

# Cygnets Primary Care Network

## Clinical Team Roles.

**A General Practitioner (GP)** is a medical doctor who provides primary healthcare to individuals. GPs are often considered the first point of contact for patients seeking medical care. They are trained to diagnose and treat a wide range of health conditions, and they play a crucial role in managing both acute and chronic illnesses.

The primary responsibilities of a general practitioner include:

- **Diagnosis and Treatment:** GPs assess and diagnose various medical conditions, prescribe medications, and develop treatment plans.
- **Preventive Care:** They focus on preventive care, including immunizations, screenings, and health education to help patients maintain good health and prevent future illnesses.
- **Managing Chronic Conditions:** GPs often manage long-term or chronic conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, and asthma, providing ongoing care and monitoring.
- **Referrals:** If a patient requires specialized care or diagnostic tests, GPs can make referrals to specialists, such as cardiologists, dermatologists, or orthopaedic surgeons.
- **Coordination of Care:** GPs may coordinate the overall healthcare of their patients, collaborating with other healthcare professionals to ensure comprehensive and integrated care.
- **Mental Health Support:** GPs are often involved in managing mental health conditions and may provide counselling or refer patients to mental health specialists when needed.

Patients of all ages can consult with a General Practitioner. GPs are trained to address a broad spectrum of health issues and are skilled in recognizing when a patient needs specialized care from other medical professionals. They act as a central point for healthcare, helping patients navigate the healthcare system and receive appropriate care tailored to their needs.

**An Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP)** is a registered nurse who has completed advanced education and clinical training beyond the requirements for basic nursing practice. ANPs play an expanded role in healthcare, providing a range of advanced clinical services and often working in collaboration with GPs and other healthcare professionals.

Here are some key aspects of Advanced Nurse Practitioners:

- **Scope of Practice:** ANPs are authorized to diagnose and treat illnesses, prescribe medications, order and interpret diagnostic tests, and provide a range of healthcare services.
- **Patient Population:** ANPs can see a broad range of patients across the lifespan, from infants to the elderly. The specific patient population depends on the ANP's area of specialization.
- **Education and Training:** ANPs typically hold a master's or doctoral degree in nursing. The advanced education includes specialized coursework and clinical training in a specific area of practice.

**A Paramedic Practitioner** is an experienced paramedic who has undergone additional training and education to expand their scope of practice. These practitioners are often involved in providing advanced clinical care, managing minor illnesses and injuries, and contributing to the overall healthcare system.

Here are some key aspects of Paramedic Practitioners:

- **Scope of Practice:** Paramedic Practitioners have an expanded scope that allows them to assess, diagnose, and treat a broader range of medical conditions. They are trained to perform advanced clinical skills, including physical examinations, interpreting diagnostic tests, prescribing medications, and managing common health issues. They bridge the gap between paramedic services and primary care.
- **Patient Population:** Paramedic Practitioners see a diverse patient population, including individuals with minor illnesses and injuries, as well as those with chronic conditions. They may provide care in a variety of settings, including patients' homes, GP Practices, Community clinics, and urgent care centres.
- **Education and Training:** Paramedic Practitioners typically have a background as paramedics and undergo additional education and training to enhance their clinical skills and knowledge. This may include advanced courses in physical assessment, diagnostics, and pharmacology.

**A Minor Illness/Injury Practice Nurse** is a registered nurse who works within a primary care setting and specializes in managing minor health issues. These nurses play a crucial role in delivering timely and accessible care for common illnesses and injuries, relieving pressure on other healthcare providers and emergency services.

Here are key aspects of the role of a Minor Illness/Injury Practice Nurse:

- **Scope of Practice:** The scope of practice for these nurses includes assessing and treating minor illnesses/injuries, providing health education, and referring patients to other healthcare professionals when necessary.
- **Patient Population:** Practice Nurses specializing in Minor Illness/Injury see patients with non-urgent health concerns. This can include minor injuries, infections, minor skin conditions, and other issues that do not require emergency intervention.
- **Education and Training:** Practice Nurses with a focus on Minor Illness/Injury typically hold a nursing degree and have additional training in the assessment and management of minor health issues. They may also undergo specific courses related to minor injury care.

**A Practice Nurse (PN)** is a registered nurse who works in a practice alongside GPs and other healthcare professionals. Practice nurses play a crucial role in delivering a wide range of healthcare services to patients within the community.

The specific duties and responsibilities of a PN includes:

- **Health Assessments:** Conducting health assessments, such as routine check-ups and screenings, to identify and manage health risks.
- **Immunizations:** Administering vaccinations and immunizations, particularly for children, adults, and individuals at risk of specific diseases.
- **Chronic Disease Management:** Assisting in the management of chronic conditions, such as diabetes, asthma, and hypertension, by providing education, monitoring, and support.
- **Wound Care:** Managing and dressing wounds, including providing post-operative care and ensuring proper healing.
- **Family Planning:** Offering family planning services, including contraceptive advice and support.
- **Women's Health:** Providing women's health services, such as cervical screening, breast examinations, and menopause support.
- **Health Promotion and Education:** Educating patients on healthy lifestyles, preventive measures, and managing their own health.
- **Travel Health:** Offering advice and vaccinations for individuals traveling abroad, including those required for specific destinations.
- **Minor Procedures:** Performing minor medical procedures, such as removing stitches, ear syringing, and administering injections.

