

NORWAY

Norwegian Nurses Organisation (NNO)
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Background Reading /Critical Mass

In the last decades the Norwegian government has introduced numerous reforms improve the quality of healthcare. Despite these reforms patients experience fragmented and incoherent healthcare services. This refers especially to those in need of interdisciplinary and multi-level services. Hence, there is a gap between the population's need for healthcare services, the quality of services, and health personnel's expertise and competence.

The growth of advanced healthcare services, especially in the municipalities calls for an expansion in the nurse's role, requiring increased specialization, expertise and competency. NNO is convinced that Advanced Clinical Nurses will play a vital role in improving the quality of healthcare services. The educational programs should be standardized on masters level and dimensioned to meet present and future needs for specialized nurses in specialized and primary care.

Definitions

To narrow the described gap, a master's nursing degree in Advanced Clinical Practice has been established in Norway. The program is based on the well-established education found in more than 60 countries with the title Nurse Practitioner (NP), Advanced Practice Nurse (APN) or Advanced Clinical Nurse (ACN).

Education

Five Master's Degree Programs were considered by the Directorate of Health in 2015 to be "advanced clinical" master's degree. The criteria for obtaining the status of Advanced Clinical master's degree education is a minimum of 120 credits, with the students receiving mentored and guided clinical practice. The program focuses on new or extended nursing roles in the healthcare service. The criteria is very general, saying little about the content of the education. We assume therefor that there are major variations related to theoretical and practical content. Specialist nurse education lacks structure, contents and quality, level, sizing and national certification.

Protected Titles/ Regulation/ Prescription Authority

Currently the title of NP/APN/ACN are not protected in Norway, either nor national certification. These nurses do not have prescription authority. Midwives and Public Health Nurses for children and adolescents have limited prescriptions authority. The role of Advanced Clinical Nurse is relatively new in Norway, so the demand for their competence and expertise is currently low. The universities' capacity to educate these master's degrees is therefore not regulated by the government.

Background Reading/Web Links/ References:

Existing Master's Degree Programs today are:

- University of Oslo: <http://www.uio.no/studier/program/geriatrisk-sykepleie-master/index.html>
- University College of Southeast Norway: <https://www.usn.no/>
- NTNU (Norwegian University of Science and Technology) Ålesund: <https://www.ntnu.no/alesund>
- Lovisenberg Diaconal University College <https://www.ldh.no/studietilbud/maks>

Current reforms from the government:

- The Coordination reform:
<https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/d4f0e16ad32e4bbd8d8ab5c21445a5dc/no/pdfs/stm200820090047000dddpdfs.pdf>
- The Primary Healthcare reform:
<https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/d30685b2829b41bf99edf3e3a7e95d97/no/pdfs/stm201420150026000dddpdfs.pdf>
- The national plan for health and hospital services:
<https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/7b6ad7e0ef1a403d97958bcb34478609/no/pdfs/stm201520160011000dddpdfs.pdf>

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