

**A descriptive survey investigating practice nurses' and GPs' attitudes to the Advanced Nurse Practitioner role in primary care in the Republic of Ireland.**

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**"This dissertation is submitted to the RCN institute in part fulfilment of the MSc in Nursing and has been conducted and presented solely by myself. I have not made use of other people's work (published or otherwise) and presented it here without acknowledging the source of all such work".**

## **ABSTRACT**

This study was undertaken to investigate the attitudes of practice nurses (PNs) and general practitioners (GPs) to the Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP) role in the primary care setting in the Republic of Ireland.

**Background to study:** Advanced nurse practitioner roles are well established in the USA, UK and Australia. Since the inception of the National Council for the Professional Development of Nurses and Midwives (NCNM), clinical career pathways are now in place for nurses who wish to remain in clinical practice and expand their scope of practice. Primary care in Ireland offers a prime opportunity to develop the ANP role in conjunction with the development of primary healthcare teams (Department of Health & Children, 2001). Despite an extensive literature review, no studies were found on advanced nursing practice in an Irish context.

**Research design:** Descriptive survey design using postal questionnaires.

**Study population:** All practice nurses and general practitioners working in the North Western Health Board region in the Republic of Ireland.

**Findings:** Respondents were asked to rate their attitudes to the ANP as an expert practitioner, as a clinical leader, as a researcher and as an autonomous practitioner. The findings from this study revealed that practice nurses and GPs were in support of the development of the ANP role in the primary care setting. However, they would welcome a clearer definition of the role of the ANP.

