

Nursing Education Strategy 2023 - 2026

Driving and supporting critical care education, quality improvement and the development of critical care nursing staff to deliver safe, evidence-based patient care.

Contents

Foreword	Page 3
Introduction	Page 4
Strategy action plan	Page 5
Current position	Page 6
Current issues	Page 7
Roles and responsibilities	Page 10
Monitoring	Page 11
Key associated documents	Page 13

Foreword

NHS adult critical care clinical networks function at the interface between commissioner and provider organisations and are part of the NHS structure for ensuring the delivery of high-quality care.

Part of the role of the NoECCN is therefore to provide impartial advice to both providers and commissioners regarding gaps in education provision and compliance with national guidelines/standards. This is achieved in part utilising data from the NHS stock take and the NoECCN review of unit education provision report alongside national standards from adult critical care specification, guidance for provision of Intensive care services and national standards for adult critical care nurse education (CC3N 2023, ICS/FICM 2022, NHSE 2022).

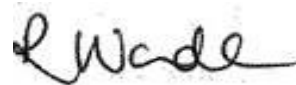
This nursing education strategy provides the direction for the continuing development of education/quality improvement within NoECCN, ensuring an exciting future in sharing knowledge and improvements within the adult critical care teams across our operational delivery network, which will develop critical care nursing staff to deliver safe, effective, and evidence-based care to our patient population.



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Introduction

It is essential that critical care registered nurses have the appropriate knowledge and skills to enable them to deliver safe and effective patient care as identified in national standards for adult critical care nurse education, (CC3N 2023). By striving for an adult critical care nursing workforce that is developed to common standards, the quality of that workforce can be assured across geographical boundaries, (CC3N 2023).

Within NoECCN there are 16 critical care units alongside a spinal injuries' unit within 8 NHS Trusts.

This NoECCN education strategy details a three-year plan with key objectives underpinned by national guidance. The strategy will focus upon key areas for standardising and improving education and quality improvement across the NoECCN region. This will enable critical care nurses to deliver safe, effective, and evidence-based care.

Education Strategy 2023-2026

OBJECTIVE		TIMEFRAME	ACTIONS	MEASURE	RESPONSIBLE
1	Each ACC to have a training strategy in place to achieve minimum of 50% nursing staff with post registration award in critical care nursing (ICS/FICM 2022, NHSE 2022, D05 2020)	April 2024	Unit leads/educators to implement a strategy to achieve compliance, utilising all funded options available	Reviewed at annual education review/peer review	ACC education lead Annual education review - Rachel Wade
2	All registered ACC nurses to be given study leave to attend adult critical care academic programme (CC3N 2023)	October 2023	Unit educators/leads to provide study leave	Reviewed at annual education review/peer review	ACC -lead nurse Review -Rachel Wade
3	Each ACC to have a dedicated Clinical Nurse Educator (Minimum 1 WTE educator per 75 staff, headcount with aim for 1:50 ratio). (CC3N 2023, ICS/FICM 2022, NHSE 2022)	1-75 date Oct 24 1-50 date Oct 26	Unit leads to review educator provision to meet national standards	Reviewed at annual education review/peer review/stocktake	ACC Lead Nurse Review -Rachel Wade
4	All unit educator leads to be in possession of PGCE/PGCAP (CC3N 2023). Recommendation following this is lead educator post to be a band 7	Oct 26	All lead educators to be supported to enrol onto PGCE or equivalent	Reviewed at annual education review/peer review	ACC -lead nurse Review -Rachel Wade
5	Recommended standardisation of supernumerary periods to be a minimum of 12 weeks for staff who have no previous experience of critical care nursing.	April 2024	Unit leads/educators to review supernumerary time	Reviewed at annual education review/peer review	ACC lead nurse/lead educator Review -Rachel Wade
6	Recommendation that each ACC provide protected time for planned delivery of unit education	October 23	Discussion within units to allocate protected time for unit education	Reviewed at annual education review/peer review	ACC lead nurse Review -Rachel Wade
7	ACC to engage with national digital STEPs programme, commence a phased introduction to the digital programme.	April 2024	NoECCN to promote digital STEPs, each ACC to register and engage with national team	Data from national implementation team	Julie Platten/Rachel Wade. CC Unit lead nurse/lead educator
8	Each ACC to work towards aim of 1:20 ratio for professional nurse advocate (PNA) with PNA having protected time for activity.	July 2024	Units to engage with trust/regional lead for nationally funded PNA places	Stocktake/annual education review/national data for PNA allocation	Trust PNA Leads Review Julie Platten/Rachel Wade
9	Each ACC to engage with the benchmarking process. (D05 2020)	Monthly	Unit BM lead to collect/submit monthly data. Shared at CRBG and local QI meetings	Submission of monthly BM data	CC Unit QI lead- supported by Sarah Gray/Rachel Wade
10	Recommendation - each clinical nurse educator/QI lead to share good practice via NoECCN Newsletter	Quarterly	Submission of quarterly activity to newsletter	Information shared in newsletter	Jan Malone/Sarah Gray CC Unit staff
11	NoECCN to update website	April 2024	Review of current website provision	Improved website for all users	NoECCN Team
12	NoECCN to deliver critical care nurse leadership and development course (CCaNDL)	Nov 2023	NoECCN team to deliver leadership course with participants to QI project and feedback	Course evaluation and project presentation	Lesley Durham/Julie Platten/Rachel Wade
13	To support the enhanced and advanced outreach practitioner framework, alongside nurse prescribing module	Oct 2026	NoECCN to raise awareness within trusts of the framework, negotiate with HEI to provide advanced practice option	Reviewed at peer review and national stocktake	Lesley Durham outreach nurse line manager, chief nurse within trusts.
14	On going collaborative work with trusts, NEY NHSE regional workforce, local HEI, and training/education teams. GAP analysis to be completed to predict the number or training places required.	March 2024	Collaboration between NoECCN/NEY NHSE education teams/HEI and trust leads. Trust education plans shared with NoECCN.	Reviewed within Network service specification/annual education review.	Unit Leads. NEY NHSE Education team Rachel Wade/Julie Platten/Lesley Durham
15	Support the implementation of healthcare support worker critical care competencies (band 2 and band 3) (CC3N 2022)	April 2026	Unit leads and educators to support implementation of HCSW competencies. NoECCN to support units with process	Reviewed at annual education review	Unit leads/unit educators/Rachel Wade

