CLINICAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK FOR ART, DRAMA, & MUSIC THERAPISTS



NHS England

The British Association of Dramatherapists

BRITISH ASSOCIATION OF ART THERAPISTS

BAMT BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR MUSIC THERAPY

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Foreword

In July 2024, BAAT, BADth and BAMT began working on three workstreams supported with funding from Health Education England. This document arose from Project C: Developing a Clinical Career Framework for Art, Drama & Music Therapists.

The aim of our project was to collaboratively develop a clear career framework which supports Art, Drama and Music Therapists and employers to better understand how skills and knowledge develop across a career within these professions. Also, to enable those working at a pre-registration and post registration level to be able to achieve their potential, in the way that fits their changing aspirations and circumstances, across the different stages of their career. This framework looks at a clinical levels of practice only. NHSE recognise that there are different management and strategic roles but these require a different skill set from those included in this framework.

This Framework has been co-created by and for Art, Drama, & Music Therapists and is designed to showcase the skills, competencies and attributes of Art, Drama, and Music Therapy professionals at different stages in their career. It is a document where existing knowledge, skills and experience are recognised, and where opportunities for further learning and professional development needs can be identified, at all career levels, across all sectors, including the statutory, community, voluntary and private sectors. It is recommended that the professional bodies review this document every two years to ensure it is up to date.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to everyone who contributed to the development of this framework, in particular the Project Steering Group and the many Art, Drama & Music Therapists who reviewed and contributed creative case studies and films leading to the final document.

It is hoped that this framework will provide the underpinning support that is needed for an underutilised workforce.

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Introduction

This Clinical Career Development Framework has been developed to provide guidance for those working as Assistants/Support Workers and those registered with the Health and Care Professions Council working across the UK. It is not a linear framework but one which aims to best support their aspirations to learn and develop at various points in their careers. It is designed to be relevant, inclusive and accessible for all – from those who are considering this this as a career, starting an arts therapies training or apprenticeship, newly qualified, returning to practice, or further along their career path in health, social care, education, community and other services.

Being clear about the levels of clinical practice, the different stages of a career and the knowledge, skills and ways of thinking needed for these can facilitate professional development. Art, Drama, and Music Therapists enter their respective profession from across the lifespan and bring significant knowledge, skills and experience from their pre-registration work to their profession and professional practice. Maximising and recognising this helps to deliver practice and leadership which is safe and effective to help meet the needs of people who access services. There is clear evidence which demonstrates that staff who are supported by robust training and development provide improved quality of care and better outcomes for clients.

This Clinical Career Development Framework is intended to be used alongside other key documents from the respective professional bodies of BAAT, BADth and BAMT and the Standards of Proficiency and Standards of Conduct & Ethics from the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). The Framework will continue to evolve and will be influenced by changes in regulation, government policy and the professional standards and codes of practice relating to all three professions. The Framework is not meant for use in performance management disputes, or for agreeing bandings, or other terms and conditions of employment. It is designed to support practitioners to reflect critically on and articulate their contribution to the wider Allied Health Professions (AHP) and health workforce at all levels of practice.

Our professions are unique in that they are recognised as being registerable titles for Allied Health Professions (AHPs), and in the taxonomy of Psychological Professions in NHS England. For those employed in the NHS they may be employed within Allied Health Professions or Psychological Therapies services. We recognise that the Psychological Professions may be more active in some areas of the UK than others however the potential for further development and delivery of psychological provision is important to recognise.

While most Art, Drama, & Music Therapists are working in discipline specific roles; others work in generic posts where part of their professional practice is in their discipline. Practitioners may work alongside other creative therapies, such as dance movement psychotherapists and play therapists, but these professions are not covered under this framework.

This Career Development Framework recognises that many Art, Drama, & Music Therapists work in non NHS roles including education, voluntary sector, and private practice. Regardless of where they work and the aspirations they have to develop across a career, they still require the knowledge, skills and attributes to carry out their roles, leading to better outcomes for the people they work with. Appendix A contains examples of practitioners working in various sectors and at different stages of their careers. These could help you to plan your own career.

Background

This Clinical Career Development Framework is intended for use in all settings across the UK, within all sectors, and at all career levels and relates to the following professions:

- Art Therapists/ Art Psychotherapists
- Dramatherapists
- Music Therapists

Services in many sectors, including education, health and social care delivery, face financial and workforce challenges moving forward. Art, Drama, and Music Therapists have a vital role to play in service delivery, strategic planning/design and leadership, but this is not as well recognised as it should be. Explaining the value and benefits that these allied health professionals bring to the organisations in which they work can maximize the potential of and development of their existing workforce to be able to engage and meet the future service demands in public health, primary, secondary and community settings in their area.

The Clinical Career Development Framework supports all practitioners and managers to recognise existing knowledge and skills and identify areas for future learning and development. It could also be used to help managers to build a pipeline that enables staff in support roles to work in an appropriate manner to be able to gain skills, as part of a structured development plan towards training as an Art, Drama or Music Therapist.

Practitioners can face difficulties with narrow career structures, limited lead roles and career progression. This framework is designed to encourage practitioners to see the competencies they already possess and how much they can and do contribute

in practice, leadership, education, research and other associated areas. This framework relates to the individual rather than the job they are employed in. It is the aim of this framework to encourage practitioners to reflect on and consider how they want to develop professionally and make a further impact whether working full or part time and not solely to be constrained by their job role.

Where practitioners feel that existing development opportunities available to them seem limited, or don't apply directly to their role in the NHS or other organisations in which they work, this framework aims to outline realistic and relevant development and career advancement pathways. Actively managed, these pathways can offer clear and genuine development opportunities for practitioners.

This framework encourages practitioners to explore opportunities which may not be readily available in their workplace through their professional body which has an important role to play in career development. Involvement with BAAT, BADth and BAMT offers opportunities to represent their profession in various fora; continuing professional development, networking, leadership, mentorship and coaching pathways.

Uses of the framework

The framework is designed to be used by Art, Drama, and Music Therapists, their managers, and workplace educators in different ways. It is acknowledged that some people cross all three roles and overlap may be inevitable.

