REF2021

Institution: University of Derby

Unit of Assessment: 3

Title of case study: Supporting newly qualified nurse transition

Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2011–2018

Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:

Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Dr Bill Whitehead	Senior Lecturer Assistant Subject Head Head of Department Deputy Dean, College of Health and Social Care UoD Clinical Lead	2005–2012 2012–2014 2014–1 Jan' 2017 2 Jan' 2017–31 Dec' 2020 1 Jan' 2021–present
Professor Patricia Owen Lorraine Henshaw Elaine Beddingham	Senior Lecturer Senior Lecturer Senior Lecturer	1 July 2006–25 Nov' 2012 6 Sept' 2004–30 June 2020 1 Feb' 2016– 31 May 2020

Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2014–2020

Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? No

1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)

The National Health Service (NHS) is in crisis, with numbers of nurses leaving at an all-time high; costing the public money and impacting patient care. Attrition of newly qualified nurses (NQNs) is particularly at risk due to perceived lack of self-confidence as autonomous practitioners. Whitehead's research team in collaboration with the NHS has significantly mitigated the attrition of NQNs through analysis and evaluation of formal support or `preceptorship`. Preceptorship aids the recruitment and retention of NQNs. Whitehead's team has benefitted the UK NHS, NQNs and clinical educators internationally through a toolkit for NQN organisational support and the establishment of a clinical educators' collaborative network.

2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)

The underpinning research for this case study was led by Whitehead (Senior Lecturer, 2005–2012; Deputy Dean, 2012–present) in conjunction with Owen (Senior Lecturer, 2006–2012), Holmes (Associate Research Assistant, 2012) and Henshaw (Senior Lecturer, 2004–30 June 2020) of UoD, in collaboration with Beddingham (who later worked for the university from 2016-2020), Simmons, Barton, and Walker from Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust [G3.1]. The transition from student nurse to qualified practitioner is recognised as a stressful time, with evidence to show that newly qualified nurses (NQNs) are especially prone to leaving the NHS if not fully supported. This is especially problematic during the first six months after qualification. Evidence suggests a period of preceptorship has been shown to positively impact attrition and retention of NQNs in the NHS. Between August 2011 and 2017 [G3.1], Whitehead's team researched current good guidance and challenges in preceptorship, with a view to creating new best practice guidelines for NHS trusts and a practitioner-based toolkit to aid NQNs.

As part of this research programme, Whitehead's team conducted a systematic review in 2011 [3.1, 3.2, G3.1]. This systematic review included 12 separate searches, generated 167 papers and critically reviewed 24 papers. Relevant data were extracted and synthesised using Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA). Findings from this systematic review led to the conclusion that NQNs benefit from a period of supported and structured preceptorship [3.1, 3.2].

Following this, a qualitative hospital-based case study was developed. The case under investigation included the total population of nurses undertaking and, in any way, supporting

preceptorship at a district general hospital in England (n = 50 staff). Data collected in 2012 [3.3, 3.4], using a multi-stage approach to data collection, including documentary analysis of preceptorship material, focus groups with preceptees, matrons, and learning environment managers, and semi-structured interviews with preceptors and senior clinical nurse managers. Case study findings included the need for specific time for the preceptorship process; for official recognition of the preceptorship process; and for adequate preparation for preceptors to undertake the role. The value of this case study was that, although the findings are based on qualitative data and consequently, specific to a time and location, it resonated with many practitioners in the field and stimulated action elsewhere.

Further research by Whitehead, Owen, Henshaw, and Beddingham investigated the issues related to transition from student to registrant, which culminated in a textbook generated by the research findings, and which included a preceptorship toolkit designed to help employers to support new registrants through this period [5.1]. This research is part of the team's well-established strand of expertise addressing transition and the organisational support structures provided by employers to facilitate this important and vulnerable stage in the registrant's professional career. The research highlighted that providing supportive structures during this period of transition is of clear benefit in recruiting, retaining and ensuring appropriate skills for newly registered professionals. These findings have been used by health academics and practitioners, nationally and internationally. For example, Whitehead has co-written with Iranian colleagues and advised on preceptorship for Tabriz University of Medical Sciences, Iran [3.5].

