

EXPLORING THE VARIOUS ROLES WITHIN SPECIALIST NURSING

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Abstract

This essay is a brief exploration into the vast and varied roles within specialist nursing. Specialist nursing is vital in meeting the complex health needs of a diverse population increasingly faced with issues related to long-term conditions. Over half of the 28,959 Various Other Professionals include nurses, midwives and health visitors in posts such as NHS management as well as nursing assistant, health visitor and community matron positions. This supports a multi-faceted role for the Specialist Nurse, with scope for autonomous practice and the undertaking of research activity. This sits comfortably alongside the more typically recognized role of the Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS), consuming welfare support from acute through to primary healthcare settings (Tiliander et al., 2022).

In examining Specialist Nursing, two main themes arise: the first explores provision of care, educational and supportive roles for patients and their families. The second idea looks at specialist nursing roles that cross the divide between service and management support provision. The structure of essay is also outlined and this reflects the diversity and specialization inherent in the roles being discussed. Specialist Nursing encompasses a wide array of positions within nursing, knowledge of these is not only an educational benefit but also has capacity to support those embarking on a career within nursing. The dynamic nature of nursing roles ensures there will always be new ground to cover. New training may be contemporarily aimed at areas where job shortages occur. That this drives the evolution of increasingly specialized competencies for nursing roles is in keeping with the expertise paradigm, with nursing being driven to a higher education level. So, too, the nature of patient encounters and the needs of the client group are frequently changing, nursing needs to be accordingly fluid. That around the current discussion focuses on the role being fulfilled by those currently in training or the service provided just on completion of a specialist nursing course. All this having been said, it is accepted that nursing is skilled and there are certain recurrent duties fulfilled by many (often diverse) nursing roles (Kilpatrick et al., 2023).

1.2 Keywords

Keywords: Nursing, specialist nursing, roles, perioperative phase, nursing education, patient care, nursing profession

Introduction Specialist nursing is a wide-ranging professional field composed of competencies that are necessary for the clinical expert roles that specialize in patients' health and well-being (Tiliander et al., 2022). This specialist knowledge and professional skills apply for a specific population of patients or client groups. Specialist nursing work can be professionally demanding and challenging as a nurse, both mentally and physically. The master's degree requirement for specialist nursing necessitated comprehensive specialist nursing education in the sciences, skills, and know-how of the working life. It is also essential to keep up-to-date and develop one's professional skills independently since evidence-based specialist know-how and working procedures are continually being updated. The specialist nurse must handle the organization of work along with patient care and have a significant effect on team leadership. Advanced competence in nursing practices is more autonomous, and the activities require making responsible decisions. The specialist nurse also supervises healthcare processes and helps to develop patient care practices in the work community. It is also the responsibility of the specialist nurse to develop and revise the principles of work methods and instructions. These practices are often developed in cooperation with head physicians and other patient care professionals in the multiprofessional clinic. However, the safety of patient care functioning in the ward must be ensured by the immediate supervisor.

1.3 1. Introduction to Specialist Nursing

Specialist nurses are a diverse group of nurses that has undergone specialist education and training to achieve the competencies of their specialist field. They work within various disciplines or care departments, ranging from acute care and emergency to chronic care and rehabilitation. Specialist nurses are educated to a master's level of training and have acquired advanced critical competencies within their field. They work to a great extent independently and possess extended decision-making capacity (Tiliander et al., 2022). Evidence shows that they improve the quality of healthcare and patient outcomes in comparison with other groups of healthcare professionals. Specialist nurses mitigate further complications, stress, and the need for ongoing healthcare while reducing costs associated with this.

The first known example of a specialist nursing role is the mental health nurse who developed as a profession towards the end of the 19th century once patients were removed from workhouses and placed in institutions. Historically, people practised 'caring' work from home and shared knowledge and skills through observation and apprenticeships. Thus, they were able to meet the needs of patients effectively. The advancement of science and technology has changed the dynamic of patient care (Nagle et al., 2017). Care is measurable, visible, and accountable. Care is educational, specialised, multi-disciplinary, accountable, standardised, outcome driven and needs based. The constant technological advancements have led to the development of very specialised forms of diseases and the requirement of a plethora of specialists so that they can be treated effectively. Specialist nursing roles have been identified to be cost-effective in the provision of high-quality treatment to patients suffering from mechanical circulatory support.