By Art, Drama, and Music Therapists

- to benchmark their current scope of professional practice and to support them in their roles across the range of sectors where they work
- to continue to grow within their current level of professional practice by identifying areas for development
- to guide their own professional development from assistant, newly qualified practitioner through the various levels to e.g. clinical lead, consultant, professor, etc.
- to have a development plan directly linked to their role utilising knowledge, skills and behaviours from profession and/or role specific frameworks
- to identify evidence to support personal development planning, or registration with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)

By Managers

- to support discussions that take place as part of professional development reviews, planning further training, and maximising skills to be able to continue to meet HCPC registration requirements.
- to inform and support service redesign and skill mix and to ensure equity, diversity and inclusion.
- to support workforce planning and provide clear parameters for employers when developing posts.

By Workplace Educators

- to plan and deliver education and training to meet the needs of a diverse workforce
- to plan and deliver education and training to meet the evolving needs of practitioners
- to identify opportunities for shared, inter-professional learning, which is a requirement of HCPC registration
- to plan programmes to prepare and support practitioners working at different levels of the framework.

The Career Development Framework also directly links to the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework and can be used to support the annual development review cycle.

By Higher Education Providers

●to plan and deliver education and training courses that meet the needs of a modern workplace

Four pillars of practice

The Framework is structured around four interacting Pillars of Practice which are widely used across the UK. For the purposes of this Framework the four Pillars of Practice are:

●Professional Practice;
●Facilitation of Learning (Education);
●Leadership & Management
●Evidence, Research and Development.

Underpinning these four pillars is the ongoing creative activity and development that is vital to inform and nourish our practice and the quality of interventions we offer clients.

Additional capabilities can be described that reflect the role and responsibilities of an Art, Drama, or Music Therapist, according to the primary focus of the context in which they work. These may include:

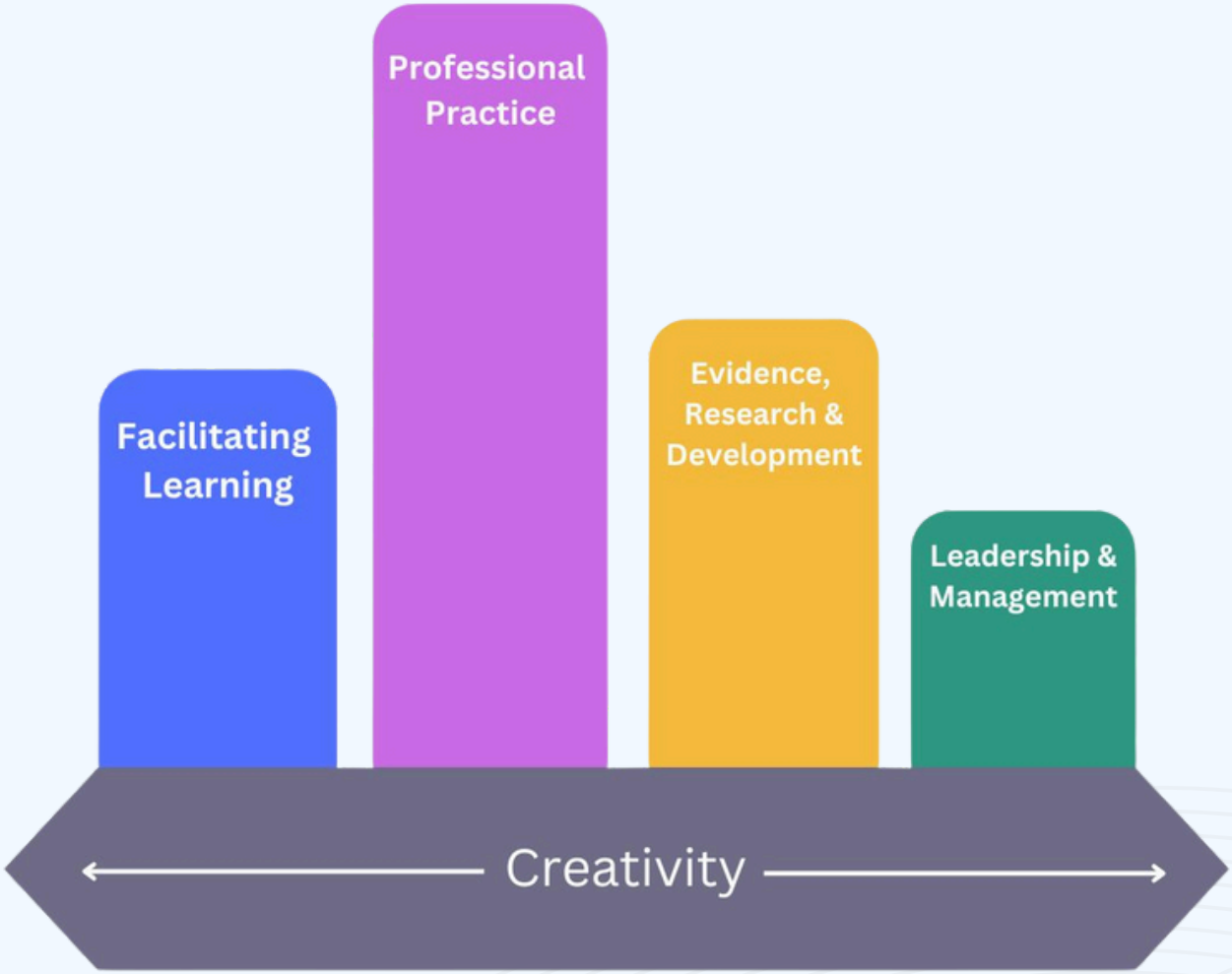
- Fellowship roles - including sponsored secondments or roles in e.g. NICE, NIHR etc.
- Public Health roles - public health is part of all our roles but could include engaging in specific public health roles.
- Digital Initiatives - including health informatics, and digital transformation.
- Entrepreneurial – including setting up in private practice, a not for profit organisation, creating a digital service.

