

The role of an Advanced Nurse Practitioner supporting mental health in-patient services

Embedding substance use expertise into inpatient mental health care improves person-centered support, discharge planning, and staff confidence. In Angus, a dedicated Advanced Nurse Practitioner bridges inpatient and community services for people with co-occurring needs.

Angus Integrated Drug and Alcohol Recovery Service have an Advanced Nurse Practitioner whose role is to work alongside the mental health inpatient unit and provide support to people with substance use needs in inpatient setting; as well as aiding discharge planning where community substance use services are required.

The Advanced Nurse Practitioner attends 'Rapid Run Down' meetings weekly, which review all the people on the ward, as well as having a presence on the ward itself, working with staff and individuals.

It was not routine practice to do joint assessments before, but now we do loads. I think it is just about knowing the people and how they can be helpful



This role includes:

- Contributing to discharge discussions by highlighting what support can be provided by substance use services in the community as part of discharge follow up.
- Facilitating transitions into community substance use services where there is a need for substance use follow up post-discharge.
- Providing education to mental health in-patient staff on administering buprenorphine.
- Prompting drug screens and helping with the interpretation of results.
- Support assessments through providing insight around substance use behaviours, including typical presentations of individuals in the community.
- Direct substance use support around relapse prevention, motivational interviewing and dealing with cravings – including education to other staff on how to provide this.

This impact of having this role is improved support for people with co-occurring mental health and substance use conditions, for example:

- People receive the right support and the right time due to joint assessments and decision making due to easier access to additional, substance use expertise.
- People have access to more comprehensive support to people within in-patient settings, through direct provision of support or the education and upskilling of existing staff.
- Person-centred support is enhanced through bringing in additional information about individuals from experience in community services, as well as being able to provide more targeted support for substance use in mental health inpatient settings.