THE PRACTICE NURSE

Practice Nurses are RGNs who are privately employed by GPs to provide holistic nursing care to the entire population of a general practice, i.e. from newborns to the elderly; both GMS and private patients. There are currently 1,519 Practice Nurses in Ireland who are carrying out immunisations, screening, health promotion, phlebotomy, weight management, smoking cessation, women's health, men's health, antenatal & postnatal care, wound management, travel vaccinations, cryotherapy, counselling, stress management, ear care, methadone maintenance; management of chronic conditions such as asthma, COPD, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, excema; as well as clinical audits, practice protocols, CPR training, etc.

211 Practice Nurses are accredited as Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS), 2 have been accredited as Advanced Nurse Practitioners (ANP) in Primary Care, 9 have begun nurse prescribing programmes and 6 are now Registered Nurse Prescribers.

The positive impact of practice nursing on patient care is regularly noted and has been shown in audits and research (see Research page of IPNA website).

With the Department of Health & Children’s continuing emphasis and strategic plans to move many services out of hospitals and into community settings, Practice Nurses are now being presented with an increasing variety of conditions and patient needs. Continuing Nurse Education enables Practice Nurses to provide evidence-based quality care and is essential before undertaking extended nursing roles.

QUALIFICATIONS NEEDED

Minimum Requirements:
A Practice Nurse must be a Registered General Nurse, i.e. on the Live Active RGN or PHN Register of An Bord Altranais.

Additional Qualifications:
The range of nursing care and extended roles which may be provided by a Practice Nurse is extensive. Each Practice Nurse, like all other nurses, must practise within his/her own Scope of Practice, (see “Scope of Nursing and Midwifery Practice Framework, 2000”, available from An Bord Altranais) and "must take measures to develop and maintain the competence necessary for professional practice" (Code of Conduct, available from An Bord Altranais). Therefore, Practice Nurses have a responsibility to ensure that they are suitably qualified and competent to undertake all aspects of their role. The autonomous nature of practice nursing means that issues pertaining to the Scope of Practice require constant reflection and vigilance on the part of the individual nurse.

Any Practice Nurse who provides antenatal care must be a Registered Midwife, i.e. on the current Midwives Register of An Bord Altranais. There is also a requirement for a Practice Nurse who is a midwife to notify their local HSE office of their intention to practice midwifery in the community. For further information, please refer to the An Bord Altranais document “Practice Standards for Midwives”, 2010.
SOME FACTS & FIGURES ABOUT PRACTICE NURSING IN IRELAND

- 51% of IPNA members are dual qualified, i.e. registered on 1 or more An Bord Altranais divisions in addition to the RGN division

- 88% of IPNA members have undertaken post-registration education or skills updates (ranging from certificates to PhDs) in clinical areas that are relevant to Practice Nursing

- There are currently 1,519 Practice Nurses working in the Republic of Ireland

- 211 Practice Nurses are accredited as Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS) in Primary Care

- 2 Practice Nurses are accredited as Advanced Nurse Practitioners (ANP) in Primary Care

- 6 Practice Nurses commenced Nurse Prescribing programmes in October 2009

- 3 Practice Nurses commenced Nurse Prescribing programmes in April 2010

- 6 Practice Nurses are now Registered Nurse Prescribers

- Practice Nurses carried out 47% of cervical smears in the year to August 2009

References
1 Membership Database of the Irish Practice Nurses Association 2008-1010.
2 Professional Development Coordinators for Practice Nursing Group, 2009.
3 National Council for the Professional Development of Nursing & Midwifery, 2009
4 Health Services Executive.
5 "Evaluation of the use of resources in the national population-based cancer screening programme and associated services", HIQA, 2010 (page 67)
6 An Bord Altranais.
A PRACTICE NURSE’S ROLE MAY INCLUDE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immunisations</th>
<th>Women’s health / Antenatal care.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Infant vaccinations, (DPT, HIB, Polio, Meningitis C, MMR).</td>
<td>• Cervical screening.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Childhood vaccinations, (MMR, Meningitis C, pre-school booster vaccines for children attending private schools).</td>
<td>• Advice on various methods of contraception and H.R.T.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Travel vaccinations, (Tetanus, Polio, Typhoid, Hepatitis A, Yellow Fever).</td>
<td>• Pre-conceptual advice.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Hepatitis B, Tetanus boosters.</td>
<td>• Pregnancy testing, antenatal care, postnatal care, breastfeeding advice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Flu and Pneumococcal vaccines.</td>
<td>• Antenatal classes.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Men’s Health</th>
<th>Methadone Maintenance</th>
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<tr>
<td>Counselling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardiology</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Cholesterol testing &amp; dietary advice</td>
<td>• Treatment of venous leg ulcers and other skin injuries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ECGs.</td>
<td>• Suturing of skin lacerations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 24 hour blood pressure monitoring.</td>
<td>• Post-operative suture removal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Monitoring patients on anti-coagulant therapy.</td>
<td>• Treatment of warts and verrucae / cryotherapy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Smoking cessation.</td>
<td>• Nursing management of skin conditions - eczema, psoriasis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Stress management.</td>
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<td>• Heartwatch Programme</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diabetes care.</th>
<th>Respiratory care.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Nursing management of Diabetes.</td>
<td>• Nursing management of Asthma and COPD.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Smoking cessation, lung function testing.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General nursing</th>
<th>Indirect nursing</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Health Promotion and Education.</td>
<td>• Liaising with other health professionals in the community/hospital.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Telephone triage and advice.</td>
<td>• Drafting practice protocols.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• General phlebotomy.</td>
<td>• Auditing patient care and practice services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ear Care.</td>
<td>• Maintenance and sterilisation of surgical instruments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Administering long-term medications/injections, (e.g. Cytamen, Depoprovera, Depixol, Myocrisin).</td>
<td>• Maintenance of emergency equipment.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Education of practice staff (e.g. CPR, First Aid).</td>
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</table>
The Irish Practice Nurses Association, (I.P.N.A.)

