

First Contact Practitioner Update

Version 2 – 25th October 2023

NHS England West Yorkshire and Humber Faculty for Wider Workforce current understanding as of 20 October 2023

Page 2 - Glossary

Page 3 – Introduction

Page 3 – 5 Education Providers

Page 5 – What is a First Contact Practitioner (FCP)

Page 6 - Change to Roadmap for FCP

Page 7 – The reason for change

Page 8 – Frequently asked questions for Learners

Page 13 – Frequently asked questions for Supervisors

Glossary

ACP – Advanced Clinical Practitioner

AHP – Allied Healthcare Professions

AP - Advanced Practitioners

ARRs - Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme

CQC – Care Quality Commission

DES – Direct Enhanced Service

FCP – First Contact Practitioner

HEI – Higher Education Institute

LNA – Learning Needs Analysis

MACP - Musculoskeletal Association of Chartered Physiotherapist

NHSE – NHS England

PDP – Personal Development Plan

OT – Occupational Therapist

PCN – Primary Care Network

RMSV – Roadmap Verification Supervisor

WPBA - Work Place Based Assessment

Introduction

As part of the Long-Term Plan, Primary Care Networks (PCNs) and General Practices are encouraged to build a team with diverse skills and competencies to support increased access for patients, alleviate pressures on existing staff, and improve the quality of care and services. The Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme (ARRS) provides PCNs with funding for some of these additional roles. Staff can be reimbursed in line with their skills and capabilities, and the role that they are undertaking, up to the maximum level of reimbursement set out in the Network Contract Direct Enhanced Service (DES). To be eligible for reimbursement staff must be able to deliver the responsibilities of the role set out in the DES. Employers need to ensure that staff are operating within the limits of their capability and scope of practice, and that they are provided with appropriate supervision to enable them to do so. It is not a requirement for Allied Healthcare Professions (AHP) to be First Contact Practitioners (FCP) or Advanced Practitioners (APs) to work in primary care.

Education Providers

<https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/allied-health-professions/enable-workforce/first-contact-practice-self-declaration-education-providers/education-providers-fcp-training>

Provider	Profession	Taught Route Places (annual)	Portfolio Route Places (annual)	Webpage
Teesside University	Paramedics	100	100	First Contact Practitioner (Paramedic) UCPPD course Teesside University
University of Bradford	Musculoskeletal (MSK)	30	30	First Contact Physiotherapy Practitioner (Musculoskeletal) PGCert - Postgraduate degree - University of Bradford
UCLAN	All FCP professions	100	50	AHP First Contact Practice in Primary Care, Short Course - UCLan
Cumbria	Paramedics	100	50	PgC Paramedic First Contact Practitioner: Practice Development - University of Cumbria

Essex University	MSK	60	60	Postgraduate Certificate First Contact Musculoskeletal Practice - First Contact Musculoskeletal Practice Degree University of Essex
Coventry University (across both Coventry and London campus)	MSK & Paramedics	60	40	PGCert Musculoskeletal First Contact Practitioner Coventry University
Hertfordshire	MSK & Occupational Therapists (OTs) & Paramedics & Dietitians	50	50	MSc Advanced Physiotherapy Courses Uni of Herts
Anglo-European College of Chiropractic (AECC)	All FCP professions	40	20	First Contact Practice AECC University College Transforming lives through Health Sciences

The following Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) have been formally recognised as delivering education and training in line with the relevant Roadmaps to Practice through the Provider Self-Declaration process. However, NHS England does not have funded places with these providers available.

- Northumbria University - MSK
- University of Plymouth - MSK
- University of Winchester - MSK
- Coventry University - MSK
- University of Bradford - MSK
- St George's University, London - Paramedics

-
- University of Salford - MSK
 - University of Central Lancashire – OT's, Podiatrists, MSK, Dietitians
 - Manchester Metropolitan University - MSK
 - University of Greenwich - Paramedics
 - University of Cumbria - Paramedics
 - Sheffield Hallam University - MSK

What is an FCP?

An FCP is a registered health professional who would be the first point of contact for a patient in a primary care General Practice setting. FCPs use their expertise to “assess, diagnose, treat, and discharge a person without a medical referral – where appropriate.

