

## **Advice for People interesting in returning to *Health Visitor Practice*:**

### **Who needs it?**

The health visitor or specialist community public health nurse (SCPHN/health visitor) who has not activated her/his registration on the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) register for five years or more.

Re-registration requires the person to successfully complete a return to practice course that has been approved by the NMC. This information can be found within the NMC (2008) publication called, Post Registration Education and Practice (PREP) [www.nmc-uk.org](http://www.nmc-uk.org)

### **What is it?**

The return to practice course must enable the person to meet the following nine generic learning outcomes in relation to practice and theory, which have been set by the NMC:

#### **Generic Return to Practice Learning Outcomes (NMC 2008)**

1. • An understanding of the influence of health and social policy relevant to the practice of nursing and midwifery
2. • An understanding of the requirements of legislation, guidelines, codes of practice and policies relevant to the practice of nursing and midwifery
3. • An understanding of the current structure and organisation of care, nationally and locally
4. • An understanding of current issues in nursing and midwifery education and practice
5. • The use of relevant literature and research to inform the practice of nursing and midwifery
6. • the ability to identify and assess need, design and implement interventions and evaluate outcomes in all relevant areas of practice, including the effective delivery of appropriate emergency care
7. • The ability to use appropriate communications, teaching and learning skills
8. • The ability to function effectively in a team and participate in a multi-professional approach to people's care
9. • The ability to identify strengths and weaknesses, acknowledge limitations of competence and recognise the importance of maintaining and developing professional competence.

### **What do I have to do in order to complete the return to practice course?**

You will need to be able to study at degree level in order to complete the return to *health visitor* practice course. This will be provided by a University (Higher Education Institution/HEI).

The course will help you to meet the NMC requirements for SCPHN/health visitor registration. These are called proficiencies and can be found in the NMC publication called, Standards of proficiency for specialist community public health nurses ([www.nmc-uk.org](http://www.nmc-uk.org)).

The proficiencies cover several areas of practice as illustrated in the following table.

#### **Learning outcomes for SCPHN (NMC 2004/[www.nmc-uk.org](http://www.nmc-uk.org))**

<b><i>Knowledge and understanding</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Critically discuss the influence of legislation and health and social policy relevant to the practice of the nurse and/or specialist community public health nurses (health visitor).</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Outline and critically discuss the structure and organisation of health and social care, nationally and locally, particularly the relationship between provider and commissioner, public and private sectors, and user and carer involvement.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Outline and critically discuss current issues in nurse and specialist community public health nurse (health visitor) education and practice, such as the identification of, and where possible, identification and elimination of environmental hazards, e.g. infections, knowledge of contemporary ethical issues, the impact of ethical issues on care delivery, the identification of risk and safeguarding.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collect structure and critically analyse data and information about health and wellbeing relating to a defined population and use this data to facilitate judgments and decisions about service delivery.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Critically analyse information in order to identify individuals, families and groups who are at risk and in need of further support.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Outline and critically discuss the approach taken to initiate the management of cases involving potential or actual physical or psychological abuse and potentially violent situations and settings.</li></ul>
<b><i>Values and Attitudes</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Describe and critically reflect on your ability to identify strengths and weaknesses, acknowledge limitations of competence and recognise the importance of maintaining and developing professional competence.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Critically discuss your personal professional development needs and outline the strategy you will use to achieve your personal development plan.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Critically reflect on your practice and illustrate the ways in which you</li></ul>

act in accordance with an ethical and legal framework that ensures the primacy of patient/client interest and well-being and respects confidentiality.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outline and critically discuss the way in which you plan to meet the requirements for personal learning using group and individual approaches.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outline and critically discuss ways in which you would demonstrate sensitivity, awareness, and understanding of cultural and lifestyle diversity and use these data to influence decisions and judgments about service delivery.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Cognitive/Intellectual Skills</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate and critically discuss the strategies that you use in practice to promote effective communication, teaching and learning.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate and critically discuss the strategies that you use in practice to develop and sustain relationships with groups and individuals with the aim of improving health and social well being.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critically analyse accountability issues in relation to management of the role and responsibility of the specialist community public health nurse for example, when delegating workload to junior members of the team, and allocating workload to the peers within the team.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate and critically reflect on your ability to use and develop key skills in practice for example, numeracy, record keeping and documentation, information technology and assessment and problem solving.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Subject Specific Skills</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outline and critically discuss the requirements of clinical governance in relation to legislation, guidelines, codes of practice and policies relevant to the practice of the nurse and the specialist community public health nurse (health visitor).</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate and critically reflect on your ability to work effectively in a team and use a multi-professional/disciplinary approach to the care of clients.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect structure and critically analyse data and information about health and wellbeing relating to a defined population and use this data to facilitate judgments and decisions about service delivery.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and critically analyse service provision and support for individuals, families and groups in the local area or setting.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Transferable Skills</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outline the principles of effective team work and critically discuss strategies used to promote this in practice.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outline and critically reflect on your ability to lead the team and work as a member of the team.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critically discuss the importance of multi-disciplinary and multi-agency working and outline ways in which this helps to improve the care of individuals, groups and communities.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe ways to access literature and research relating to practice and critically discuss how this should be used to inform the practice of the nurse and/or specialist community public health nurse (health visitor).</li> </ul>

In order to show that you have achieved this learning in your practice placement you will usually be expected to complete a professional practice portfolio which is assessed by the university providing the course.