The four Pillars of Practice descriptors

- **Professional Practice –** Art, Drama, or Music Therapy practice which is safe, effective and person-centred using judgement and evidence to inform their autonomous decisions and approaches.
- **Facilitation of Learning (Education) -** teaching, creating methods, supervising and/or assessing others through practice-based and work-based learning.
- **Leadership & Management -** Enhancing own and others' knowledge, skills and ways of thinking through teamwork; identify and design/implement professional/organisational change and strategy
- **Evidence, Research and Development –** evaluating and using evidence to inform practice and improve service delivery

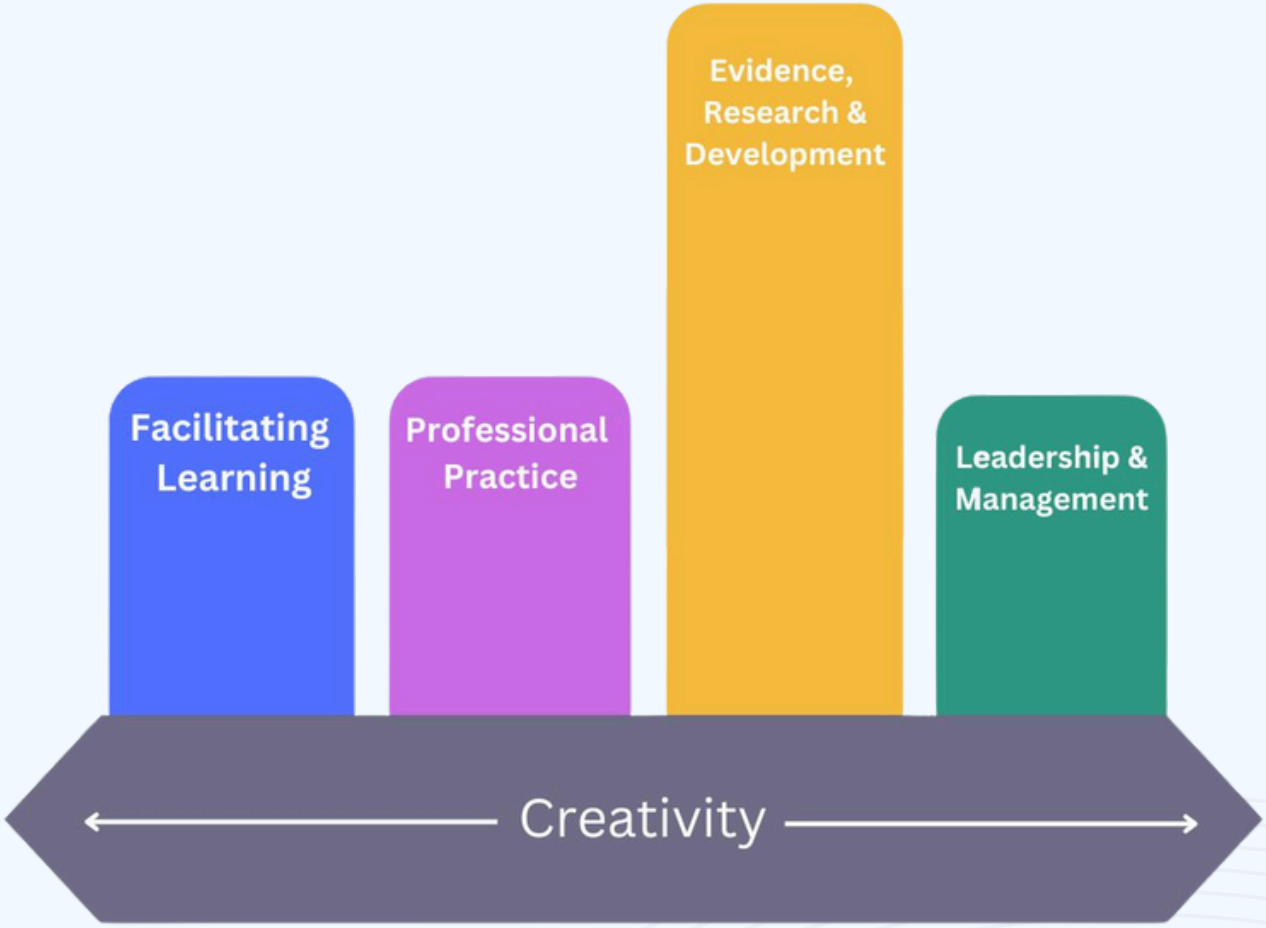
The Four Pillars of practice apply irrespective of where practitioners work, and the core capabilities listed under each pillar are set out according to the level and scope of practice. Depending on an individual's role, they may not demonstrate all or the same knowledge, skills and behaviours of each pillar all the time, but they must have the capability to do so at their current level of practice. According to the level of practice and the specific role held the emphasis on each pillar will vary.
For an Art, Drama or Music Therapist working at Proficient/Foundation Practitioner, the emphasis will relate more to the 'Professional Practice' pillar.

Proficient/Foundation Practitioner



For a Practitioner working in a Research role the ‘Evidence, Research and Development’ pillar will be more relevant.

Research Practitioner



The standards developed alongside each level of practice are aligned to the four pillars of practising as an Art, Drama, or Music Therapist.