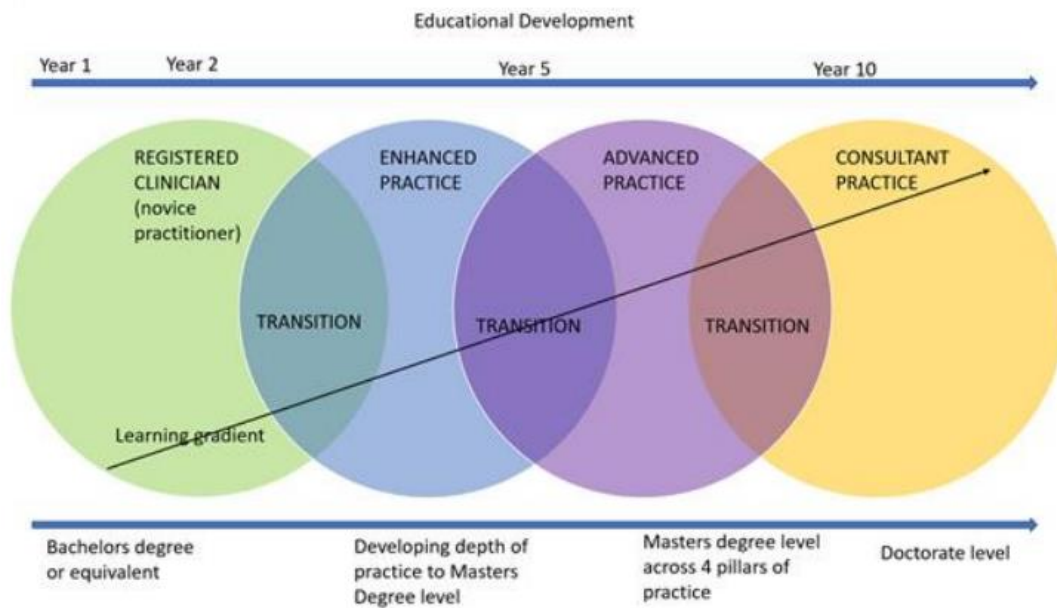
The introduction of the FCP roles were to ensure the patient saw the right health care professional the first time round. Examples include a patient being assessed and treated by a physiotherapist about a MSK problem or someone seeing an Occupational Therapist regarding their absence from work, due to their long term health condition. Patients attending FCP appointments such as these, avoid the need to see a GP first, resulting in more available appointments in primary care and ensuring GP appointments are retained for those who require a GP most.

The introduction of FCPs has supported the patient pathway to ensure that patients are seen and treated quickly and efficiently. FCPs are diagnostic clinicians working at master's level, managing complexity and uncertainty at the first point of contact.

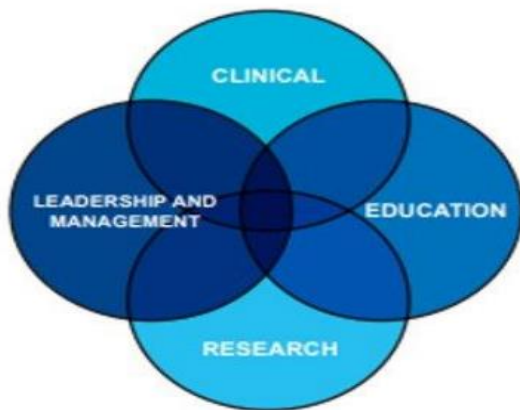
Stage 1 = a verified portfolio of evidence of working academically at Masters level against the knowledge skills and attributes document plus the 2 sets of e-learning modules

Stage 2 = a verified portfolio of evidence demonstrating the application of their stage 1 academic masters level knowledge into practice using the Work Place Based Assessment (WPBA) Toolkit in the primary care clinical setting.

First contact practice sits in the transition between Enhanced and Advanced practice.



FCPs differ from Advanced Practitioners (APs) as FCPs work at master’s level in their clinical pillar of practice but have not yet reached an advanced level in all four pillars of practice. Whereas an AP is a clinician working at an advanced level across all four 3 NHS England, Elective Care High Impact Interventions: FCP for MSK Services, (2019) pillars of advanced practice at master’s level.



The four pillars of practice

Change to Roadmap for FCP

To support FCPs, a national Primary Care educational pathway has been created for clinicians moving into FCP roles which may lead on to AP status with appropriate additional education, and education providers have been procured to deliver this training and education package.

Although there is not a provider based in every NHS England region, all the providers have committed to taking learners from outside the region in which they are based.

The reason for change?