### **How long does the course take?**

A return to practice course that has been approved by the NMC will consist of at least five days. The length and nature of the programme will be determined by the university, your registration history and the current level of knowledge and skill that you have. It is also important to consider the experience that you have gained since leaving health visitor practice because this may help you to meet some of the learning requirements/proficiencies for registration.

A general guide to calculating the number of hours and days that you may need to complete in practice during your course is provided in the following table. This is provided merely as a guide as it is not used by all organisations.

### **Template for Minimum Hours in Practice**

<b>Years out of practice</b>	<b>Minimum practice hours required</b>	<b>Equivalent days in practice (7.5 hrs per day)</b>
5-10	150	20
11-20	300	40
>20	600	60

### **How can I prepare for the return to *health visitor* practice course?**

It is important try to become up-to-date with the issues that currently influence the policy and practice of health visiting because these are likely to have changed since you left the profession. The following list is provided to help you think about current issues.

## **Current issues/factors in health visitor policy and practice**

- The Healthy Child Programme
- Safeguarding including: child protection, child protection supervision, record keeping and documentation, the legal framework for safeguarding
- Childhood Immunisations
- Government strategy for meeting the health and well being needs of children in England, leadership of service delivery e.g. in relation to the healthy child programme
- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome: research and literature, public health data relating to the incidence and prevalence of SIDS, CONI (care of the next infant)
- Infant feeding: breast feeding, weaning, obesity, faltering growth
- Mental health and well-being: identification of mental ill health in the post natal period, literature and research relating to surveillance, identification, monitoring and treatment of post natal mental ill health, impact on the emotional development of the baby, and the family
- Career progression and career direction: Action on Health Visiting – getting it right for children, Facing the future, Modernising nursing careers
- Consultations for changes in the profession and service delivery structures e.g. changes in nurse education and career progression, changes in terms and conditions within Agenda for Change, the development of provider and commissioner within NHS community services, the long term condition agenda
- Clinical governance e.g. mechanisms for safe and effective practice, risk assessment and avoidance, audit
- Effective, efficient and ethical resource management

## **Public health policy and practice: improving health and wellbeing in England**

- Assessment of health and well being (individual, group, community, population)
- Health promotion and illness prevention e.g. the policy and practice of immunisation, the policy and practice of managing and preventing obesity

- Government structures for service delivery and development e.g. policies led by the Department of Health (DH) and the Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF).

### **Research and development: improving health and wellbeing**

- Evidence based practice – accessing the information, assessing the quality and relevance of the information, using the evidence (research and literature in practice), contributing to the body of research and literature within the profession)

### **Suggested Preparatory Reading**

It is advisable to do some reading in preparation for undertaking a return to *health visitor* practice course. Some pertinent texts and sources of information are provided in the following list. This reading list will also help you to consider your learning needs in relation to the SPCHN/health visitor proficiencies (NMC 2004).

Appleton J.V and Cowley S (2008) Health Visiting Assessment – Unpacking Critical Attributes in Health Visitor Needs Assessment Practice. A Case Study. *International Journal of Nursing*, **45**, 2, 232-245.

Appleton J.V and Cowley S (2008) Health Visiting Assessment Processes Under Scrutiny: A Case Study of Knowledge Use During Family Health Needs Assessments. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, **45**, 5, 682-696.

Barker J and Hodes D (2004) *The Child in Mind. A Child Protection Handbook*. London, Routledge.

Brandon M, Belderson P, Warren C, Howe D, Gardner R, Dodworth J, Black J (2008) *Analysing Child Deaths and Serious Injury through Abuse and Neglect: What can we learn? A Biennial Analysis of Serious Case Reviews 2003-2005*. Research Report No: DCSF-RR023. London, The Stationery Office.

Coles L and Porter E (2008) *Public Health Skills*. Oxford, Blackwell Publishing.

Cowley S (2002)Eds). *Public Health in Policy and Practice*. London, Bailliere Tindall.

Department of Health (2000) *Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families*. London, The Stationery Office.

Department of Health (2004) National Service Framework for Children, young People and Maternity Services. London, The Stationery Office.

Department of Health (2006) Immunisation Against Infectious Disease. London, The Stationery Office.