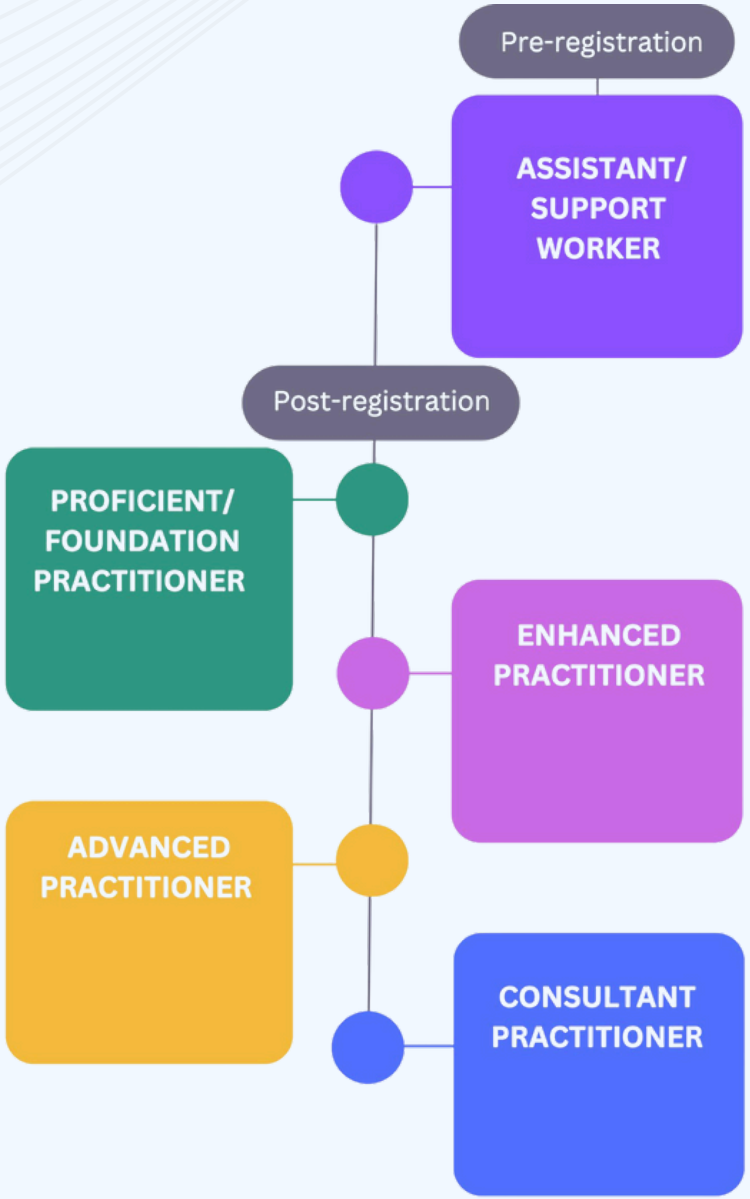
Levels of Practice

There are five main Career Framework Levels for Art, Drama, and Music Therapists which align to the NHS Career Framework levels in Figure 4. The Career Framework practice levels used in this document are as NHS England highlight 'different to the NHS pay bands which describes how staff will work and how much they will be paid'. The NHS National profiles relate to the Agenda for Change bands and not the levels of knowledge, skills and attributes outlined in this document. The levels of practice align to the four nations frameworks and terminology for AHPs.

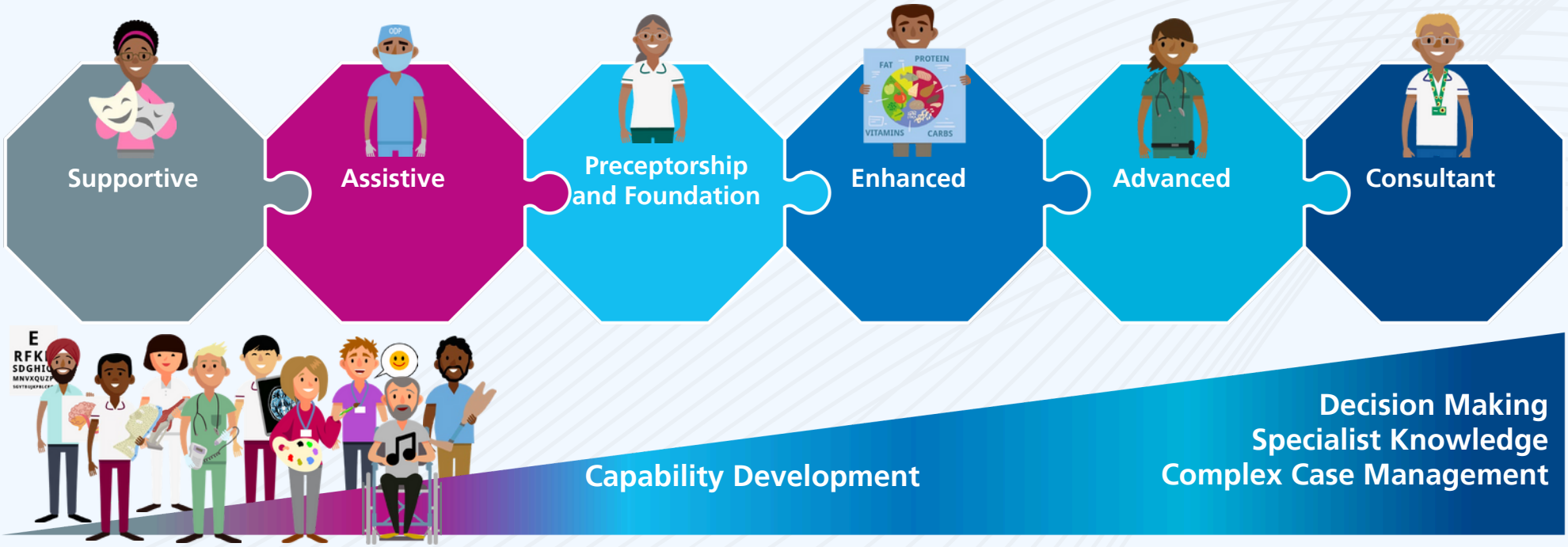
These levels relate to the individual rather than the job they are employed in. Many practitioners working outside the NHS are not in a role which is banded and undertake leadership, education and research activity well beyond their job description and this framework seeks to reflect this.

It is also worth noting that the practice levels used in this Clinical Career Development Framework are also not the same as those used in education to describe the difficulty level of a qualification attained for pre-registration.

The Career Framework allows people to identify their career framework level and existing knowledge, skills and competencies they would need to develop to move to a different role. There may be variations where levels of practice are different for people working across organisations. This framework is not intended to be rigid in terms of levels of practice.



NHS Levels of practice



Pre-registration

For the purpose of this framework the pre-registration level focuses on the role of an Arts Therapies Assistant/Support Worker. However, the framework recognises that many who choose to train as an Art, Drama or Music Therapist have begun their journey in the field of Arts in Health, as a facilitator of arts sessions and workshops to support the wellbeing of individuals or a community.

The framework recognises that Arts in Health has a vital role to play and is part of the creative health spectrum in which arts therapies also sit. Many of the skills used and developed in these roles are transferable to the skills needed as an Art, Drama or Music Therapist. These roles have not been brought into the framework at this time because Arts in Health is a wide field that also offers its own career development. However, there are a growing number of Arts in Health posts within the NHS that are supervised by Arts Therapists as part of the Arts Therapies governance structure. There is some work for professional bodies and NHS Leaders to take forward on how we might further develop these roles and bring them into this framework.

Assistant /Support Worker
People working as an Assistant/Support Worker will a play key role in assisting Art, Drama and Music Therapists by preparing materials, assisting in sessions, and supporting clients in expressing themselves through the various artforms, while also maintaining a safe and encouraging environment. They come to these roles from diverse backgrounds, usually with a focus on facilitating creative expression. They will have some factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work allied to Art, Drama and Music Therapy. They will use general skills and work to routine procedures or systems of work, with close guidance and supervision. They maintain accurate records of client progress and sessions, as well as inventory of materials.

