

Previous ODP projects: Key Takeaways

ODP WORKFORCE REFORM PROJECT

Implementation of research, education and leadership placements into Operating Department Practitioner training: A 4-pillar practice-based learning approach

01

Victoria Cadman, Helen Batty & Jennifer Law (Sheffield Hallam University) (2024)

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Introduced research, education & leadership placements alongside traditional clinical placements for BSc ODP students at SHU.
- CODP guidelines cover 4 pillars of practice, but the current curriculum only addresses the clinical pillar — reducing time to achieve clinical competence and pointing to curriculum revision.
- Students had to be allocated only one non-clinical placement type (research, education, or leadership), limiting choice.
- Change management proved important when introducing new placement types — existing information helps manage perceptions and expectations.
- Identified barriers and facilitators to REL placements, with local recommendations for sustaining them.
- Limited research evidence so far; a formal evaluation of these placements is planned.

WS

Potential Workstream Focus

This evidence could most usefully inform:

WS1

Creating the Climate to Maintain Supply

WS3

Educator Workforce (Academic & Clinical)

WS5

Career Development Framework & Pathways

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Explored ODP experiences at York & Scarborough NHS FT, where roles were integrated with critical care per the AHPs Strategy for England 2022–2027, aiming to improve morale and retention.
- Involving ODPs in critical care teams enriched experiences for newly qualified ODPs and students, though this could also be challenging for some.
- Integration succeeded through a forward-thinking culture — starting with voluntary out-of-hours cover, normalised by 2024.
- Retention depends on offering advancement, quality of work, growth, responsibility, recognition and achievement.
- Working outside traditional theatre departments increased ODP visibility.
- Gap: perspectives of other professionals working alongside ODPs were not captured; project was localised.

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Professional Leadership &
Influence

An HEI Guide to the Enhanced Clinical Practitioner Apprenticeship for AHPs

NHS England & Sally Gosling (Centre for Advancing Practice) (2024)

03

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Supports employers in understanding, implementing and harnessing the enhanced clinical practitioner (ECP) apprenticeship.
- Provides enough information for employers to make informed decisions about the apprenticeship programme.
- The Marshall & Farrington approach offers a stronger demonstration of workforce improvement in practice.
- Guidance is generic, covering all Allied Health Professions rather than being ODP-specific.

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Shaping Better Practice Through Research: A Practitioner Framework

04

Jennifer Harris, Jo Cooke & Kate Grafton (Doncaster & Bassetlaw NHS FT / NIHR CLAHRC / CAHPR) (2020)

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Collaborative AHP research framework setting basic competences to make research 'core business', plus advanced competencies in research leadership.
- Supports practitioners, managers, educators and leaders to review and plan roles, activity and support systems across practice settings.
- Generic framework aimed at AHPs developing research alongside clinical practice.
- Maps 'awareness' level competences to training curricula so practitioners enter the workforce ready to progress.

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AHP Research and Innovation Strategy for England

Health Education England — Roddam, Cooke, Connell, Grafton, Conway, Liston & Wren (2022)

05

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Commissioned to set high-level strategic aims for transformational change in AHP research and innovation reputation, influence and impact.
- Aims to close the gap between researcher and practitioner communities.
- Calls for robust, relevant, specific and sensitive metrics to provide credible indicators of progress.
- Strategic vision statements were produced following stakeholder consultation.
- Gap: implementation has not progressed as envisaged — a one-year-on event took place but little since.

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The AHP Strategy for England: AHPs Deliver 2022–2027

NHS England (2022)

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KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Sets strategic direction for the AHP community to maximise contribution to improving health outcomes, care quality and service sustainability.
- AHP community spans support workers, assistant practitioners, registered professionals, pre-registration apprentices and students.
- Acts as an umbrella strategy, housing a number of other AHP policies.

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National Operating Department Practitioner (ODP) Workforce Programme 2021-22: Scoping the future of the ODP workforce Full Report

07

Helen Lowes (Health Education England) (2022)

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Explored the current position of the ODP profession to inform a profession-specific strategy.
- Limitation: short project timescale meant not all ODP stakeholders could contribute, though a diverse group across ODP, critical care and perioperative practice engaged.
- Successfully brought stakeholders together to network, collaborate and strengthen the voice of the profession — giving ODPs a chance to 'be heard'.
- Established an ODP expert group, regional workforce action groups and an ODP policy group.
- Flagged further work: exploring theatre nurse progression data to clarify whether issues are profession-specific or departmental.

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HEI Toolkit for Integration of the AHP Critical Care Capabilities Framework to PG Cert Critical Care Programmes

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Intensive Care Society (2024)

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Provides a delivery model to support multiprofessional post-graduate critical care courses.
- Applicable UK-wide, to any region or institution delivering a PG Cert for a nursing cohort.
- Usable by critical care managers, clinical leaders, educators and staff delivering PG education to AHPs in critical care.