Department of Health (2008) Child Health Promotion Programme (CHPP): Pregnancy and the first five years (The Healthy Child Programme). London, The Stationery Office.

Department of Health, Department of Children, Schools and Families (2009) Healthy lives, brighter futures – The strategy for children and young people's health. London, The Stationery Office.

Department of Health (2009) The Protection of Children in England: A Progress Report. The Lord Laming. London, The Stationery Office.

Department of Health (2009) Getting it Right for Children and Families. Maximising the contribution of the health visiting team, Ambition, Action, Achievement. London, The Stationery Office.

Department of Health, Department of Children, Schools and Families (2008) Family-Nurse Partnership Programme: First Year Pilot Sites Implementation in England. London, The Stationery Office.

Department of Health (2006) Working Together to Safeguard Children. London, The Stationery Office.

Greenhalgh T (2002) How to Read a Paper. Second Edition. London, BMJ Books.

Hall D and Elliman D (2003) Health for All Children. Fourth Edition. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Johns C (2009) Becoming a Reflective Practitioner. Third Edition. West Sussex, Wiley-Blackwell.

Naidoo J and Wills J (2008)Eds). Health Studies: An Introduction. Second Edition. Basingstoke, Polgrave Macmillan.

National Institute of Health and Clinical Excellence (2006) Routine Postnatal Care of Women and their Babies. London, NICE.

National Institute of Health and Clinical Excellence (2007) Antenatal and Postnatal Mental Health. London, NICE.

National Institute of Health and Clinical Excellence (2009) Reducing Differences in the Uptake of Immunisations. London, NICE.

National Institute of Health and Clinical Excellence (2009) When to Suspect Child Maltreatment. London, NICE.

Nursing and Midwifery Council (2004) Standards of Proficiency for Specialist Community Public Health Nurses. London, NMC.

NMC (2004) Reporting Lack of Competence: A guide for employers and managers. NMC, London.

NMC (2004) Reporting Unfitness to Practice: A guide for employers and managers. NMC, London.

Nursing and Midwifery Council (2008) Standards to Support Learning and Assessment in Practice. London, NMC.

NMC (2008) The Code. London, NMC.

NMC (2008) The PREP Handbook. London, NMC.

Newland R (2007) Record Keeping and Documentation: Principles into Practice. London, CPHVA.

Robotham A and Frost M (2005)Eds). Health Visiting. Specialist Community Public Health Nursing. Second Edition. London, Elsevier Churchill Livingstone.

Scriven A and Garman S (2007) Public Health. Social Context and Action. Berkshire, Open University Press.

The Children Act (2004) The Children Act. London, The Stationery Office.

#### **Useful sources of information:**

Association of Public Health Laboratories. [www.apho.org.uk](http://www.apho.org.uk)

Department of Health Website for all the National Service Frameworks  
[www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk)

#### **Journals:**

Community Practitioner

Health and Social Care in the Community

Journal of Public Health

Primary Health Care Research and Development

The Journal of School Nursing

#### **Will I have to pay for the course?**

This varies across the country. A good place to start would be to approach your local Primary Care Organisation to see if they would be willing to support the return to health visitor practice course. A good person to talk to would be

the service lead/manager for Children and Families services or the Education lead for the organisation.

### **Exciting Opportunities for 2010**

Currently there are plans for a pilot scheme which will take place in London. It will provide 30 supported places for people who are interested in returning to health visitor practice. It is anticipated that this will be provided by the strategic health authority called NHS London in collaboration with City University London. Once this is finalised the information will be available on the NHSL website (London.nhs.uk/hvreturntopractice) and City University London website ([www.city.ac.uk/scn](http://www.city.ac.uk/scn)). It is anticipated that this will provide a small salary for the person returning to health visitor practice and payment of the University course fees.

### **Who will help me to learn in practice?**

You will need to have a sign-off practice teacher. This is a health visitor with more than two years practice experience and who has undertaken additional education usually at Masters Level (MSc) to help them to facilitate and assess your learning. The requirements for this are outlined in the NMC document called, Standards to Support Learning and Assessment in Practice (NMC 2008/www.nmc-uk.org). This person is also accountable to the NMC for confirming that you have achieved the proficiencies for registration on the NMC register. This person is provided by the primary care organisation. It is not possible to do the course without access to a sign-off practice teacher.

### **Maintaining NMC Registration (following successful completion of the Return to Health Visiting Practice course)**

Active registration on the NMC register requires the nurse, midwife or specialist community public health nurse to illustrate achievement of the following:

PREP (CPD): 35 hours of learning in the three years up to registration.

PREP (Practice): 450 hours in practice in the three years up to registration.

The registrant must maintain their first and second level registration on the NMC register in the following way:

<b>First level registration</b>	<b>PREP (Practice) hours</b>
Nurse	450
Midwife	900

This information can be found within the NMC (2008) publication called, Post Registration Education and Practice (PREP).

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