Post-registration

Proficient/Foundation Practitioners are early stage practitioners who will have the factual and theoretical knowledge in broad contexts within a field of work. Their work is guided by standard operating procedures, protocols or systems of work, but they make judgements and work in an autonomous manner and demonstrate self-development. They may have some responsibility for supporting the practice education of students.
Enhanced Practitioners have a critical understanding of detailed theoretical and practical knowledge, they may be in specialist roles and may have practice education supervisory responsibilities. They demonstrate initiative and are creative in finding solutions to problems. They have some responsibility for team performance and service development, and they consistently undertake self-development. They may also be referred to as being in a senior role in their practice.

Advanced Practitioners have a critical awareness and knowledge of issues in the field and at the interface between different fields. They are innovative and have a responsibility for developing and changing practice and/or services in a complex and unpredictable environment. Advanced Practitioners may choose leadership careers such as professional lead for a service; healthcare research careers; pursuing an education role in healthcare. In addition, they are responsible for supporting the development of staff in other roles, e.g. support worker, proficient and Enhanced Practitioners which requires significant expertise and experience to enable provision of enhanced client care.

Consultant Practitioners have highly specialised knowledge, some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work, which they use as the basis for original thinking and/or research. They are leaders with considerable responsibility, and the ability to research and analyse complex processes. They have responsibility for service improvement or development. They may have considerable clinical responsibilities, be accountable for service delivery and innovation. Working closely with Advanced Practitioners they have responsibility for the development and delivery of a service to a population, at the highest level of the organisation. Consultant Practitioners lay a crucial role in shaping service development, influencing strategic policy, and contributing to national workforce planning. They are accountable for ensuring the safe and effective delivery of clinical services and for adhering to clinical governance frameworks. Through leadership in multidisciplinary teams, engagement with policy bodies, and involvement in professional networks, they also advocate for the recognition, sustainability, and expansion of arts therapies within health and social care systems.

Areas of Practice

The Framework provides core content which can be used as the basis from which to add role specific knowledge, skills and responsibilities and the detail associated with a discipline & specialism.

As we move through our careers, our level of practice may change, and we may choose to work in the same clinical area or across the continuum of practice. For example, we may move from clinical practice after many years of gaining clinical experience into academia where we draw on our experience while taking on a new role and working in an academic role related to the clinical area.

Specialist areas of practice refer to the specific clinical contexts in which a practitioner operates. These areas can be defined by the client group, the skill set, or the organisational context. Allied Health Professionals (AHPs) can work in these specialist areas at various levels, ranging from assistant or support worker to newly qualified registrants under supervision, right through to Consultant level.

Specialist Practice, on the other hand, involves Art, Drama, and Music Therapists who have acquired additional skills and expertise requiring further education, training, and practice beyond that of a Proficient/Foundation Practitioner. This advanced training is often supported by a recognised qualification, when available, and represents progression from ‘proficient’ to ‘consultant’.

As outlined previously there are four levels of professional development each with short descriptions of the associated Knowledge & Skills and Role Responsibilities against the Four Pillars of Practice

- Professional Practice;
- Facilitation of Learning (Education);
- Leadership & Management
- Evidence, Research and Development.

Areas of practice



Pre-registration Roles

For the purpose of this framework the pre-registration level focuses on the role of an Arts Therapies Assistant/Support Worker. However, the framework recognises that many who choose to train as an Art, Drama or Music Therapist have begun their journey in the field of Arts in Health, as a facilitator of arts sessions and workshops to support the wellbeing of individuals or a community.

The framework recognises that Arts in Health has a vital role to play and is part of the creative health spectrum in which arts therapies also sit. Many of the skills used and developed in these roles are transferable to the skills needed as an Art, Drama or Music Therapist. These roles have not been brought into the framework at this time because Arts in Health is a wide field that also offers its own career development.

However, there are a growing number of Arts in Health posts within the NHS that are supervised by Arts Therapists as part of the Arts Therapies governance structure. There is some work for professional bodies and NHS Leaders to take forward on how we might further develop these roles and bring them into this framework.

Knowledge & Skills and Role Responsibilities

Pre-registration Level: Assistant/Support Worker

- **Safe, Effective and Person-Centred Care**
- **Aware of own values, culture and position and the impact these have on own work and on others.**
- **Works within local policies and procedures**

People working as an Assistant/Support Worker will a play key role in assisting Art, Drama and Music Therapists by preparing materials, assisting in sessions, and supporting clients in expressing themselves through the various artforms, while also maintaining a safe and encouraging environment.

They come to these roles from diverse backgrounds, usually with a focus on facilitating creative expression. They will have some factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work allied to Art, Drama and Music Therapy. They will use general skills and work to routine procedures or systems of work, with close guidance and supervision. They maintain accurate records of client progress and sessions, as well as inventory of materials.

Knowledge & Skills

Pre-registration Level: Assistant/Support Worker

- KS.1.Understanding of appropriate Art, Drama or Music Therapy techniques and principles
- KS.2.Develops competence in meeting the holistic needs of clients and the wider public
- KS.3.Knowledge and skills in at least one artform and understanding of the value and evidence base of the arts
- KS.4.Understanding of the diversity of clients, the impact of discrimination and how to respond, to enable inclusive client-centred care
- KS.5.Understanding of how a practitioner's actions or inactions affect clients, other professionals and the effectiveness of clinical services
- KS.6 .Knowledge and maintenance of the core skills required for safe and effective service/ healthcare delivery e.g. record-keeping, infection prevention and control, child protection and safeguarding etc.
- KS.7.Knowledge of artistic expression and competencies
- KS.8.Knowledge of effective strategies to communicate with the diverse clients, carers, and other staff
- KS.9.Knowledge of the importance of listening to and understanding the views of clients to inform values-based practice
- KS.10.Consolidates own knowledge, skills and attitudes through receiving supervision
- KS.11.Understanding of the concept of personal resilience

Responsibilities

Pre-registration Level: Assistant/Support Worker

- Works with care to exercise judgement about actions while accepting accountability and responsibility within the limits of the role
- Supports treatment for clients presenting with a wide range of needs
- Provides interventions, liaises with other care staff, and supports evaluation of impact.
- Shares information effectively and concisely for a range of situations and contexts to ensure client safety and continuity of care
- Carries out the appropriate tasks that have been selected and delegated by an Art, Drama or Music Therapist. These may involve assisting in therapy sessions, liaison with families, and working with MDT colleagues.
- Communicates sensitive information with clients, carers and families about appointments, information and resources asking for support as needed to manage hostile, antagonistic or highly emotive situations
- Communicates effectively and appropriately by verbal, non-verbal and written means with clients, carers, colleagues and the public
- Participates in the maintenance and cleaning of equipment and resources and of clinical areas in accordance with the health and safety policy and procedures.
- Complies with policies on confidentiality, maintaining strict confidentiality regarding any information pertaining to clients.
- Acts as an advocate for clients when required and engaging in fair practice to prevent discrimination and remove barriers to support diversity of people
- Practises within the duty of care raising concerns, being open and honest with clients, reporting adverse incidents etc. and following these up
- Practises in a way which seeks to maintain the safety of clients, carers, colleagues and self at all times, following local guidance applicable to role and sector
- Demonstrates strong organisational and time management skills and the ability to maintain confidentiality and ethical standards
- Demonstrates a sensitive approach to the diverse needs of clients who access the service.

