfolio.
- R11 Consider developing a wider pool of supervisors and co-supervision [i.e. between nurses and other professionals skilled in psychosocial intervention] to further enhance the programme)

Appendix 1

Programme team

Ms Eithne Cusack	Director, Nursing & Midwifery Planning & Development, HSE Dublin North
Mr Ken Brennan	Director, Regional Centre of Nurse & Midwifery Education, Connolly Hospital
Mr James Lynch	Nurse Tutor, Regional Centre of Nurse & Midwifery Education, Connolly Hospital
Ms Anna Maria Luddy	Nurse Tutor, Regional Centre of Nurse & Midwifery Education, Connolly Hospital
Ms Martina McGuinness	Nurse Practice Development Co-ordinator, HSE Dublin West/South West, Kildare/West Wicklow, Dublin South & Wicklow Mental Health Services.
Ms Imelda Noone	Nurse Practice Development Co-ordinator, HSE North West Dublin Mental Health Services.
Ms Antoinette Hughes	Community Mental Health Nurse, St Vincent's Hospital, Fairview, Dublin 3