

National Dermatology Nurse Audit Collaborative Working between the British Dermatology Nursing Group (BDNG) and AbbVie Ltd

Outcome Summary

This project was funded by AbbVie Ltd and developed in collaboration with the BDNG.

Project Aim

The purpose of this collaborative working project was to:

- Audit current practice against the published BDNG clinical role descriptors
- Identify roles and services that could be developed and supported
- Develop action plans that support key areas which have been identified

Project Objectives

- Understand the national state of the dermatology service, at the individual dermatology nurse level, how this aligns with the Clinical Dermatology Nursing Role Descriptors, and their clinical and non-clinical responsibilities.
- Understand the current dermatology service at a national level, including the number of nurses and the whole time equivalent (WTE)/Full time equivalent (FTE) of staff within each band, their clinical responsibilities, the estimated proportion of nursing time spent on dermatology-related care, and the estimated time spent on dermatology-related research and audit.
- Understand the type and length of appointments that each service offers and how many patients attend their clinics
- Compare the expected clinical responsibilities with the actual clinical tasks that individual nurses and services carry out on daily basis.
- Share the findings of the project with UK dermatology nurses and to explore the themes identified in the course of the project, so as to generate potential actions that may aid in services optimising the experience and training of their staff.

Key Achievements and Highlights of the Project

The collaborative working project started in September 2021 with parts 1 (nurse level survey) and 2 (service level survey) of the audit taking place from January to May 2022 and the real-time activity audit taking place in May 2022. The project finished in December 2023.

Part 1 –30% of the respondents across bands 5-8c did not agree that their job plan reflected what they did in practice. The survey revealed that a vast array of dermatology nursing activities were conducted across all bands, including general support, advice and education, prescribing of medications (usually band 6 and above) and surgical procedures with and without supervision. Nurses received the majority of their education from the BDNG, pharmaceutical companies, congresses and universities. 76% of responders believed that changes were implemented to the dermatology service as a result of service audit.

Part 2 –The majority of service leads completing the service level survey were in the role as a band 6 or 7. Most teams had majority of FTE bands 5 and 6's and there were few band 8 nurses in many of the services surveyed. Bands 5,6 and 7's seemed to spend the majority of their nursing time on dermatology related care where as band 8's spent less time on this and more

time on research and audit. The most vacancies appeared to be at a band 5 level. The average length of a new appointment either face to face or via video was 28 minutes and a follow up 19 minutes. Number of daily appointments varied significantly between departments.

Part 3 – Dermatology nurses from across the UK completed the audit by recording their daily activity for a two week period. The range of clinical responsibilities varied from treatment counselling, education, prescribing and monitoring, phototherapy, topical therapy, ward visits, home visits. Over 30% of nurses worked one or more hours longer than was scheduled and 81% reported having no break where one was scheduled. 3041 new and follow up appointments were scheduled in the two week period however an additional 1030 emergency, rescue, ad-hoc appointments took place during this period too.

The results were shared by the BDNG at various congresses including WCD Singapore July 2023 and the BDNG annual conference Sept 2023, and with dermatology nurses across the UK by members of Abbvie's medical team. The results are also available on the BDNG website. The activity work-book is also available through the BDNG so dermatology nurses can record their work activity to support making changes to aid service delivery and improve patient care.

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