The Irish Practice Nurses Association (IPNA) is a professional membership association of Practice Nurses and was granted Charitable Tax Exemption (CHY 17932) in June 2008. The main objective of the association “is the advancement of education in general practice in Ireland by promoting and assisting nurses in further education programmes and to provide a forum for the dissemination of information on developments in the general Practice Nursing field which will promote the highest standards of care to benefit the community.”

From its' humble beginnings in the early 1990’s as a small group of Practice Nurses who decided to meet regularly to share ideas and information, it has expanded steadily and now boasts over 700 Practice Nurse members nationwide, with 19 Branches holding monthly educational meetings. Aside from the very much appreciated help from the National Council in hosting our first website, the IPNA has never received any grants or funding from the Department of Health. The growth and successful development of the IPNA can be solely attributed to the hard work of many dedicated Practice Nurses who have given so generously of their own time over the years. The IPNA is also immensely grateful to the many generous sponsors of our branch meetings, Annual Conference and some of our educational awards.

IPNA Logo

The IPNA logo was designed in 1990 by Kate MacCormack (daughter of Netta Williams - one of the IPNA’s founding members) when she was a 1st year student in the National College of Art & Design. The four people represent a family and the hand behind them represents the Practice Nurse supporting the family. The hand also symbolises the “hands-on” clinical nursing care provided by Practice Nurses.

Branches of the Irish Practice Nurses Association

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cavan / Monaghan</th>
<th>Louth / Meath</th>
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<tr>
<td>Clare</td>
<td>Mayo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cork</td>
<td>Midlands</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donegal</td>
<td>Roscommon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Dublin</td>
<td>Sligo / Leitrim</td>
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<tr>
<td>Galway</td>
<td>South Tipperary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kerry</td>
<td>Waterford</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kildare / Carlow</td>
<td>Wexford</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kilkenny</td>
<td>Wicklow</td>
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<tr>
<td>Limerick / North Tipperary</td>
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</table>
Membership of the Irish Practice Nurses Association

Benefits of membership include:

- Invitation to each **monthly educational meeting** of your local branch, which will include a speaker who has been carefully chosen by the branch committee to talk about a subject that is relevant to Practice Nursing in your area and update you on the latest guidelines / best practice.

- Invitation to the annual IPNA **Educational Conference/AGM**. All aspects of the conference, i.e. theme, speakers, clinical workshops, poster display area, research presentations, awards and exhibitors are specifically relevant to Practice Nurses.

- Free delivery of “**Nursing in General Practice**”, the official Journal of the Irish Practice Nurses Association.

- Free **IPNA Resource Pack and Personal Portfolio** – to assist you with maintaining records of your Continuing Professional Development.

- Exclusive access to the **members’ area of the IPNA website**, www.irishpracticenurses.ie, which includes relevant Publications, Education, Events, Grants & Awards, Research, Discussion Boards on various topics, updated pages for your Professional Development Portfolio, and other relevant documents.

- The option to receive **e-mail and/or text messages** about relevant issues, education, study days, etc.

- The option to receive **information by post** from sources other than IPNA regarding relevant study days, courses, products etc.

- Some **practical assistance** is available to members who need to source mailing lists for the purposes of carrying out research that is relevant to Practice Nursing.

- **Special offers** from companies, e.g. uniforms, educational books, etc.