Specialist nursing is an umbrella term for a range of roles such as: nurse practitioner, clinical nurse consultant, clinical nurse specialist, nurse educator, nurse midwife, nurse navigator, nurse researcher, clinical nurse specialist, nurse coordinator, nurse manager, nurse unit manager, and nurse director. One can see how nursing has become very complex due to the advancement of medical sciences and technology in general. Each of those fields requires a very specialized set of

knowledge and skills. With the increasing complexity of healthcare, it is important that these specialist nursing roles are recognised and utilised by healthcare management. The role of the specialist nurse and other nurses in leadership roles have been identified as a way to redesign the provision of healthcare services to better meet increasing service demands. Some of the trends and future directions for specialist nursing are the need for a common base of training, a move to expand roles, workforce modelling, the standardisation of roles, and extended scopes of practice or advanced practice nursing.

1.1. Definition and Scope of Specialist Nursing

Specialist nursing can be defined in a number of ways: it can lie within a specialist field, be in the form of specialist consultation or be a form of practice. Specialist nurses engage in a variety of roles to support, meet, and consult with generalist nurses in relation to the nursing care of clients (Nagle et al., 2017). Therefore, specialist nurse practice is seen as broader and different from generalist nursing practice with its more defined roles directed towards direct client care and relational practice. Specialist nurse practice requires unique qualifications and expertise, practices that are separate and specialised. The practices and the roles of the specialist nurse are mostly guided by the clinical practice initiative. The nursing workplace has a lot of nurses, and hence nursing practice variance. Consequently, it is important to have an understanding of the roles of specialist nurses within the overall nursing workplace.

There are a number of specialities within nursing practice and hence the roles of specialist nurses are varied. The main functions of specialist nurses are identified below. Managerial: management of a resource team, coordinating the nursing roles of other nurses, roles in recruitment preparation and assessment of various things, liaison and reporting to other groups, involved in policy development and planning, managing consultations practice (Kapra et al., 2023). Clinical Specialist: assessment and diagnosis, care planning and evaluating care, the direct client care, special client health procedures and care focus, holding complex case loads, nursing care following a consultation of a medical officer, making decisions concerning emergency care and referring of client, delivering advice to clients who are concerned about their health and whether they should get consultation, prescription of medication, and standing treating orders, co-ordinating health promotion educational programs and coordinators education activities and program evaluation. Professional support and development: basic counselling and care for clients in need, work towards quality utilization of nursing resources within and external to the workplace, and coordination treatment use of nursing resource in hospital and community for patient care, supervision of student nurses and other nurses and associated personnel and contribute to same promotion of nursing, provision of learning, teaching and evaluation and make referrals to other disciplines and team members as appropriate to meet assessment, treatment or care planning needs. Giving education is a large part of the specialist nurse's role and hence they often spend a considerable part of their time teaching: qualified nurses, pre-post registration nursing students, nurses who are not employed by the same employer. Consultative: seek or provide advice from or to other nurses, reporting, follow-up consultations, participating in and attending to arrangements for nursing care at hospital clinics, nursing home, community nursing, school nurse and general practices, care collaborative care management issues with nurses, comment and give guidance and on health promotion education report. Professional health management: delving guidelines, standards and practices, assisting with troubleshooting nursing care procedures, conducting audits regarding compliance of care with standards and guidelines and professional work practices and review and analysing practice and costing situations and job advice on the development of nursing care policy, practice and job activities. In many occasions specialist nurses may have had experience in a

particular area of nursing and hence can be regarded as an authority on that area of nursing to some degree. In many situations client care is complex and nursing specialists will be responsible for very complex cases and client treatment. On occasions nursing care can not only be novel and with novel or unexperienced practice or special attention is needed in arranging care.

1.4 2. Oncology Nursing

Oncology is one of the most rewarding, yet challenging fields in nursing. As an oncology nurse, you work with patients on their cancer journey. There are so many treatments and surgeries involved in care, making it essential for oncology nurses to stay on top of treatment regimens. Developing therapeutic relationships with cancer patients is fundamental. For many patients, the thought of going through cancer treatment seems like an impossible and daunting task. However, oncology nurses are there to provide hope and guidance, educating patients on what to expect during treatment. Patients undergoing cancer treatment need to be equipped with preventive knowledge. Often, oncology nurses are the final care provider before sending a patient home, so equipping patients with supplies and the knowledge they need before leaving is crucial.