Current Position

Education Strategy Objective		Current Position - Quarter 3 - 2023/2024
1	Each ACC to have a training strategy in place to achieve minimum of 50% nursing staff with post registration award in critical care nursing (ICS/FICM 2022, NHSE 2022,)	5 out of 16 units have a minimum of 50% nursing staff with post registration award in critical care nursing. Not all units utilise NHSE funded places.
2	All registered ACC nurses to be given study leave to attend adult critical care academic programme (CC3N 2023)	There are varieties of approaches to study leave within NoECCN units.
3	Each ACC to have a dedicated clinical nurse educator (Min 1 WTE educator per 75 staff with aim for 1:50 ratio) (CC3N 2023, FICM/ICS 2022, NHSE 2022)	1:75 - 6 units achieve this ratio. 1:50 – 8 units achieve this ratio.
4	All unit educator leads to be in possession of PGCE/PGCAP (CC3N 2023). Recommendation following this is lead educator post to be a band 7	Three educators hold a PGCE/equivalent. 4 units have lead educators at a band 6.
5	Recommended standardisation of supernumerary periods to be a minimum of 12 weeks for staff who have no previous experience of critical care nursing.	Supernumerary periods vary from 6 weeks to 12 weeks.
6	Recommendation that each ACC provide protected time for planned delivery of unit education	All unit educators identify lack of protected time for education delivery
7	ACC to engage with national digital STEPs programme, commence a phased introduction to the digital programme.	Six units have had some involvement with digital STEPs no units have embedded this programme.
8	Each ACC to work towards aim of 1:20 ratio for professional nurse advocate (PNA) with PNA having protected time for activity.	12 units have a professional nurse advocate. 4 units have allocated time for PNA sessions.
9	Each ACC to engage with the benchmarking process. (NHS 2022)	7 units out of 16 applicable submitted data for the most recent benchmark.
10	Recommendation - each clinical nurse educator/QI lead to share good practice via NoECCN Newsletter	Newsletter has just had first edition no units yet have contributed.
11	NoECCN to update website	Feedback from unit educators was they felt the NoECCN website required improvements. Website is currently under review
12	NoECCN to deliver critical care nurse leadership and development course (CCaNDL)	Previous course delivery was pre Covid, the NoECCN team are reviewing the course with aim of first delivery in 2023.
13	To support the implementation of the enhanced and advanced outreach practitioner framework, alongside nurse prescribing module.	Total number of Outreach practitioners = 121.67 WTE (B5 - 15.89, B6 - 50, B7 - 54.78, B8 - 1) Total number of outreach practitioners who are independent prescribers = 53 WTE Total number of outreach practitioners without prescribing qualification = 68.67 WTE Data from 2023 stock take.
14	Ongoing collaborative work with trusts, local HEI, NEY NHSE regional workforce, training, and education teams. GAP analysis to be completed to predict the number or training places required.	Discussions with NHSE using data from stock take and local gap analysis to provide detail.
15	Support the implementation of healthcare support worker critical care competencies (band 2 and band 3) (CC3N 2022)	Currently no data collated regarding healthcare support worker competencies.