Assistant/Support Worker:
Pillars of Practice Primary Aspects

Professional Practice

- Actively listens to and reflects on the needs and views of people who access services, their families and their carers
- Is consciously aware of own values, culture and position, and the impact these have on own work and on others
- Thinks critically and reflects when making judgements, guided as necessary by others
- Works within local policies and procedures
- Communicates information effectively and concisely in a range of situations
- Implements practices that promote participation, inclusivity and the rights of people who access therapy services, their families and their carers, in line with their choices

Assistant/Support Worker:
Pillars of Practice Primary Aspects

Facilitating Learning

- Actively engages in ongoing learning, including orientation, induction, mandatory training and relevant educational/developmental opportunities
- Seeks opportunities to learn from and with others
- Considers how the learning from other work and previous life experiences can benefit current work
- Engages in, applies and records relevant learning across the four Pillars of Practice, to identify the impact and benefit of own learning for self and others, including people who access services, their families and their carers
- Supports the creation of a culture in which everyone is encouraged to reflect and constantly learn (including from mistakes), to receive and give constructive feedback, and learn from and with each other

Assistant/Support Worker:
Pillars of Practice Primary Aspects

Leadership & Management

- Acts in a manner which demonstrates person-centred values.
- Acts as a role model (for example by being welcoming) and demonstrate role modelling, including advocating for other support staff.
- Takes appropriate action when the values and practice of others should be positively recognised or requires improvement.
- Takes and demonstrates responsibility for own work and self-management.
- Alerts colleagues and/or managers to resource issues which may impact on service delivery.
- Advocates for clients, their families and carers.
- Maintains curiosity to continually develop in response to changing population needs and challenges.

Assistant/Support Worker:
Pillars of Practice Primary Aspects

Evidence, Research & Development

- Knows the importance of evaluation and outcomes in delivering safe and effective services
- Participates in service evaluation and quality improvement activities relevant to own role.
- Understands and complies with service improvement processes, including ethics, data protection and confidentiality, with support if needed.

Knowledge & Skills and Role Responsibilities

Post-registration Level: Proficient/Foundation Practitioner

- **Safe, Effective and Person Centred Care**
- **Maintains own psychological health.**
- **Professional Judgement and Decision Making**
- **Aware of own values, culture and position and the impact these have on own work and on others.**
- **Robust understanding and works within the ethical and professional standards expected as laid down in the HCPC Standards of Proficiency and the standards and guidelines set by own Professional Body Code of Conduct.**
- **Works within the national and local policies and procedures.**

People working at this level as an Art, Drama, Music Therapist will have the factual and theoretical knowledge in broad contexts within a field of work. Their work is guided by standard operating procedures, protocols or systems of work, but they make judgements and work in an autonomous manner and demonstrate self-development. They may have some responsibility for supporting the practice education of students.

Those working at practitioner level will typically have a broad scope of practice, being able to undertake a range of therapeutic interventions. Practitioners work autonomously within their scope of practice and are accountable for their actions. They use their knowledge, experience and judgement to manage uncertainty and solve problems. Their practice is informed by evidence, through engagement with research, continuing professional development (CPD) and clinical supervision.

Knowledge & Skills and Role Responsibilities

Post-registration Level: Proficient/Foundation Practitioner

- KS.1.Understanding of limitations in relation to education and training undertaken and accountability
- KS.2. Continues to develop competence in meeting the holistic needs of clients and the wider public
- KS.3. Understanding of the theoretical principles underpinning the appropriate use of their artforms.
- KS.4. Understanding of the diversity of clients and their associated care needs, including physical, psychological, neurodiverse and social care needs, the impact of discrimination and how to respond to enable inclusive person-centred care
- KS.5. Understanding of how a practitioner's actions or inactions affect clients, other professionals and the effectiveness of clinical services
- KS.6. Understanding of the role of audit, quality assurance (QA) and service evaluation in delivering safe, effective and compassionate care.
- KS.7. Understanding of the impact of health and social care on planetary health, the sustainability of resources and the effects on human health within own scope of practice
- KS.8. Knowledge and maintenance of the core skills required for safe and effective service/ healthcare delivery e.g. record-keeping, infection prevention and control, child protection and safeguarding etc.
- KS.9. Knowledge, maintenance and practice of artistic skills and competencies
- KS.10. Knowledge of effective strategies to communicate with the diverse clients, carers, and other staff

Knowledge & Skills

Proficient/Foundation Practitioner

- KS.11. Knowledge of the importance of listening to and understanding the views of clientss to inform values-based practice
- KS.12. Being fully aware of the sources of support or development available for professional practice
- KS.13. Evaluates own practice and identifies own continuing professional development and develop appropriate action plans
- KS.14.Consolidates own knowledge, skills and attitudes through clinical supervision, mentoring and reflective practice
- KS.15. Knowledge of current professional body and HCPC guidance including, where to find it and how it affects practice.
- KS.16. Understanding the concept of professional and personal resilience
- KS.17. Understanding fitness to practice in self and others, including awareness of how my own health may affect this.
- KS.18 Understanding of the need to be digitally confident and competent, including understanding the potential of digital skills to improve care.