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AHP Enhanced Level Practice Schemas with Model Curricula (10 Professions)

NHS England (2024)

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Does not yet cover art, drama, music or speech and language therapy, or orthoptics — planned for a later date.
- The ODP Enhanced Level Practice schema was led by an Associate Professor AHP (not an ODP), with CODP included as an innovative partner.
- Consultation events drew on diverse stakeholder representation: CODP, National AHP Education & Training Lead for ODP, NHS England Clinical Fellow for ODP Workforce Transformation, academic ODPs, theatre managers and ODPs.

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AHP Educator Career Framework: Raising the profile, promoting the importance and realising the potential of Allied Health Professions Educators. A developmental career wide resource for all those engaged in the education and development of Allied Health Professionals and the wider health and care multiprofessional team Final Report and Framework

Health Education England & Council of Deans of Health (multi-author) (2023)

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KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Year-long project developing an AHP Educator Career Framework.
- Sets out expectations for excellence, inclusivity and evidence-based practice for AHPs responsible for education.
- Establishes clear expectations for all AHPs with an education responsibility.
- Only 10% of AHPs held senior academic positions, with very few ODPs, paramedics or therapeutic radiographers in senior leadership roles.

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Multidisciplinary Working in Perioperative Care: Rapid Research Review

Centre for Perioperative Care (review by The Evidence Centre) (2020)

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KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Explored the role of multidisciplinary working in the perioperative pathway, identifying enablers and barriers at system, organisational, team and individual level.
- Synthesised learning from 236 UK and international studies (13% UK-based), screened from over 18,000 articles.
- Findings: multidisciplinary working can speed access to surgery, improve clinical outcomes, and reduce cost via earlier discharge.
- Gap: no evidence that any one model of multidisciplinary working is more effective than another — more research needed on effective models and required infrastructure.

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Theatres, Surgery and Perioperative Care: A Clinical and Operational Improvement Guide. Interim Version

NHS England (2024)

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Guide offering intervention improvement ideas with a feedback mechanism for continuous refinement.
- Includes links to tools for improving theatre productivity, including GIRFT modules on the FutureNHS platform.

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NHS Long Term Workforce Plan

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NHS England (2023)

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Sets out future demand and supply requirements and the reforms needed to support the NHS's overall workforce strategy.
- AHP workforce inclusion is limited — shortfalls flagged mainly for paramedics, OTs, diagnostic radiographers, podiatrists and SLTs; possible read-across to theatre practitioner shortages via critical care nursing.
- Aims to reduce attrition to 14% for paramedics and ODPs; builds theatre first-assist and critical care skills into pre-registration training.
- Commits to reviewing unwarranted variation in clinical placement hours for professions including ODPs and paramedics.

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ODP Fellow Report — Ready for the Future

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Health Education England (2023)

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Aims to understand the challenges currently facing ODPs and develop recommendations to address them.
- Identifies BOTT (Building Outstanding Theatre Teams) as a key productivity workstream for post-COVID recovery.
- Notes variation in students' practice preparation, at odds with the profession's governing-body vision.
- An appropriate preceptorship programme would support transition to registrant status and a positive AHP professional identity.
- Recommendations: standardise apprenticeship/direct-entry routes to CODP content; introduce preceptorship; HCPC recording of qualifications; recognise Enhanced/Advanced Practice roles; introduce a career development framework; urgent review of prescribing rights; culture change.

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Operating Department Practitioners (ODP) Apprenticeship Models

Helen Lowes (2024)

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KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Reports on the ODP Apprenticeship (DApp) Models event, chaired by NHS England and CODP, to support further development of ODP apprenticeships.
- Conclusions: the support-worker feeder pool is drying up; awareness of ODP careers needs to increase; HEIs need additional portfolio/ATP/NA-conversion routes into the profession.
- Agreed next steps: define 'supernumerary status'; create a toolkit to align apprenticeship models; align with national BOTT capability frameworks (bands 2–5); scale apprenticeships against elective recovery targets.

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HEE ODP Simulation Report: Regional/National synthesis of the advancement of Practice Based Simulation and Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) in Operating Department Practice (ODP) practice-based learning- Report

Deborah Robinson (University of Hull) & Caroline Hinds (formerly HEE, now NHS England) (2023)

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Reviews the inclusion of simulation and TEL in ODP training and the benefits of simulation-based education over traditional methods.
- Programme/simulation leads in HEIs reported confidence delivering simulation, but this was not consistently replicated across wider teams.
- Identifies training and development needs, and maps simulation/TEL applications to the ODP curriculum.
- Provides recommendations for implementation.

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Report on the impact of the London Operating Department Practitioner (ODP) Advocacy Pilot Project

Tom Wicinski (Guy's & St Thomas' NHS FT) for NHS England (2023)

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Piloted an ODP identity board across five London NHS trusts to strengthen ODP identity and improve theatre culture, morale and retention.
- Impact measured via matched before/after surveys (nine identical questions) at each site.
- Baseline survey revealed confusion between ODPs and anaesthetic nurses, and low general awareness of the ODP role.
- Conclusion: even a small, localised initiative measurably raised awareness and began shifting culture — a foundation to build on at greater scale.

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Professional Leadership & Influence