Following the procurement exercise and education provider delivery, the governance processes in place around approval and sign-off of FCP portfolios of evidence are now more robust, needing both supervisor and education provider approval and quality assurance.

Meaning - Due to the new governance processes, there is no longer a need for supervisors to complete designated FCP Supervision training, such as the two-day Roadmap Supervisor training.

Frequency Asked Questions for Learners

Q1 - What is the eligibility criteria for an AHP to access training and education to work in an FCP role?

An AHP who has 5 years of postgraduate experience including at least 3 years' experience in the area of practice the individual will be delivering in Primary Care. Whilst the Care Quality Commission (CQC) recommends completion of Stage 1 before entering a primary care role and Stage 2 within 6 months of gaining said employment, this hasn't been possible for AHPs already working within the primary care system. This provision gives these individuals the opportunity to complete the required training and education to work in an FCP role successfully.

FCP Professions

Podiatrists

Paramedics

Musculoskeletal Practitioners

Dietitians

Occupational Therapists

Q2 - What happens to the FCPs who completed the Taught/Portfolio route prior to the new education providers being procured?

If you have successfully completed both Stage 1 & 2 of the FCP Roadmap and you have the following documentation:

- **A completed Roadmap to Practice checklist** – the template can be found in section 9.4 of the appropriate Roadmap. It should be signed and dated by you and your supervisor when each component of Stage 1 and 2 is completed.
<https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/allied-health-professions/enable-workforce/first-contact-practice-self-declaration-education-providers/roadmap-verification-changes>
- **Certificates of completed Stage 1 elearning modules.**
- **Evidence of Stage 1 completion** – a completed portfolio of evidence relevant to your area of practice. If a Taught Route was undertaken to complete Stage 1, your portfolio will include evidence from the education provider that you have completed the relevant FCP module/s. [See further information.](#)

-
- **Evidence of Stage 2 completion** – a completed portfolio of evidence of Primary Care training. This includes completed copies of all the Stage 2 documents listed in the FCP Roadmap to Practice, including a Personal Development Plan (PDP), reflective learning logs and a record of Workplace Based Assessments. [See further information.](#)

OR

- You may have completed a course provided by a university where both **Stages 1 & 2** were successfully completed – if this is the case, then evidence of successful completion of both Stages 1 & 2, and your portfolio, as described above, will suffice.

Then you already have all the necessary documentation to demonstrate that you have completed the FCP Roadmap Process. You can show this to your employer when that is required as this constitutes supervisor sign off.

Q3 – What should I do if I am in the process of completing Stage 1&/or 2 of the FCP Roadmap?

If you anticipate completing before April 2024, then the guidance is that you complete the process and maintain your portfolio to demonstrate that you have met the FCP Roadmap requirements.

However, it may be the case that if you haven't started or have only just started the process, or you don't anticipate completing until after April 2024, then you are advised to take advantage of the funded FCP courses that are advertised on the [Education Providers of FCP Training](#) or one of the FCP Courses offered by education providers that have self declared that their programmes map to the FCP Roadmaps.

Q4 – What should I do if I am due to complete slightly after April 2024

Conversations to be held with Supervisor to truly understand completion date and a pragmatic approach as to whether give or take a couple of weeks is acceptable. However, our advice is to complete as soon as possible prior to or very close to April 2024.

Q5 – What should I do if I have completed Stage 1 and wish to progress to Stage 2?

If the individual has part completed the required training and education (e.g., only Stage 1), they can access the procured provision, complete a learning needs analysis (LNA), and be supported through the remainder of the training and education via an education provider.

Q6 - If I have completed the FCP Roadmap Stage 1, do I have to complete Stage 2 via the Portfolio route or do I have the option to complete the Taught route?

You can access the procured provision, complete a LNA and be supported through the remainder of the training and education via an education provider via Taught or Portfolio route.

Q7 - Why do I need to undertake an LNA?

The LNA is designed to determine what your learning needs are and what route will best suit your learning style and circumstances.

Q8 – Will I receive a digital badge if I completed Stage 1 & Stage 2 prior to the procured Education provision?

No, it was decided the introduction of digital badges will not be adopted.

Q9 – Why does it say on some of the Education Providers webpage a digital badge will be received?

Some education providers haven't updated their websites to reflect the new process.

Q10 - Who is responsible for sourcing Supervisors and placements for FCPs?

As the Education Provider Taught route has suggested, you will be required to identify a nominated appropriately trained Supervisor to support you for the 75-hour practice placement as part of the Stage 2.