Symptom management is another huge part of an oncology nurse's job. The ability to quickly respond to a patient's need, and the assessment and implementation of treatment techniques for the patient's best outcome are crucial skills for an oncology nurse. With the wide variety of cancers nurses are faced with, the symptoms can also be very different. Each patient comes with their own unique history, which is why a strong differential nursing skill is needed. Along with symptom management, an oncology nurse must be able to provide psychosocial care. A cancer diagnosis doesn't just affect a patient physically; it challenges their social and mental health as well. To care for a cancer patient in a holistic manner, oncology nurses are needed to provide psychosocial care encompassing an individual's mind, heart and even their living environment.

Interdisciplinary collaboration is a key aspect of improving patient care and outcomes. Good connections between multidisciplinary healthcare members mixed with specialist knowledge and skills shared in the oncology care delivery system, results in high-quality care for cancer patients. In conjunction with doctors, nurses also play a vital role in clinical trials and research. Protocol compliance with detailed documentation, drug administration, management of complex side effects, patient assessment, and frequent patient follow up care, are key nursing indicators of the success of the completion of clinical trials. In the cancer care field, delivering care that listens and shows compassion can be just as important as care that cures. Oncology nurses are at the frontline of patient provider communication. Growing old with cancer is becoming the norm, and patients need hope of longer survival along with better quality time. Patient touch points, symptom management charts, and an acuity app are essential tools in helping devote more time to patient care. With the increase in the number of cancer patients and rapidly advancing treatment systems, the specialization of oncology nursing will continue to evolve, creating a better world for cancer patients everywhere.

2.1. Role and Responsibilities of Oncology Nurses

There are many specialist areas in nursing, and each area has a variety of different roles. As with the wider nursing family, the registered nurses (RNs)/practitioners have a broad range of roles, which include, but are not limited to, direct patient care, education, care coordination, research, care quality assurance, and being advocates for those in their care. There are often distinct roles with different titles encompassed within these areas. Within specialist nursing it can be a bit more confusing, with some of the role titles containing the specialty area or the role itself and others not; these can change not just between specialties but also in different workplaces. Here, some of the roles that fall within the label of a specialist cancer/oncology nurse are about direct patient

care, which is the most well-known image of nurses, working with patients directly, whether that's helping professionals like doctors administer treatment, such as drugs or radiotherapy, or looking directly after each patient's wound and similar tasks (Kapra et al., 2023). There are, however, many more direct patient care roles and ones that support this image that are highly important but perhaps not widely understood.

Oncology nurses care for people who have cancer, monitoring patients, administering therapy, and acting as a patient support system. They have to be vigilant for the side effects of the treatments while ensuring that patients are well-versed about their chemotherapy or other treatments and what they can anticipate. They can manage care and be an advocate for a patient, ensuring that they have everything they require and that their care is properly coordinated. But they also offer an enormous amount of psychological support through trial periods. This can include giving patients and their families the space to reflect on the feeling that the diagnosis has brought about, as well as more practical assistance and information. Recruiting nurses who undertake similar screening tasks was explored, looking at patient satisfaction and costs. When it comes to cancer patients, employing nurses such as these might improve adjustment rates and significantly reduce the amount of emergency room visits and admission. Compassionate abilities are particularly significant in order to be an effective cancer nurse. With the complexity of nursing tasks, other emotional support solutions that rely on patients' confidence in nurses have also been shown to substantially improve patient survival. However, RNs that work in intense emotional treatment situations often encounter signs of compassion fatigue sooner rather than later. Keeping up to date is vital, as is a passion for remaining up-to-the-minute with tumor care, and the role nurses play in this has been considered a substantial barrier to outpatient nursing events. Being knowledgeable about cancer or oncology is called a passion because nurses demand a higher level of professional integrity and should be properly prepared to perform such tasks and have a better understanding of what would be expected beforehand.

1.5 3. Critical Care Nursing

Critical care nurses provide highly specialized direct care to patients with life-threatening illnesses. They require advanced levels of clinical judgment, knowledge, and skills to manage rapidly changing, often highly complex patient conditions. Critical care nurses frequently care for patients on life-support systems. A sophisticated array of technologies is used to manage patients who are either at risk for, or are experiencing problems primarily with essential systems, as well as impending failure of one other system. The vast majority of critically ill patients in the ICU are physiologically unstable with multiple complex health care problems, recovering from major surgery or have pre-existing complex health-care needs (Caroline Stayt et al., 2022). This patient population is high-intensity and high-dependency for both nurses and medical staff. Therefore, critical care patients require significant interventions, investigations, and continuous monitoring and assessment (Page et al., 2019). In addition to nursing care, critical care nurses undertake highly skilled technical procedures and interventions, where the potential outcomes may be high or risky. The pace at which the interventions are carried out often means minimal margin for error.