- **Invaluable contact with other Practice Nurses in your area**. The chance to network, share information, learn from more experienced Practice Nurses and the general peer support provided by colleagues is often cited by members as one of the most beneficial aspects of IPNA membership.
Eligibility for Membership

Full Membership of the Irish Practice Nurses Association is open to persons who are on the Live Register of An Bord Altranais, in the RGN or PHN Divisions, and who are currently employed in the Republic of Ireland as Practice Nurses either on a full-time, part-time or job-sharing basis, working alongside a GP and providing GP services in any of the following settings:

- General Practice
- Out of Hours GP Services – Triage
- Out of Hours GP Services - Clinical
- 3rd level institutions
- Schools
- Prisons
- Family Planning Centres
- Occupational Health Centres
- Health Screening Centres
- Health Information Centres – with direct patient contact

How to join:

Membership Forms can be downloaded from the Membership page of the IPNA website www.irishpracticenurses.ie or you can contact Tracey Rooney, IPNA Membership Secretary at e-mail: membership@irishpracticenurses.ie or mobile: 086-2634917.

Completed Membership Forms should be posted, along with a cheque/postal order/bank draft for €75 made out to "Irish Practice Nurses Association" and a copy of your current An Bord Altranais Certificate, to:

Tracey Rooney, IPNA Membership Secretary, Dundrockan, Donaghmoyne, Carrickmacross, Co Monaghan.
RELEVANT EDUCATION / STUDY DAYS
For the latest information on relevant education, study days, seminars and conferences please see the Education and Events pages of IPNA website www.irishpracticenurses.ie and also contact your local Professional Development Coordinator for Practice Nurses.

SCOPE OF PRACTICE WORKSHOPS/UPDATES FOR PRACTICE NURSES
These are regularly available through the Professional Development Coordinator (PDC) for Practice Nursing in each HSE area. Nurses who are interested in becoming Practice Nurses are often welcome to attend many of the relevant courses facilitated/coordinated by the PDCs.

OTHER SOURCES OF RELEVANT INFORMATION
“The Practice Nurse – a Guide to Nursing in General Practice” produced by the ICGP with the assistance of the Irish Practice Nurses Association in 2006 and available to IPNA & ICGP members only via the members’ area of both websites.

“Practice Nurse Information Guide for General Practice” produced by the HSE and available at http://www.lenus.ie/hse/bitstream/10147/51015/1/PracticeNursebook08.pdf

“Practice Manager’s Manual” produced by the HSE and available at http://www.lenus.ie/hse/bitstream/10147/51033/1/PracticeManagersBook08.pdf

“An Information Guide for Practice Nurses, 2010” Published by the Information Department of the INMO. This is available on the INMO website.

Practice Nurse Section, INMO
Contact: Mary Power, Section Officer, Irish Nurses & Midwives Organisation, Whitworth Building, North Brunswick Street, Dublin 7. Telephone: 01-676 0137 Fax: 01-661 0466 Website: www.inmo.ie (click on “Sections” and then “GP Practice Nurses” for contact details).

RESEARCH/CLINICAL ARTICLES RELEVANT TO PRACTICE NURSING
Contact IPNA for information on any relevant research carried out by both members and non-members. There are also links to relevant articles and journals on the Research page of the IPNA website.

INFORMATION ON CNS/ANP GRADES IN PRACTICE NURSING:
For information on Clinical Nurse Specialist and Advanced Nurse Practitioner grades, contact:
The National Council for the Professional Development of Nursing & Midwifery, 6-7 Manor Street Business Park, Manor Street, Dublin 7. Telephone: 01-8825300 Fax: 01-8680366 Website: www.ncnm.ie

PRACTICE NURSING IN THE FUTURE
Nurse Prescribing
Practice Nurses were involved in the Pilot Project on Nurse Prescribing and the IPNA made a submission to the Consultation Process on the Extension of Prescriptive Authority to Nurses and Midwives. 9 Practice Nurses have recently completed/commenced Nurse Prescribing courses and 6 are now Registered Nurse Prescribers.