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

University of Derby (UoD) researchers are indicated by black, underlined text:

3.1 Whitehead, B. (2012) 'Preceptorship Programmes in the UK: A Systematic Literature Review report for Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust'. Available from the UoD online research archive: http://hdl.handle.net/10545/625486

3.2 Whitehead, B., Owen, P., Holmes, D., Beddingham, E., Simmons, M., Henshaw, L., Barton, M. and Walker, C. (2013) 'Supporting newly qualified nurses in the UK: A systematic literature review', *Nurse Education Today*, 33(4), 370-377. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2013.01.009 Also available from the UoD online research archive: http://hdl.handle.net/10545/292598

3.3 Whitehead, B. (2014) 'Preceptorship Research Project Report Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust'. Available from the UoD online research archive: http://hdl.handle.net/10545/625487

3.4 Whitehead, B., Owen, P., Henshaw, L., Beddingham, E. and Simmons, M. (2016) 'Supporting newly qualified nurse transition: A case study in a UK hospital', *Nurse Education Today*, 36(1), 58-63. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nepr.2017.10.018 Also available from the UoD research archive: http://hdl.handle.net/10545/583376

3.5 Borimnejad, L., Valizadeh, S., Rahmani, A., Whitehead, B. and Shahbazi, S. (2018) 'Attributes of Iranian new nurse preceptors: A phenomenological study', *Nurse Education in Practice,* 28(1),121-126. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nepr.2017.10.018 Also available from the UoD research archive: https://hdl.handle.net/10545/621910

Evidence of the quality of the research: 3.2 and 3.4 are articles in international journals which were double blind peer-reviewed; 3.1 and 3.3 are research reports which were reviewed by the funder and were later submitted as the basis of articles 3.2 and 3.4.

Grants
G3.1 Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (CRH) (2011): GBP25,000.
A GBP25,000 fee was allocated from Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust for the nurse transitions research project. This was from a fund provided by the Department of Health

for work related to preceptorship of newly qualified nurses. The funding was used to facilitate the research between 2011 and 2016. It funded Associate Research Assistant Holmes' employment in 2012 and part funded Principal Investigator Whitehead's employment from 2011 to 2016.

G3.2 Advance HE (2019) GBP3,000
Funding to support the launch of CNE's sister organisation Nurse Academics in Clinical Education (NACE).

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

The research report upon which the publications were based was available to the funding organisation, Chesterfield Royal Hospital in January 2014 [3.3]. The long-term impact of this collaborative research was the transformation of the delivery of preceptorship in Chesterfield Royal Hospital from 2014 onwards. The research has also resulted in a preceptorship toolkit [5.1] that has been promoted by NHS Employers and Health Education England (HEE) [5.2]. It has also led to the establishment of a UK based support network for clinical nurse educators [CNEnet, 5.3]. This network has reached a global audience of nurse training practitioners.

Improving preceptorship at Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

In collaboration with the trust, Whitehead's research team transformed the delivery of preceptorship support at Chesterfield Royal Hospital (CRH), which has been highlighted as good practice by NHS Employers [5.2]. Using funding from the Department of Health (DH) to enhance and modernise the existing preceptorship programme for newly registered nurses a project plan was developed which improved and enhanced the clinical learning environment. The sharing of research-informed knowledge and expertise to a range of nursing staff with no previous experience or involvement in nursing research was a key benefit. For example, the project raised the profile of nursing research with nurses across the trust and specifically with the groups of nurses who were directly involved in the focus groups and interviews and who were kept informed of outcomes and developments [5.4].

The working relationships and greater understanding of organisational processes enabled by the preceptorship project have enhanced the Clinical Placement Learning Team's (CPLT) understanding of their Higher Education Institution (HEI) partners, and vice-versa. Enhanced relationships have allowed for the understanding and questioning of HEI processes by the CPLT, while HEI staff gained a deeper understanding of the trust, for example HEI staff were enabled to focus on patient care; HEIs have a strong quality checking ethos; and trust staff are committed to education and quality of educational assessment. As a result, problems are resolved at an earlier stage as a greater level of openness now exists between the teams. This greater understanding allows for development of further research questions and collaborations resulting in enhanced quality of care and improved outcomes for patients [5.4].

