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Dear Colleague

Framework for the Administration of Medicines by Career Level 3 and 4 Health Care Support Workers in Scotland

As part of the Scottish Government's commission to enhance and develop the role of the HCSW, NHS Education for Scotland has worked with key stakeholders to develop a Framework for the Administration of Medicines by Career Level 3 and 4 Health Care Support Workers in Scotland.

The framework will support employers to consider the professional and legal aspects of medicines administration by health care support workers, (including vaccine administration) where this is becoming a core competency for the Level 3 and 4 workforce.

Publication of the Development and Education Framework for level 2-4 Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professions (NMAHP) Health care Support Workers (HCSWs) in October 2022, supports the development of core knowledge, skills, and behaviours in the four pillars of practice. Medicines administration is specified as a core competency for Level 3 and 4 HCSWs. The attached Framework for the Administration of Medicines by Level 3 and 4 HCSWs in Scotland sets out the national standards and legal frameworks to be followed in practice where HCSWs can administer medication, freeing capacity of the registered workforce to focus on providing more complex care and treatment interventions.

The Scottish Government's Health and Social Care: National Workforce Strategy (2022) sets out a framework to achieve a vision of **a sustainable, skilled workforce with attractive career choices where all are respected and valued for the work they do. This includes a commitment to achieving the right workforce, with the right skills, in the right place at the right time. Further it makes clear the requirement to support and nurture our workforce, ensuring that employers offer roles and development opportunities that staff find rewarding and fulfilling.**

Changing the skill mix of healthcare teams is a strategy for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of healthcare and may offer part of the solution to meet the challenges currently faced across health and social care teams. Whilst acknowledging that richer nursing skill mix, with a higher percentage of registered professionals is evidenced to provide better quality of care, higher safety, and higher patient satisfaction it



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is also reported that a rich mix of staff is associated with improved patient outcomes. The Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019 aims to ensure that appropriate staffing levels are in place to support high quality care. It is increasingly likely and intentional that the use of Common Staffing Methodology will result in skill mix changes within teams and allow employment and deployment of a registered and unregistered healthcare workforce to be increasingly efficient and effective.

Health Care Support Workers are a vital part of our workforce, supporting the delivery of healthcare as part of the multi-disciplinary/multi-agency team. We value the care, treatment and support that nursing, midwifery and allied health professional HCSWs deliver every day to service users, clients and patients, under delegation and supervision of the registrant workforce. To ensure that the care and treatment interventions provided by HCSWs are safe, clinically effective and of the highest quality, it remains our intent to continue to provide enabling and supportive guidance to HCSWs, as well as their employers, managers and supervisors, together with underpinning learning and development opportunities.

Yours Sincerely

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