[Education Supervision Toolkit App.pptx](#)

Q11 - Who will check whether my supervisor aligns to the Quality Framework?

All supervisors should align to the [HEE Quality Framework](#). Individual Education Provider websites may list specific criteria, for example.

- A GP Trainer – Educational Supervisor
- A GP
- A Clinician who has a post registration Masters degree (Pre-registration Masters degrees DO NOT qualify)
- Are a full MACP member

-
- A First Contact Practitioner who has completed the requirements of the Roadmap to Practice
 - An Advanced Practitioner who is recognised by the NHS England Centre for Advancing Practice (CfAP).

Q12 – What if I am completing Stage 2 and work within the primary care system?

If the Education Provider taught route has been suggested, you will be required to identify a nominated appropriately trainer supervisor to support you for the 75-hour practice placement component as part of the second module on the PG Cert (FCP2 – Working in Primary Care).

Q13 – Is it compulsory for someone calling themselves a FCP to have completed Stage 1 & Stage 2 of the roadmap?

No. The title of FCP is not a protected title, however if you want professional recognition of FCP as a First Contact Practitioner, we will strongly advise undertaking Stage 1 & Stage 2.

Evidence of compliance may be asked for at a CQC inspection.

[GP mythbuster 106: Staff not directly employed by a GP practice - Care Quality Commission \(cqc.org.uk\)](http://cqc.org.uk)

Q14 - What if Stage 1 & Stage 2 become mandatory and I have been working as a FCP for many years?

See response above.

The benefits of completing the FCP Roadmap, in terms of an FCPs protection, safety, governance, recruitment /retention and recognition, remains extremely high. It also aids transparency for patients and ‘care navigators’ on who a patient is seeing at a practice level – which again reduces potential exposure to risks.

Q15 - Are there any geographical restrictions for learners accessing the procured education providers provision?

The procured education providers have agreed to take learners nationally, meaning that any learner can access any of the education providers providing training and education for the appropriate FCP Roadmap regardless of where they are based. Information in this guidance details which education providers are delivering fully online provision. The education providers delivering blended learning are happy to work with regional colleagues to establish

the best way to deliver the face-to-face elements (i.e., a block of days rather than spread across a number of weeks).

Q16 - I want to become FCP and want to access learning via a HEI that wasn't part of the procurement, is this allowed?

The funding available is only for the Education Providers who were successful through the NHS England national procurement process. If an individual wants to self-fund, or has access to alternative funding, they can do this. However, they should ensure the Education Provider has completed the NHSE self-declaration process with the Centre for Advancing Practice, and that certification of completion will be issued.

Q17 – Would I need a LNA on completion of FCP via Education Provider to move onto ACP?

The supported portfolio route for ACP is still available for the next 4 years. This route is available for those practitioners who may not have a full MSc in ACP or have an alternative masters but believe they fulfil the criteria of the 4 pillars of AP.

As an FCP you would have a LNA prior to completing the Portfolio route, so the university can advise if enough evidence or if more study required.

Frequently asked question for Supervisors

Q1 - Who can be an FCP supervisor?

Supervisors who align to the regional quality framework and the quality in primary care workstream which approves educators and learning environments at scale can supervise an FCP – including, but not limited to, those who have completed the designated RMSV two-day training.

[Education Supervision Toolkit App.pptx](#)

Q2 – Due to changes are FCP Supervisors still needed?

Yes, FCP supervisors will still be needed as both routes require them. If doing HEI Taught route, the learner is required to undertake 75-hour practice placement and FCP supervisor or equivalent needs to support placement. If doing supported portfolio route, roadmap supervisor or equivalent will need to undertake all WPBAs in practice.

Q3 – I completed the RMSV course in 2021 but havent supervised and keen to start supervision what do I need to do?

We would recommend you join Community of Practice where updates, buddy systems, refresher topics, and case studies are shared.

Contact Details

South Yorkshire - Kim Palmer kimberly.palmer3@nhs.net

West Yorkshire - Suzanne Henshall - suzanne.henshall1@nhs.net

North Yorkshire and Humber - Emma Jones - emma.jones282@nhs.net

Q4 – Why are Education Providers offering supervision training and refresher training?

As part of the NHSE FCP procurement, some educational providers were commissioned to provide FCP supervisor refresher updates. Please check with procured HEIs as to whether they are offering this and how they can access this training.