Current Issues

Quality Improvement

Benchmarking provides a platform for organisations to work together to improve services and meet ambitions set out in the NHS Long Term Plan, (NHS 2019) It also provides a structured approach for realistic and supportive practice development and allows the identification and comparison of best practice. (DoH 2010b) Currently not all units within NoECCN are submitting data for benchmarking, resulting in missed opportunities for quality improvement to patient care.

The digitalisation of the STEPs programme commenced in 2021 for STEP 1, to allow for improved quality assurance, skill visibility and flexible usage. In August 2022, a 7-month UK wide pilot began, involving 54 NHS trusts. There is limited uptake within NoECCN units to join the digital process; in August 2023 the pilot of steps 2 and 3 began, within NoECCN one unit has registered as a pilot site for this.

Workforce – Education and Retention

Staff leaving roles within the NHS for a variety of reasons has steadily increased over the past 5 years. Since the 2020 pandemic, critical care has been operating under sustained demand and pressure, consequently this has resulted higher numbers of junior and inexperienced nurses working within critical care. These nurses are vital to the teams they work within, but they require time, support, and education to achieve the required competencies and academic awards to ensure they are competent adult critical care nurse who can deliver safer, effective, and evidence-based care to patients. It is important to note that this has increased demand upon existing experienced critical care staff who are required to supervise, mentor, and develop these staff whilst maintaining safe service delivery.

- Retention of skilled critical care staff is national priority and there have been strategies introduced nationally to help improve the retention of staff.
 - Introduction of the role of the professional nurse advocate (PNA), which provides staff wellbeing support, (ICS 2023). The national aim is for one PNA to every 20 nurses, which the units are working towards.
 - The Career Pathway for Critical Care Nurses developed by CC3N rewards our nurses by recognising skills and knowledge of an experienced Critical Care Nurse who also have completed the Critical Care Award.
- Critical care educators require support and education to enable them to be confident and competent to deliver the best possible critical care education, currently there are a limited number of educators within NoECCN who hold an additional educational specific qualification.
- The introduction of the enhanced and advanced Critical Care Outreach Practitioner Framework requires embedding to support and Critical Care Outreach Practitioners.

In its 2023 statement on intensive care staffing standard the Intensive Care Society delivered clear message that to ensure patient safety GPICs Critical Care Standard must not be aspirational, they must be adhered to, and there must be adequate and sustainable plans for retention, recruitment and education and training of critical care staff.

Summary

Our education and quality improvement strategy aims to mitigate these shortcomings and issues, to do this we will:

Provide quality assurance.

- Support the undertaking of annualised NoECCN review of education.
- Continue the supportive peer review process of each critical care unit within NoECCN.
- Review national stock take data.

Achieve sustainability.

- Continue to support/link a curriculum of academically accredited programs, collaborating between the higher education institutions and critical care educators to ensure adequate and equitable provision of NHSE funded adult critical care programme.
- Ensure stakeholder engagement and awareness.
- Collaborate with regional PNA leads and Trust PNA leads to ensure equitable provision of PNA places within NoECCN.

Collaborate

- Encourage and provide forums for sharing of expertise and opportunities for innovation and effective and efficient delivery of education.

Each risk lies within individual Trusts, NoECCN do not own any risk but can offer support to trusts to escalate risks within their organisation.

Roles and responsibilities

NoECCN team

- To provide structured opportunities in the form of online/face to face meetings for educators/quality improvement leads/PNA's/unit leads to meet and network, to share/collaborate and develop education and quality improvement with an ambition to improve patient care and staff wellbeing/education.
- Undertake process of peer review and educational review and provide feedback to critical care units.
- Support critical care unit educators/unit lead nurses with critical care nurse education.
- Facilitate benchmarking between critical care units within NoECCN and the collaborative regional benchmarking group.
- Deliver a critical care nurse leadership and development programme to support staff working towards their STEP 4 competency.