Promoting a best practice model for the UK NHS: the Preceptorship Toolkit

Since 2017, Whitehead and his research team's toolkit has been disseminated through conference proceedings; a free hyperlink to local employers and nationally to CNEnet members. It also makes up the final chapter of the book *Transition to Nursing* and has been published as a peer reviewed article [5.1]. University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust have incorporated the toolkit in their Preceptorship programme, with a Senior Nurse and Trust Lead for Preceptorship claiming that the research and toolkit have encouraged them to, *"take a fresh look at our support and undertake a critical review of what we provide"*, with the toolkit enabling them to do so in a *"consistent and structured way"* [5.5]. The trust have also used the research to inform their Preceptorship policy which is currently being updated for 2020 [5.5].

Derbyshire's 2018 Chief Nurse Fellow devised the Derbyshire Wide preceptorship handbook based upon the preceptorship toolkit. This handbook is used in three Derbyshire trusts as a basis of their preceptorship support programmes [5.6].

The 2020 NMC principles of preceptorship cite the research as part of their evidence base [5.2] and NMC executive members have consulted with Whitehead on regular occasions as outlined in the next section.

Supporting national policy and practice: the UK Clinical Nurse Educator Network (CNEnet)

Professor Walters, Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) Director of Education, described CNEnet as *"gold dust"* when discussing the need and value of this organisation in relation to nurse transition and quality education in general [5.7]. Whitehead and Allibone set up CNEnet in 2014 as a response to the evidence-based need for supportive structures for clinical educators. Their research had shown that this was a practical necessity in order to attract and retain educators and ensure quality training. This is because these are often isolated roles, underpinned by short-term contracts, which address a specific training need (such as the implementation of a new skill or to develop a preceptorship programme). The network exists to reduce the isolation of clinical nurse educators, offer support and provide advice on obtaining employer support for more substantive posts. CNEnet now has over 600 members nationally [5.7].

According to the NHS Headcount there are 2,027 clinical nurse educators working for the NHS across the UK [5.8], which means over 30% of the total CNE UK workforce is in membership, with members in all four countries of the UK. In 2018, CNEnet conducted a survey of its members [5.9]. Survey questions asked respondents to reflect on the employment of CNEs and the network in supporting newly qualified nurse transition. Key findings included [5.9]:

- 91% of members, *"think that the CNE role affects the recruitment and retention of NQNs."*
- 89% of members, *"support/facilitate/teach/assess"* registered nurses including NQNs.
- Only 77% of members also, *"support/facilitate/teach/assess"* pre-registration student nurses.

The role of the majority of members includes supporting NQN transition [5.9]. There is also a large online community which extends across the world and links clinical educators in countries including the US and Australia using a Facebook group (over 700 members) and the Twitter handle @NurseEdUK (over 4,000 followers). This international network has led to our review being cited by the Australian Government Independent review of nurse education [5.2]

This network is routinely consulted by the NMC and HEE in national policy matters regarding preceptorship and clinically based education [5.2]. For example, Whitehead (CNEnet National Secretary) was interviewed for the RePAIR project and our research papers were cited in the RePAIR report [5.2]. Whitehead was also consulted on the Supporting the Transition and Retention of Newly Qualified Nurses (STaR) project. He wrote two blogs for the research team and the transitions research papers were cited in the STaR report [5.2]. Significantly, the NMC Director of Nursing and Midwifery Education, Standards and Policy attended three CNEnet national members' events to consult on the design of the new standards for nurse education. CNEnet's Chair and Secretary are members of the national HEE Future Nurse Oversight Board.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

5.1 Group of publications of the Preceptorship Toolkit:
a) Whitehead, B. and Brown, M. (2017) *Transition to nursing: Preparation for practice*. London: Open University/McGraw Hill. For publisher information on this title, including endorsements by nurse educators, see: https://www.mheducation.co.uk/transition-to-nursing-preparation-for-practice-9780335263820-emea-group#tab-label-product-description-title (Accessed: 28-05-2020).
b) Owen, P., Whitehead, B., Beddingham, E. *et al* (2020) 'A preceptorship toolkit for nurse managers, teams and healthcare organisations', *Nursing Management*, 27(4), 8 July [online]. Available at: https://doi.org/10.7748/nm.2020.e1751. Also available from the UoD online research archive: http://hdl.handle.net/10545/624973 (Accessed: 23-10-2020).

