

# Outline for potential participants

General Practice Nurses:  
articulating their role and  
their value



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Part of the NHSE/I GPN 10 Point Plan  
programme of work

NHS England and NHS Improvement



**Sonnet**  
Advisory & Impact

**General Practice Nurses (GPNs)** are an accepted and important part of the NHS and community care landscape. With part of their role closing the gap in services left by a shortage of GPs, practices have realised that they bring more value than that, and support community wellbeing in wider ways.

However, that value has not been articulated, and no measurement framework has been put around their roles to evidence it. It is understood that the public values their presence, but why: what is it about them that is so special? What is the effect on the patient, on the practice, and on the community? How does that effect arise, and what could make them more effective? How can opportunities for improvement within PCNs be identified and embraced? How can we best maintain and develop GPN-led services and support?

An evaluation is proposed that will develop answers to these questions and more. The findings will inform action, and will meet the following objectives:

- Recognise and articulate the value that GPNs bring to PCNs and the communities within which they sit
- Identify the enablers and blockers to GPNs delivering that value so that they may be addressed
- Develop the profession's voice and influence
- Grow the inflow of expertise into this branch of nursing
- Encourage investment in the further development of the role of GPNs
- Develop guidance for PCNs and general practices as to how to get the best out of the presence of GPNs
- Provide a foundation for leadership and other training.

**The deliverables** from the evaluation will emerge in four phases. In summary they are:

1. Build an understanding of the roles and the value they bring, using multiple methods and working with six to ten general practices across three areas;
2. Test that understanding with a similar sized group from a different three areas, and refine the values and framework;
3. Gather information from a sample of general practices across England in accordance with that framework;
4. Ongoing measurement by NHS England and general Practices to support ongoing learning and improvement.

The present commissioned study covers phases 1 and 2 only.

## The approach to the evaluation

This will centre around the stories that the GPNs themselves can tell in an Action Research workshop setting with others from their profession. They will work together to develop a wide-ranging view of value and how it is delivered and enhanced. It will be supported by interviews with others in the practices in which they work, and with external stakeholders including other public service agencies. It will develop a view of financial and operational costs and benefit from the practice's viewpoint, and evaluate the GPNs' impact on the patients and wider community.

It will focus on their role and value, but will not look at the quality of their clinical work, starting from the assumption that the highest of professional standards for patient care are always maintained.

## Project Participants: the role and commitment

General practices are being approached to support either of phases 1 and 2. It will involve:

- Their GPNs taking part in two half day workshops (one only for phase 2 participants) over 3 months;
- 2 to 3 other professionals available for an interview of up to an hour each
- Providing financial and operational information about the practice, with necessary explanations to aid interpretation.
- For phase 2 only there will also be a questionnaire to all staff, and to the Patient Representative Group

**No confidential information will be shared** with other practices or any third party beyond the Sonnet and Sheffield Hallam teams. They will use it to provide blended views of value and cost-benefit.

**The benefits** to the practice and the GPNs involved lie in the opportunity for learning and development, as well as enhanced profile within their local area as the study reaches out to other agencies and influencers.

## Who is Sonnet ?

The project is being led by Sonnet, with support from Sheffield Hallam University's Health Research Institute and Wyman Associates.

Sonnet is a consultancy focusing on all types of organisation that look to bring impact. Structured as a social enterprise, having spun out from its origins first in Baker Tilly (now RSM) and then in Bates Wells, it is now partially owned by Sheffield Hallam University, and uses 65% of its profits to grant-fund pilot projects and other innovations that might otherwise be too early-stage to get funded. It brings together a diverse and experienced team of: Strategic and operational consultants, Economists, Social Researchers, Accountants and Corporate Financiers.

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Registered Office: 45 Flitwick road, Ampthill, Bedfordshire, MK45 2NS

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