Unit Nurse Leads

- Engage with NoECCN and support their activity.
- Support staff undertaking and delivering education and quality improvement.
- To provide an educator/education team to support the critical care nursing staff with a minimum ratio of 1.0 WTE per 75 nursing staff with aim to increase this to 1.0 WTE educator to 50 nursing staff.
- Ensure the achievement of national STEP competencies, forms part of the staff appraisal.
- Ensure registered nurses joining the team have a supernumerary period, recommended time of minimum of six weeks but for new registered nurses with no previous critical care experience a recommended supernumerary time would be twelve weeks.
- Support clinical educators to work supernumerary to ensure the provision of education to the nursing workforce.
- Attend joint collaborative forum (JCF) meeting or nominate a deputy if unable to attend.
- Support critical care outreach team to work towards the enhanced and advanced critical care practitioner framework.

Unit educators

- Engage with NoECCN and support their activity.
- Supervision and delivery of education to enable critical care nursing staff to gain national STEP competencies.
- Formulate a training strategy to aim for a minimum of 50% of unit registered nurses to achieve a post registration award in critical care.
- Following completion of STEP 1 competency, support RNs with opportunity to complete post registration qualification in critical care and completion of STEP 2 & 3 competency.
- Support senior nurses with their leadership development and achievement of the STEP 4 competency.
- Support nurses to attend conferences and share their learning.
- For areas that employ Registered Nursing Associates (RNA)- support them to achieve the national RNA competency framework
- Act as nominated educational lead to provide support and guidance for student nurses on placement.
- Support experienced critical care staff with their continued professional development.
- Support healthcare support workers to achieve national competency framework, supportive and assistive level.
- Attend NoECCN education meeting or allocated a nominated deputy if unable to attend.

All critical care nursing staff

- To be aware of the role of NoECCN and the educational strategy and how it can assist their development.

Monitoring

- Quarterly via contributions to NoECCN newsletter.
- Annually via NoECCN review of education provision.
- Annually via critical care stock take.
- Via the peer review process.
- Via feedback from JCF/ quality improvement meetings and education meetings.
- Evaluation/feedback from nurse leadership and development study days.

Organisation	North of England Critical Care Network
Document Purpose	Guidance
Title	NoECCN Nursing Education Strategy 2023-2026
Authors	Rachel Wade Network Educator and Quality Improvement Nurse Julie Platten Network manager Lesley Durham Network director
Version	1
Review Date	April 2026
Key Associated Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical Care Networks- National Nurse Leads (CC3N) (2020) <i>National Critical Care Nursing Workforce Survey – an Overview Report</i>. Available at national critical care nursing workforce survey report july 2020 final v.1.1.pdf (cc3n.org.uk) (accessed 06/11/2023) • Critical Care Networks- National Nurse Leads (CC3N) (2023) <i>National Standards for Adult Critical Care Nurse education, Core Curriculum and Competency Development for Registered Nurses in Adult Critical Care</i>, available at education standards final.pdf (cc3n.org.uk), (accessed on 06/11/2023) • Critical Care Networks- National Nurse Leads (CC3N) (2022) <i>National Competency Framework for Healthcare Support Workers in Adult Critical Care Assistive Level (band 2)</i>, available at working version - _cc3n_hcsw_assistive_proficiencies -_working_version_july_2022.pdf (accessed on 04/12/2023) • Critical Care Networks- National Nurse Leads (CC3N) (2022) <i>National Competency Framework for Healthcare Support Workers in Adult Critical Care Supportive Level (band 3)</i>, available at • Critical Care Networks- National Nurse Leads (CC3N) (2015) <i>National Competency Framework for Registered Nurses in Adult Critical Care, Step 1 Competency</i>, available at 01_new_step_1_final_1_.pdf (cc3n.org.uk), (accessed on 06/11/2023)

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- [NCDR \(england.nhs.uk\)](https://www.ncdr.nhs.uk)
- The National Outreach Forum (2023) *Critical Care Outreach Practitioner Framework*, Available at: [Critical Care Outreach Competencies \(cc3n.org.uk\)](https://www.cc3n.org.uk/critical-care-outreach-competencies) (Accessed 06/11/2023)

North of England Critical Care Network:
 Unit leads.
 Unit educators
 Quality Improvement Group
 Stakeholder board

Circulation

Description	This strategy is designed to assist Trusts across the North of England Adult Critical Care Network in determining Critical Care nursing educational requirements that will meet the current and future demands of the service
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