The care required varies dependent on the infirmity of the patient and various modes of treatments. Many interventions and nursing strategies involve high-stakes decision-making, with a narrow margin for error and can have life-threatening repercussions if untoward events occur. Clinical decision-making made by critical care nurses is best practice driven, and in conjunction with medical staff and the wider multidisciplinary team. Clinical sense and anticipation of acute clinical problems are paramount to prevent deterioration and in the resolution and intervention of crises. Furthermore, the rapid assessment of ongoing information to care for the patient remains of

paramount importance when faced with uncertainty and time-limited critical interventions. Given the rapid evolution of acute disorders and/or sudden change in stability of the critically-ill patient, care is unpredictable, where outcomes of the multiple threats to the patient may alter in a split second. As a result, it is more of an art form than specific knowledge. The art of nursing involves problem-solving and for that reason dealing with new, unfamiliar situations and managing uncertainty should be a norm.

3.1. Role and Responsibilities of Critical Care Nurses

Specialist nurses enhance care pathways. For patients with non-ST elevation myocardial infarction (NSTEMI) it is impossible to provide care without nurses (Deaton et al., 2016). The diverse blend of specialist heart workforce, encompassing cardiac and heart failure nurses, and advanced practice nurses are making an increasingly essential and key contribution to medical care through diagnosis, treatment, and stipulation of data and nurture to patients and their families. There is broad consensus that patients with NSTEMI are benefiting from the employment of these workforces, in part because they provide the organisational continuity that ensures the patients obtain the most appropriate care.

With a diversified mix of nursing experts, the precise arrangement of each service sector cannot be replicated at other healthcare associations. However, the comprehensive roles, exercises, and duties of ACS nurses known to benefit from many diverse service settings likely to hold broadly comparable parts, ergo the results are applicable more broadly. Importantly, the nursing contribution to the care of patients with NSTEMI is demonstrably diverse and functions as specially crafted, integrated service. Broadcast via ‘fast track’ clinics, ward round attendance, primary responsibility for patient education, audit activity, and enrolment of patients into secondary treatment clinics. The clinical utility of their experience and inherent faith in their analytic or procedural skills mean their involvement in patient care activities that transcend traditional boundaries.

1.6 4. Pediatric Nursing

Pediatric nursing is the care of infants, children, and adolescents. Major advances in medical science and technology have resulted in the reduction of infants and children mortality rates over the past 30 years. Despite these changes, there are still a considerable number of children who have critical or potential critical health problems that require skilled care. Children are not small adults and are usually unable to describe their symptoms or condition accurately. Moreover, in children, the assessment of heart rate, respiratory rate, blood pressure, and the interpretation of laboratory values are significantly different from those of adults. All of these have created challenges for the care of pediatric patients and necessitated the development of a specialty in nursing. It is important that the nurse assessing and treating children be either a pediatric nurse or a nurse with extensive individualized preparation in the special skills of pediatric nursing. Pediatric nurses must use approaches that befit the developmental parameters of children and must be alert to signs of child abuse. Pediatric nurses must be skilled in both channeling medical caring to children and in nonverbal and verbal communication, which is energetically and emotionally tailored to children and their family. As with adult medicine, the obvious role of nursing is health promotion and disease prevention. Changes in the family structure and women role in society have driven an increase in the number of single-parent and single-income families. Other changes, such as increases in dual-income families and socioeconomic factors, have fostered the traditional family's evolution. The influence of the family as a major component in a child's life has resulted in an increase in pediatric nurses' involvement in educational activities. Pediatric nurses educated families about child development, health management, illness prevention and traffic and home

