

Supporting Quality and Educational Capacity in Primary and Integrated Care

Regulators Statement & FAQs on behalf of the NMC and HCPC

Regulators Statement

There is a need for significant expansion of educational capacity in primary and integrated care, while maintaining and developing educational quality. The HEE Quality Framework ([HEE Quality Framework](#)) sets out HEE's quality standards and expectations for all clinical learning environments, including a focus on clinical and educational supervision. These inform initial recognition of educational environments and educators and ongoing support and quality monitoring.

The Long Term Plan, the interim People Plan and recent manifesto pledge include plans to increase the primary care workforce by 6,000 GPs and 26,000 additional roles. This manifesto promise requires educational providers and practices in primary care to work together to approve additional learning environments and educators supporting education for a variety of professions. A benefit of HEE's quality processes are that higher education institutions can work through these where appropriate to fulfil their responsibilities regarding the quality of primary care learning environments provided for their students.

HEE has started to implement a seamless process to approve environments and educators across localised geographies, such as a Primary Care Network footprint. This approach is underpinned by HEE's Quality Strategy ([HEE Quality Strategy](#)), which sets out its national and local priorities, principles, and overarching processes for multi-professional quality management. These reflect HEE's aim to develop and support a sustainable workforce through a focus on the culture of education, engaging with learners, working with partners, committing to improve quality, and being future focussed and inclusive. These strategic priorities not only support the expansion of opportunities for learners to enter primary care, they also promote and mirror the ambitions and ways of working across a localised environment at scale.

HEE is working with key stakeholders including statutory professional regulators, professional bodies, and the Council of Deans of Health to promote and drive this work to support primary care.

FAQs

The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) and Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) are working closely with Health Education England (HEE) to support their goal to significantly expand practice-based learning capacity in primary and integrated care settings. Part of this work involves implementing a system to establish and maintain high quality learning environments at scale

using HEE's quality framework and processes. This should benefit all those involved in the education of future professionals.

Can education providers place students in primary and integrated care settings which have been quality assured by a HEE training hub?

Yes. The NMC and HCPC standards provide flexibility for Approved Education Institutions (AEI's) to work in partnership with the other organisations to deliver practice-based learning, and this would include HEE training hubs. This may involve the delegation of some activities regarding the approval and monitoring placement sites, which AEIs would traditionally undertake themselves. To ensure standards continue to be met using this approach, AEIs must continue to:

- Maintain overall responsibility for any practice-based learning settings where students are placed.
- Be satisfied that the primary and integrated care placements you choose to access for your students meet your own quality criteria and the programme learning outcomes.
- Be satisfied those placements are safe and supportive for both your students and service users.
- Ensure supervision is provided by professionals who meet your criteria for this role (and as defined in regulatory standards) and understand the requirements of your programme and the students own learning needs.
- Receive regular feedback on the quality of practice-based learning settings where students are placed, and act where necessary in partnership with others to improve them.
- Ensure students have the information they need to undertake their placement and support them to achieve their learning objectives.
- Provide assurance to the NMC and HCPC through monitoring activities

Do education providers need to notify the regulator that they have secured suitable practice-based learning opportunities in primary and integrated care?

The NMC expects you to notify them when you have established new practice learning partnership and employer partnerships through their normal regulatory processes. Both regulators will use their monitoring processes to understand how you have maintained your placement capacity over time. This will provide you with the opportunity to detail and reflect on new placement arrangements related to primary and integrated care settings and how you have continued to meet regulatory standards in accessing these sites.