

## **The Chief Nursing Officer's Review of the Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting Contribution to Vulnerable Children and Young People: Implications for Education – The CPHVA's Perspective**

The CPHVA welcomes the Chief Nursing Officer's Review of the nursing, midwifery contribution to the health and well being of vulnerable children and young people. The Review draws on the Green Paper *Every Child Matters (DOH 2004)*. The views of children, and young people have been contributed to by a broad spectrum of opinions, from stakeholders in a series of consultation events.

The Review sets the strategic direction for the nursing midwifery and health visiting professions and provides advice for service commissioners, managers and other agencies on how to develop and provide an appropriately skilled workforce to promote the well-being of vulnerable children and young people. The Review also addresses the roles of the nurse, midwife, and health visitor working in various settings and considers how they can be deployed to complement other services, maximise the benefits to vulnerable children and their families. Key issues are identified. These include gaps and omissions in service, fragmented care, mismatch between the expectation of vulnerable children, young people and their families and the skills and knowledge of the nursing workforce. Other issues identified were the need for more effective leadership, governance and integrated, whole workforce planning systems.

### **Implications for Education**

Educational development is subject to quality assurance systems. These need to be fair, rigorous, transparent, cost effective, designed according to the needs of the client, validated, linked to major reviews and benchmarked quality standards that come from a national framework, aimed at reducing duplication as suggested by *Streamlining Quality Assurance in Health Care Education (DOH 2003)*.

The CNO's Review stresses the need for flexible, seamless care delivery, improved inter-professional, multidisciplinary approaches including the development of extended leadership roles for vulnerable children and young people.

In interpreting the findings and recommendations, there is clear indication that education will form a key role in improving and developing child protection services in health and social care organisations. The issues posed have been interpreted here for education developments. Any educational development involving nurses, midwives and health visitors will need to be sanctioned by the regulator the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), commissioners and higher education institutions.

Interpreted, the role of the NMC is clear. The Council has existing powers to developed standards through consultation processes with key stakeholders, the public, registrants, Workforce Development Confederations, Primary Care Trusts and HEIs. Parallel to or following this, education commissioners will need to develop systems that foster the purchase and delivery of appropriate inter-professional, multidisciplinary training for the workforce from health and social care organisations.

From the issues identified and recommendations suggested in the Review, the following implications for education providers may have to be considered.

Nurses, midwives, school nurses and health visitors will need access to child protection programmes that are based on agreed standards and competencies, practice portfolio linked, mentor/practice teacher supported and validated by frameworks directed by the NMC. The outcomes/ competencies posed are not exhaustive, but serve only as an initial interpretation of what the education implications of the CNO's Review could be:

- Programmes will need to be inter-professional, integrated child and young person focused. In light of this, education programmes would need to review their current programmes for nurses, midwives and health visitors.
- Practitioners will need theory and practice based learning at a level commensurate with the individual's level of learning.
- Improved skills and knowledge in the identification of factors and their implications in contributing to vulnerability in the antenatal period and early postnatal period.
- The knowledge and skills to engage in planning and executing inter-professional projects aimed at supporting potentially vulnerable children and their families.
- A practical understanding of how care delivery can be more integrated in meeting the holistic and mental health needs of vulnerable children and adolescents.
- An improved understanding of the support needed for families and children at risk and how these can be best provided.
- A detailed understanding of how children, adolescents and their families can be empowered to accessed services.
- Equipped with the skills to ensure that vulnerable children and young people remain safe.
- An in-depth understanding of how to deliver needs-driven appropriate community focus public health activities for vulnerable children, young people and their families.
- The abilities to develop, lead and evaluate community based child protection services.
- The skills and knowledge to use appropriate inter-professional electronic, communication and networks in sharing information of child protection issues and recognise their significance for the vulnerable child and young person.
- An appreciation of the role of the practitioner in holistically caring for vulnerable children and young people in first contact/acute, long-term care, community settings and the planning of care when the individual is transferred between services.

- The ability to provide an integrated service whilst developing systems that allow, for speedy identification of vulnerable children and young people in their care.
- An ability to negotiate health outcomes for the vulnerable child and young person that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound.
- An understanding of their child protection role in specialised areas e.g. named health visitor, school nurse, family nurse, specialist community public health nurse, Sure Start, Children's Trusts, practice nursing, school nursing, Walk in Centres, A&E, NHS Direct and the benefits of co-located children's services.
- A recognition of the role of social services, the multidisciplinary team and allied health care services in providing a seamless services for vulnerable children, young people and their families.
- Improved listening skills for working with children for children - Knowledge of how to maximise their emotional well being.
- The ability to develop protocols and procedures for practice development and Review.
- Opportunities to engage in continuous professional development.

## References

- Byers P. Report on the Practice Educator Project. Community Practitioners' and Health Visitors' Association. London: CPHVA, 2002.
- Department of Health of Health. Streamlining Quality Assurance in Health Care Education. London: 2003.
- Department of Health. The Chief Nursing Officer's Review of the Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting Contribution to Vulnerable Children and Young People: Implications for Education. London: Department of Health. Every Child Matters. Department of Health London: 2004.