Responsibilities: Proficient/Foundation Practitioner

- Works autonomously within scope of practice to exercise judgement about actions while accepting professional accountability and responsibility
- Highly specialist knowledge across range of procedures, underpinned by theory.
- Assesses patients/clients for suitability for individual or group Art, Drama, Music Therapy.
- Effectively manages a designated caseload in a delegated area of practice
- Demonstrates the ability to consistently apply knowledge to ensure safe and effective clinical practice in familiar and new situations
- Provides individual and group sessions, liaises with nursing or other care staff, and evaluates care.
- Shares information effectively and concisely for a range of situations and contexts to ensure patient safety and continuity of care
- Communicates complex, sensitive information: requires empathy & reassurance, barriers to understanding, hostile, antagonistic or highly emotive atmosphere.
- Communicates complex condition related information to clients and carers; undertakes group sessions where atmosphere may be highly emotive
- Develops effective relationships to gather information and deliver care in partnership with clients and carers
- Draws on a range of sources in making judgements guided as necessary by senior colleagues
- Possess transferable skills, enabling the development of competences in new settings through appropriate training and/or education, as necessary
- Demonstrates the skills for safe and effective professional practice within multidisciplinary teams and settings
- Uses critical thinking skills to demonstrate appropriate clinical decision-making within own scope of practice
- Applies the principles of consent appropriately to therapeutic practice
- Makes valid assessments of clients prior to and during the delivery of care, including assessment of general wellbeing and indicators of abuse
- Communicates effectively and appropriately by verbal, non-verbal and written means with clients, colleagues and the public
- Maintains resilience, networking and peer support, uses coping strategies, self-motivation and self-care

Responsibilities: Proficient/Foundation Practitioner

- Acts as an advocate for clients when required and engages in fair practice to prevent discrimination and remove barriers to support diversity of people
- Practises within the duty of care raising concerns, being open and honest with clients, reporting adverse incidents etc. and following these up
- Demonstrates the ability to carry out outcome measurements relating to care pathway and own professional discipline
- Demonstrates empathetic client care by effectively reading and interpreting the emotions of others and use this to inform professional behaviour accordingly
- Practises in a way which seeks to maintain the safety of clients,, colleagues and self at all times, following local, national and/or international guidance applicable to role and sector
- Seeks out and shares best practice e.g. by engaging with or sharing audit outcomes.
- Demonstrate learning aligned with contemporaneous practice and critically evaluate all aspects of personal practice and service delivery

Proficient/Foundation Practitioner: Pillars of Practice Primary Aspects

Professional Practice

- Practises safely and effectively within their legal, ethical, and professional scope of practice.
- Aware of and adheres to governance, protocols and procedures.
- Takes professional responsibility and accountability for their actions.
- Practises with values-based care.
- Aware of and seeks to maintain own fitness to practise.
- Maintains and develops creative skills to support professional practice.
- Widens their understanding of the arts in different cultures and the impact in using in therapy.

Proficient/Foundation Practitioner: Pillars of Practice Primary Aspects

Facilitating Learning

- Assists when required with the learning of others e.g. students, support workers and other professional groups.
- Takes responsibility for own learning by engaging in continuing professional development to maintain and develop creative knowledge and skills.
- Provides clients, carers and the public with appropriate information to improve health outcomes.
- Learns from clients in line with clients, public and practitioner partnerships.

Proficient/Foundation Practitioner: Pillars of Practice Primary Aspects

Leadership & Management

- Accepts and contributes to the dynamic and changing nature of the profession.
- Takes on responsibilities within own scope of practice.
- Leads on service improvement within own scope of practice drawing on core creative skills.
- Works within wider team or other professional areas.
- Involved in making recommendations for future practice based on the evidence base.
- Aware of, and where appropriate integrates into practice, new and emerging evidence and professional body guidance.

Proficient/Foundation Practitioner: Pillars of Practice Primary Aspects

Evidence, Research & Development

- Involved in research and/or audit.
- Collects primary and secondary data as required by the role.
- Acquires and evaluates evidence from research.
- Aware of and uses evidence-based practice including practice in arts and health.
- Uses creative skills to engage in evidence-based research.
- Involves clients in evaluation of services.

Knowledge & Skills and Role Responsibilities

Post-registration Level: Enhanced Practitioner

- **Safe, Effective and Person Centred Care**
- **Maintains own psychological health.**
- **Professional Judgement and Decision Making**
- **Awareness of own values, culture and position and the impact these have on own work and on others.**
- **Robust understanding and works within the ethical and professional standards expected as laid down in the HCPC Standards of Proficiency and the standards and guidelines set by own Professional Body Code of Conduct.**
- **Works within the national and local policies and procedures.**

Art, Drama, Music Therapists who require a critical understanding of detailed theoretical and practical knowledge. They may be in specialist roles and may have practice education supervisory responsibilities. They may have clinical supervision responsibilities for assistants/support workers and Proficient/Foundation Practitioners. They demonstrate initiative and are creative in finding solutions to problems. They may have some responsibility for team performance and service development and they consistently undertake self-development. Enhanced Practitioner level of practice is for an Art, Drama, or Music Therapist who is highly skilled, and who is in a more senior role in their practice.

Knowledge & Skills

Post-registration Level: Enhanced Practitioner

- KS.1. Legal, ethical and professional responsibility for their enhanced practice role, including autonomy, limits of own competence and professional scope of practice
- KS.2. Continues to develop competence in meeting the holistic needs of clients and the wider public through their respective professional discipline.
- KS.3. Enhanced understanding of approaches to communication in various situations or relating to the needs of clients, their families and/or carers to share information, ideas, evaluation and assessment.
- KS.4. Enhanced skills for explaining/ voicing professional opinion within multidisciplinary teams and setting to form partnerships of care and promote teamworking.
- KS.5. Principles and evidence base underpinning specialist interventions/activities within own scope of enhanced practice
- KS.6. Knowledge of issues which may affect the performance of service delivery in own area of practice and levels of Art, Drama, Music Therapy service provision.
- KS.7. Knowledge of local and national healthcare policy and practice, evolving population needs, healthcare inequality, practice guidance and standards
- KS.8. Knowledge of clinical supervision theories to support the development of those working in their own team
- KS.9. Knowledge of service development and evaluation methods, including client and carer engagement, and implementation of change for own area of enhanced practice

Knowledge & Skills

Post-registration Level: Enhanced Practitioner

- KS.10. Understanding and implementing audit, quality assurance (QA) and service evaluation in delivering safe, effective and compassionate care to reduce health inequalities and improve health outcomes.
- KS.11. Knowledge of national and local research governance processes and local infrastructures and personnel available to support enhanced-level practice researchers and practitioners
- KS.12. Knowledge and further development of artistic skills and competencies through further training and practice
- KS.13. Demonstrates enhanced level knowledge of assessment and diagnostic tools and intervention techniques specific to professional discipline.
- KS.14. Demonstrates enhanced level knowledge and training in outcome measurements relating to care pathway and own professional discipline
- KS.15. Understanding of leadership frameworks and approaches – e.g. Enhanced Clinical Practitioner apprenticeship
- KS.16. Seek or develop guidance to be followed for scope of practice in specific care pathways
- KS.17. Understanding of practice to prevent discrimination and remove barriers to support diversity of people and the implementation of fair practice
- KS.18. Support resilience and self-care through role modelling and the implementation of measures that assist with the maintenance of health and wellbeing for clients, families and carers
- KS.19. Support the training and development of others in the workplace by seeking out learning opportunities for all, sharing own enhanced knowledge and learning, and providing and seeking feedback to inform future practice and the learning needs of others and self
- KS.20. Able to utilise digital technologies to improve care through telehealth, AI-assisted interventions, and digital therapy platforms.