PNs see a diverse range of patients, including children, adults, and the elderly. The goal is to support patients in maintaining good health, managing chronic conditions, and preventing illness through education and preventive measures.

**A Health Care Assistant (HCA)** is a trained and supportive member of the healthcare team who assists in the delivery of care to patients.

Their responsibilities include:

**Vital Signs Monitoring:** Taking and recording vital signs, such as blood pressure, pulse, temperature, and respiratory rate.

**Health Checks:** Assisting with routine health checks and assessments, including height and weight measurements.

**Patient Education:** Providing basic health education and advice to patients, often under the guidance of registered nurses or other healthcare professionals.

**Supporting Chronic Disease Management:** Assisting in the monitoring and management of chronic conditions, as directed by healthcare professionals.

**Phlebotomy:** Collecting blood samples for diagnostic tests.

In general practice settings, healthcare assistants interact with a wide range of patients, including those of all ages and backgrounds. They work as part of a multidisciplinary team, collaborating with general practitioners, practice nurses, and other healthcare professionals to ensure the efficient delivery of care. HCAs play a vital role in supporting patient care, contributing to the smooth operation of the practice, and enhancing the overall patient experience.

**A Clinical Pharmacist** is a highly trained healthcare professional who specializes in providing direct patient care, within a GP Practice. Unlike traditional pharmacists who primarily focus on dispensing medications, clinical pharmacists are actively involved in patient care, medication management, and collaboration with other healthcare providers. They play a critical role in ensuring safe and effective medication use within the Practice setting.

Here are key aspects of the role of a Clinical Pharmacist:

- **Scope of Practice:** The scope of practice for Clinical Pharmacists is diverse and may include medication therapy management, drug dosing, monitoring for drug interactions and adverse effects, patient counselling, and collaboration with other healthcare professionals.
- **Patient Population:** Clinical Pharmacists may see a wide range of patients across different age groups and medical conditions.
- **Education and Training:** Clinical Pharmacists typically hold a Doctor of Pharmacy (Pharm.D.) degree and have completed additional postgraduate training, such as a pharmacy residency or fellowship. This advanced education equips them with the knowledge and skills needed for clinical practice.

**A Pharmacy Technician** is a healthcare professional who works under the supervision of a licensed pharmacist to assist in the preparation, dispensing, and management of medications. Pharmacy Technicians support the operation of pharmacies, ensuring the safe and efficient delivery of medications to patients.

Here are key aspects of the role of a Pharmacy Technician:

- **Education and Training:** Pharmacy Technicians typically complete a formal education program, which may include a certificate program, diploma, or an associate degree. They learn about pharmaceutical calculations, drug interactions, medication dispensing, and pharmacy law and ethics.
- **Patient Interaction:** Pharmacy Technicians interact with patients and customers to collect information necessary for prescription processing, answer questions about medications, and provide general information about over-the-counter products.

While Pharmacy Technicians do not typically provide clinical or medical advice to patients, their role is crucial in supporting the overall pharmacy operation and ensuring that patients receive their medications safely and accurately.

**A Mental Health Practitioner (MHP)** is a professional who specializes in providing mental health care and support to individuals experiencing psychological and emotional challenges.

In general practice, mental health practitioners see individuals dealing with a wide range of mental health concerns, including:

Anxiety disorders

Depression

Stress-related disorders

Trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

Substance abuse and addiction issues

Eating disorders

Relationship problems

Grief and loss

General Practitioners refer patients to MHPs when they recognize the need for specialized mental health care. MHPs collaborate with GPs and other healthcare professionals to provide comprehensive and integrated care for individuals with both physical and mental health needs. The goal is to promote mental well-being, improve coping skills, and address mental health issues in a holistic manner.

**A Social Prescriber (SP)** (also known as a Link Worker) is a healthcare professional who focuses on addressing the social determinants of health by connecting individuals with non-medical support and community resources. The role of a Social Prescriber is to help people improve their overall well-being by addressing social, economic, and environmental factors that impact health.

Here are key aspects of the role of a Social Prescriber:

- **Holistic Approach:** SPs take a holistic approach to health and well-being, recognizing that factors such as social isolation, housing, employment, and lifestyle can significantly impact a person's health.
- **Non-Medical Interventions:** SPs focus on non-medical interventions. They work to identify and address the root causes of health issues, often by connecting individuals with community resources and support services.
- **Assessment and Goal Setting:** SPs conduct assessments to understand the individual's needs, challenges, and goals. Based on this assessment, they collaborate with the individual to set realistic and achievable goals for improvement.
- **Community Resources:** SPs have extensive knowledge of local community resources, services, and support groups. They help individuals access services related to housing, employment, education, mental health, physical activity, and more.
- **Collaboration with Healthcare Professionals:** SPs work in collaboration with healthcare professionals, including GPs, nurses, and other members of the healthcare team. They bridge the gap between clinical care and community-based support.
- **Empowerment and Support:** SPs empower individuals to take control of their health and well-being by providing support, encouragement, and guidance. They help build individuals' resilience and self-efficacy.
- **Target Population:** Social Prescribers work with a diverse range of individuals, including those with long-term health conditions, mental health challenges, social isolation, or other factors affecting their well-being.
- **Prevention and Health Promotion:** The role of a Social Prescriber includes preventive measures and health promotion. By addressing social determinants of health, they contribute to preventing the onset or worsening of health issues.