5.2 Evidence group of national reports and guidance documents citing research:
a) NMC Principles of Preceptorship (2020). Available from:
https://www.nmc.org.uk/standards/guidance/preceptorship/ (Accessed: 23-10-2020).
b) HEE RePAIR (2018) 'Executive Summary: Reducing Pre-Registration Attrition and Improving Retention' Available from: https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/reducing-pre-registration-attrition-improving-retention (Accessed: 28-05-2020).
c) STaR Project Report, University of Hull (October 2020).
d) NHS Employers. (2014) 'Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust: a better preceptorship offer'. Available from: http://www.nhsemployers.org/-/media/Employers/Documents/Retain-and-improve/Royal-Chesterfields-final.pdf (Accessed: 28-05-2020).
e) Australian Government Department of Health. (2019) 'Fit for purpose / work ready / transition to practice'. Available at: https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/topic-1-fit-for-purpose-work-ready-transition-to-practice (Accessed: 23-10-2020).

5.3 Ford, S. (2014) 'Network set up for UK clinical nurse educators', *Nursing Times*. Available from: https://www.nursingtimes.net/roles/nurse-educators/network-set-up-for-uk-clinical-nurse-educators/5074891.article (Accessed: 28-05-2020).

5.4 Beddingham, E. and Whitehead, B. (2015) 'Developing a collaborative research partnership'. *Nursing Standard*, 29(40): 44-47. DOI: 10.7748/ns.29.40.44.e9480. Also available from the UoD online research archive: http://hdl.handle.net/10545/604067 (Accessed: 28-05-2020).

5.5 Evidence group of factual statements and email requests for the Preceptorship Toolkit:
a) Senior Nurse Clinical Practice Development and Trust Lead for Preceptorship, University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust (28-09-2020).
b) Director of Nursing and Quality, St Johns Hospice (17-07-2020).
c) Library Assistant, Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust (29-07-2020).

5.6 Augustin, S. (2018) 'Derbyshire wide preceptorship: a multi-professional transitional framework for healthcare professionals new to role', HEE, Chesterfield.

5.7 Evidence group of CNEnet newsletters: Issues 6 (09-2017); 7 (02-2018); 10 (09-2019).

5.8 Evidence group of NHS workforce statistics:
NHS Digital, 'NHS Workforce Statistics - November 2019'. Available at: https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/nhs-workforce-statistics/november-2019 (Accessed: 28-05-2020).
Clinical Nurse Educator figure located on row 28 column EE of 'Nurses and Midwives' worksheet in 'NHS Workforce Statistics, July 2020 Staff Group, Care Setting and Level' Excel spreadsheet. Available at:
https://files.digital.nhs.uk/63/2704B6/NHS%20Workforce%20Statistics%2C%20July%202020%20Staff%20Group%2C%20Care%20Setting%20and%20Level.xlsx (Accessed: 15-12-2020).

5.9 Whitehead, B. and Allibone, E. (2018) 'Clinical nurse educator network: Making a connection'. Conference presentation to the Networking for Education in Healthcare (NET) Conference 2018. See 'Strand 2F: Developing the future healthcare education workforce, 15.30-17.30, 4 September 2018'. The programme is available at:
https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/downloads/Strands%202A-2I_1.pdf (Accessed: 28-05-2020).

5.10 CLINICAL NURSE EDUCATOR NETWORK UK. 'Britain's first national network for clinical nurse educators'. Available from: https://www.derby.ac.uk/cnenet/ (Accessed: 28-05-2020).