safety. The PNP works collaboratively within a multidisciplinary team approach; family, child and other health professionals and participates at the initiation, continuation and end-of-life care of pediatric oncology patients. Collaboration between nursing and medical staff in the area of special care units, particularly the development of multidisciplinary roles, have been found productive in the assessment and management of critical health issues with households (Christensen & Akcasu, 1999). This role has been articulated via comprehensive medication review, family communication and reporting, and case management between the household. Improved communication and collaboration could enhance results. The roles and skills developed by pediatric nurses are consonant with the emotional and psychological aspects of the care of the child who is ill and critically ill, the child who required ongoing improved health care, and the child and family requiring a palliative care approach. Developed coping strategies for children with illness, discussing issues related to long-time hospitalization, chronic or disabling illness, and end-of-life care. Coping strategies for families and children alternate to major health care transitions related to treatment success and failure is discussed. Subsequently, the role of pediatric nursing in enhancing health consequences for infants, young kids, and adolescents with significant health problems is delineated, via monitoring of the developmental stage, review of the nursing care concerns, modeling of the possible form of care, and effectiveness query process.

4.1. Role and Responsibilities of Pediatric Nurses

Pediatric nursing is a specialty that focuses on the care of newborns, infants, children and adolescents whose age (0-18 years) is still incomplete, so the care given is very different from adult nursing care. The care of pediatric patients consist of several aspects, namely care regarding their physical development and prevention of diseases of various types by promoting health, care enhancement of sick and vulnerable children and their families, as well as rehabilitation and strengthening of children's condition when facing chronic physical and mentality issues.

The first is the role of the pediatric nurse herself, who is responsible for assessing the health needs of children, planning and providing nursing care to help them implement health recovery and develop in health terms. Pediatric nursing care should be able to provide comfort for pediatric patients with a variety of socialization such as playgroup and image videos or pictures on the walls of the pediatric nursing room. Besides, good and effective communication is a must. Pediatric nurses must have the ability to communicate with children according to the child's developmental level. Similarly, children's families are also nurses' duty and manners in providing information on patient health because the love of parents for children is enormous (Christensen & Akcasu, 1999). Although nursing school graduates already have basic knowledge of pediatric nursing care, self-development by often reading and attending lectures will improve their knowledge of pediatric nursing care. Last but not least, pediatric ward nurses must be able to work closely with multidisciplinary teams to improve pediatric patient health. There are many dynamics between pediatric patients and their families that pediatric nurses must understand. Pediatric nurses must also have good collaboration and communication skills with the team. In conducting pediatric nursing care, it must be empathetic, caring and loving. The services provided are to consider the health and safety of patients and of course must provide comfort for pediatric patients and their families.

1.7 5. Psychiatric Nursing

Psychiatric nursing, also known as mental health nursing, is a specialized branch of nursing that focuses on the care of individuals who are experiencing mental health disturbances. Experienced nurses in the mental health field work with individuals, families, and communities, where they contribute to recovery from mental health challenges and help to overcome stigma associated with

mental health difficulties. Offering empathy, precious time, and a compassionate attitude are essential while relating to individuals who suffer from mental illness, a challenge that nurses meet often. Further, the preventive, health promotion, and treatment roles undertaken in this field can be daunting, as nurses balance safety and well-being against the individual rights and freedoms of their patients (Hurley et al., 2022).

Comprehensive mental health assessments are the key to effective patient management in this field. Psychiatric nurses' duties include the establishment of a nursing diagnosis, formulating a nursing care plan, and evaluation of the validity of the treatment administered. Nursing diagnosis is the process in which the nurse seeks to identify the patient's mental health needs, determine the root causes, and elaborate on the patient's experience. The strategy for patient care should reflect these findings and be individualized to meet the patient's needs. During the time when the patient is critically vulnerable, the nurse must work to create a trusting and communicative relationship with the individual who endures such suffering. Skilled mental health nurses are well trained to implement therapeutic communication and have extensive experience in its use. In this field of expertise, mental health nursing practitioners advance continuously, focusing their training in crisis intervention and therapy skills. Psychiatric nurses can work with multidisciplinary teams, such as psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, music therapists, teachers, occupational therapists, and patient attendants. Psychiatric nurses are also involved in patient rehabilitation therapy and promote the patient's commitment to this process.

