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Department of Education
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St Chads Court
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To: GP practices, CCGs, Responsible Officers, HEIs, LMCs
Sent via Email



13th July 2016

Dear Colleagues,

Student nurses indemnity on placement in GP practices.

This letter sets out our current understanding of indemnity cover arrangements for student nurses on placement in a GP practice. It is unlikely that a clinical negligence claim would be bought against a student as in most cases they would be present as an observer or in a directly-supervised role with the supervising doctor or nurse retaining responsibility for any patient contact. We believe student nurse placements in general practice carries a very low risk if general practice professionals take the following steps:

1. Practice nurses acting as nurse mentors hold a mentorship qualification that meets the NMC guidelines.
2. The practice ensures all clinical members of GP practice have medical indemnity cover.
3. GP practices should sign a Learning Development Agreement with relevant university to clarify what student nurses are able to carry out and at what stage of their study.
4. Ideally an honorary educational contract is signed between the student nurse and GP Practice/Nurse Mentors to clarify role and responsibilities for all parties.

Training and supervision is the responsibility of the primary care provider (e.g. practice partners) who retains responsibility for clinical consultations, decisions and treatment, irrespective of the involvement of students, and they should ensure that students are appropriately supervised at all times. It is expected that the level of supervision is based on an appropriate assessment of the competence of the student, and that duties delegated are in accordance with GMC guidelines.

In the unlikely event that a student nurse commits clinical negligence while working at a GP practice, the practice could be the focus of any such litigation. Therefore, GP practices should ensure that their indemnity cover extends to the actions of student nurses working on their premises and under their supervision. The three largest medical indemnity organisations have advised HEE that they do not need to be notified individually if practices have medical or nursing students on placement or otherwise involved in their education.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Lisa Bayliss-Pratt
**Director of Nursing and
Deputy Director of Education & Quality
Health Education England**

Professor Simon Gregory
**Regional Director and Dean of Education
and Quality, Midlands and East
Health Education England**