Primary Care Teams
The IPNA, PDCs and Practice Nurse Section of the INMO are currently working to ensure that the Practice Nurse role is fully included in the development of the Primary Care Teams around the country.
PRACTICE NURSE JOBS MAY BE ADVERTISED IN THE FOLLOWING PUBLICATIONS:

“Nursing in General Practice” (bi-monthly Journal of the IPNA)
Sent free of charge to all IPNA members. Also available by subscription.
Published by GreenCross Publishing, Lower Ground Floor, 5 Harrington Street, Dublin 8.
Contact Maura Henderson, Publisher, at e-mail: maura@greencrosspublishing.ie
For back issues, please see www.greencrosspublishing.ie

“The World of Irish Nursing” (WIN), “Nursing in the Community” (Journals of the INMO)
Sent free of charge to all INMO members.
Published by: MedMedia Ltd., 25 Adelaide Street, Dun Laoghaire, Co Dublin.
Telephone: 01-280 3967 Fax: 01-280 7076 website: www.medmedia.ie

“Nursing in the Community” A monthly publication sent free of charge to those on the Practice Nurse register of the INMO.
Contact: The Editor, Nursing in the Community, 25 Adelaide Street, Dun Laoghaire, Co Dublin.
Telephone: 01-280 3967 Fax: 01-280 7076 e-mail: community@medmedia.ie

“Irish Medical Times”
Published by Medical Publications (Ire) Ltd., 24-26 Ormond Quay, Dublin 7.
Telephone: 01-817 6300 Fax: 01-817 6345 Website: www.imt.ie

“Irish Medical News”
Available at www.irishmedicalnews.ie

Irish Independent, Sunday Independent, Irish Times, local newspapers, etc.

SALARY, TERMS AND CONDITIONS

For information on salaries, terms and conditions please contact the Irish Nurses & Midwives Organisation, Whitworth Building, North Brunswick Street, Dublin 7.
Telephone: 01-676 0137 Fax: 01-661 0466 Website: www.inmo.ie
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COORDINATORS FOR PRACTICE NURSING

One of the recommendations of the Commission on Nursing (1998) was to appoint a Professional Development Coordinator (PDC) for Practice Nursing in each HSE area to facilitate Practice Nurses in their continuing professional development. In 2001, following representation to the Department of Health by the IPNA and the Practice Nurse Section of the INMO, funding for these positions was granted.

HSE South (Cork, Kerry)
Marie Courtney, Professional Development Coordinator for Practice Nursing
NMPDU, 8a South Ring Business Park, Kinsale Road, Cork, Co Cork
Phone: 021-4927468 Fax: 021-4927474 e-mail: marie.courtney@hse.ie

HSE: Dublin North East (North Dublin City & County, Fingal County)
Rhonda Forsythe, Professional Development Coordinator for Practice Nursing
PCCC, Health Service Executive, Swords Business Campus, Balheary Road, Swords, Co Dublin.
Phone: 01-8908740 Fax: 01-8908707 Mobile: 087 2198098 e-mail: rhonda.forsythe@hse.ie
Term-time.

HSE: Dublin Mid-Leinster (South-West Dublin, West Wicklow, Kildare)
Rita Lawlor, Professional Development Coordinator for Practice Nursing
Primary Care Unit, Block E, Westland Park, Nangor Road, Clondalkin, Dublin 12.
Phone: 01-4609667 or (direct line) 01-4609686 Mobile: 086-3837432 Fax: 01-4609697 e-mail: rita.lawlor@hse.ie

HSE West (Galway, Mayo, Roscommon)
Kathy McSharry, Professional Development Coordinator for Practice Nursing
CNE, St. Mary's Campus, Castlebar, Co. Mayo.
Tel: 094 9042164 Fax: 094 9042075 mobile: 087 1206184 e-mail: Kathy.McSharry@hse.ie

HSE South (Carlow, Kilkenny, South Tipperary, Waterford, Wexford)
Patricia McQuillan, Professional Development Coordinator for Practice Nursing
NMPD, Office Complex, Kilcreene Hospital, Kilcreene, Co Kilkenny.
Phone: 056-7785613 Fax: 056 7785549 Mobile: 087-2281548 e-mail: patricia.mcquillan@hse.ie

HSE West (Donegal)
Ann McGill, Professional Development Coordinator for Practice Nursing
NoWDOC, Unit 1, Letterkenny Business Park, Oldtown, Letterkenny,
Tel: 074 91 67566 Mobile: 087 2199824 e-mail: annm.mcgill@hse.ie
(Monday, Tuesday, Thursday)

HSE West (Sligo, Leitrim, West Cavan)
Kathy Taffe, Professional Development Coordinator for Practice Nursing
HSE West, Finn Valley Centre, Stranorlar, Co Donegal.
Mobile: 087 1321 424 Email: kathy.taffe@hse.ie
(Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday each week: half-time)

HSE: Dublin Mid-Leinster (South-East Dublin, East Wicklow) There is no PDC in post in this area at present.
HSE Dublin Mid-Leinster (Laois, Offaly, Longford, Westmeath) There is no PDC in post in this area at present.
HSE Dublin North East (East Cavan, Monaghan, Louth, Meath) There is no PDC in post in this area at present.
HSE West (Limerick, Clare, North Tipperary) There is no PDC in post in this area at present.