5.1. Role and Responsibilities of Psychiatric Nurses

The mental health setting is a complex environment which delivers treatment, support and care for people experiencing mental health distress, sometimes under significant constraints; criticism is also leveled at this crucial area of health treatment (Hurley et al., 2022). Psychiatric nurses work in these areas; currently few studies have rigorously analysed the work of psychiatric nurses, exploring in detail what they do. The few that have often focus on nurses in a very specific environment, for instance inpatient wards, leading to a knowledge gap regarding the more community aspects of psychiatric nursing. Little consideration has been given to examining how nurses themselves describe their role. The rapid expansion of community mental health nursing in response to national policies impacts on understanding of this specialism, as the rapid expansion of posts and focus in task-centered brief intervention challenges traditional notions of the role. Consequently, the aims of this scoping review are to identify and describe the breadth of psychiatric nursing roles in mental health, whilst examining how psychiatric nurses describe their role and what they do. Informed by this, it aims to discuss future research needs and the implications for educators and practicing professionals. Broadly there is some sense of overlap with other nursing specialisms and that part of the role can be characterized by the elements of nursing not which are constrained within sanctioned activities and are concerned with basic patient care, such as taking vital signs and providing food. However, psychiatric nurses also commonly perform roles it would be inappropriate or unlikely to see outside the mental health setting. The vast majority of individuals having contact with patients in the mental health setting were recorded as nursing staff – over 90% of contacts compared with a combined total of less than 7% for staff such as clinical psychologists, occupational therapists, outpatient care workers, and social workers, with doctors accounting for just 1.3% of contacts.

1.8 6. Common Skills and Competencies Across Specialist Nursing Roles

Specialist Nurses can be found in a broad range of healthcare settings and often work across professional boundaries within multidisciplinary teams. They may work with a wide variety of patients in a variety of settings, often managing the care delivered to that group of patients.

However, despite these variations across roles, there are some fundamental skills and competencies which apply to Specialist Nurses across all areas of practice. Firstly, a basic foundation of nursing skills and knowledge, well-developed critical thinking and effective communication are essential tools for the Specialist Nurse, with an ability to assess a patient holistically and to plan care as part of a multidisciplinary team. Beyond this there are some common principles and ways of working which are applicable to specialist nurses across all roles. These are primarily centred on an understanding of patient needs and how these can be met collaboratively within services. With a broad remit and a wide selection of patients, good knowledge of the area is also important. Alongside this the ability to be adaptable and resilient in the face of change or stressful situations and the ability to be supportive when presented with complex, unknown, or hard to meet patient needs is also important.

Specialist roles within nursing can also act as a resource to others by participating in research, teaching other health care professionals or patients about their specialty, or by advocating for improved services. Developing one's own competence is embedded in lifelong learning as nurses encounter new health care technologies and procedures. The knowledge base for nursing is also expanding, with nurses working more autonomously within multidisciplinary settings. Continuous updating of knowledge is particularly important when nurses are specialising in a particular area of practice. Part of this is actively seeking out information, reflecting on current practice and learning both from mistakes and achievements. Mentoring, both giving and receiving, can also assist in developing competency. Staying in touch with current practice may help the nurse work in a context-sensitive or evidence-based manner. This will also have important implications for patients and their families who have the right to know that the care they are receiving is safe and of a high standard. At the same time, nurses are working with increased cultural diversity in their patient cohort. Cultural competence concerns the ability to understand, communicate with, and effectively interact with people across cultures. This is not only important in being able to effectively establish and maintain care, but also in the efficacy of medication compliance. Further, it is likely that gaining an insight into the background of patients can help nurses negotiate the changing terrain of their work and provide services that more effectively meet patient needs.

1.9 7. Conclusion

There are diverse specialist nursing roles that shape the delivery of safe, high-quality patient care services, the conduct of clinical research, and the shaping of health policy. Numerous nursing specializations are interconnected and can improve the outcomes and long-term effects of patients' health situations. Drawing attention to 3 of these roles that are rooted within specialist nursing, the aim of this literature review is to consider the interaction of these roles. A thematic discussion is conducted by adopting a non-technical style of writing, accessible to the general public. Secondly, attention is paid to the development and support for specialist practitioners. The literature discussions are informed by a set of expert interviews that are summarized in a more technical section at the beginning of this report.

Specialist nurses are noted to offer readily-accessible support and information to patients who might otherwise experience fragmented care. Good relationships are noted within specialist nurse services in cases where there are opportunities for regular contact. This argument is supported since there are seen to be positive relations between the numbers of patients choosing medication compliance talking with specialist nurses and how they rate the quality of their care (Tarrant et al., 2008). This relationship is interesting and suggests that rather than occurring naturally, relationships between patients and specialist practitioners have to be fostered. This is likely to be

because there is an absence of awareness concerning the role of such practitioners in patient care, and a number of other factors.

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