Responsibilities: Enhanced Practitioner

- Practises autonomously and as part of a team, using knowledge, skills, critical thinking and evidence reflecting awareness of own ability and capabilities at enhanced-practice level.
- Manages workloads of self and others where supervising or delegating workload and minimises avoidable risk to facilitate effective teamwork at maximum levels of performance and care in trusted, safe environments
- Highly specialist knowledge across range of procedures, underpinned by theory.
- Assesses clients for suitability for individual or group Art, Drama, Music Therapy.
- Implements individual and group sessions, liaises with nursing or other care staff, and evaluates care.
- Communicates highly complex, sensitive information which requires empathy & reassurance where barriers to understanding can create a hostile, antagonistic or highly emotive atmosphere
- Upholds the governance requirements of the employer, HCPC, professional body and national initiatives, exhibiting accountability for actions, transparency and cultures of professional practice
- Demonstrates effective leadership in relation to own scope of enhanced practice and related team
- Challenges, and is willing to support others who challenge, practice that does not appear to follow legal, ethical or clinical guidelines or is not in the client's best interests
- Acts as a learning mentor, coach or facilitator, as appropriate, to support a culture of enquiry, learning and development within team and those in training
- Effectively manages projects including wider team members within own scope of practice
- Safely applies enhanced assessment and diagnostic tools and intervention techniques specific to own area of practice.
- Demonstrates the ability to improve and enhance quality of care, including through engagement in audit, service evaluation and improvement projects within own scope of enhanced practice
- Demonstrates the ability to carry out outcome measurements relating to care pathway and own professional discipline
- Evaluates own leadership skills in line with relevant national leadership frameworks for example, in healthcare, and enhanced-level practice, seeking feedback and advice regarding barriers and challenges in professional development
- Actively contributes to research projects within own scope of enhanced practice: and seek advice and collaborative support to determine research goals; provide evidence (e.g. question formulation, selection of research methods, data collection and analysis) including practice-based, small and / or large-scale projects. Participates in clinical audits/ may undertake research.
- Designs and participates in audit, quality assurance (QA) and service evaluation in delivering safe, effective and compassionate care to reduce inequalities and improve positive outcomes.

Responsibilities: Enhanced Practitioner

- Designs and participates in audit, quality assurance (QA) and service evaluation in delivering safe, effective and compassionate care to reduce inequalities and improve positive outcomes.
- Proactively applies, and facilitates others to apply the principles of patient, public and professional partnerships, person-centred care and values-based practice to enhance people's experiences of care and co-create services that meet clients' needs and preferences
- Proactively review practice to prevent discrimination and remove barriers to support diversity of people and the implementation of fair practice
- Practises critical self-awareness: seek feedback and undertake reflection, lifelong learning, personal clinical supervision and continuing professional development

Enhanced Practitioner:
Pillars of Practice Primary Aspects

Professional Practice

- Practises at a higher level of skills than those obtained at registration
- Enhanced practice in clinical specialism or care pathway
- Expanding practice through a wider range of creative methods.
- Practises safely and effectively within their legal, ethical, and enhanced professional scope of practice.
- Widens their understanding of the arts in different cultures and the impact in using in therapy.

Enhanced Practitioner:
Pillars of Practice Primary Aspects

Facilitating Learning

- Facilitates the learning of others e.g. students, assistants/support workers and other professional groups.
- Skill development via workplace learning and external courses to develop knowledge, creative and specialist skills.
- Promotes a positive teaching and learning environment for students and others directly supervised.

Enhanced Practitioner:
Pillars of Practice Primary Aspects

Leadership & Management

- Practice education responsibilities for students.
- Leads on service improvement drawing on core creative skills within own team.
- Integrates into practice and share the need for new and emerging evidence and professional body guidance within team/area of practice.

Enhanced Practitioner:
Pillars of Practice Primary Aspects

Evidence, Research & Development

- Uses research to inform own practice
- Carries out clinical audit and service evaluation in area of practice to ensure best outcomes for clients, team and employer
- Leads on service improvement initiatives
- Encourages, advocates and leads on service innovation using inherent creative skills.

Testing accessibility document (skillsforhealth.org.uk)

Knowledge & Skills and Role Responsibilities

Advanced Practitioner

- **Safe, Effective and Person Centred Care**
- **Maintains own psychological health**
- **Professional Judgement and Decision Making**
- **Awareness of own values, culture and position and the impact these have on own work and on others.**
- **Robust understanding and works within the ethical and professional standards expected as laid down in the HCPC Standards of Proficiency and the standards and guidelines set by own Professional Body Code of Conduct.**
- **Works within the national and local policies and procedures.**

Advanced Practitioners are Art, Drama, Music Therapists who have a critical awareness of knowledge issues in the field and at the interface between different fields. They are innovative and have a responsibility for developing and changing practice and/or services in a complex and unpredictable environment. Advanced Practitioners may choose leadership careers such as professional lead roles; healthcare research careers; pursuing an education role in healthcare. In addition to experiential learning, progressing to the Advanced Practitioner role requires significant educational support to enable provision of enhanced client care. They will meet the four pillars of professional practice, using critical thinking and problem-solving to research and analyse complex situations throughout their practice.

Knowledge & Skills

Advanced Practitioner

- KS.1. Knowledge of and competency in utilising complex decision-making skills which are underpinned by a wider foundation of knowledge, skills and expertise from their previous roles.
- KS.2. Understanding and knowledge of the legal, ethical and professional responsibilities of the advanced practice role, including autonomy, limits of own competence and professional scope of practice
- KS.3. Develops advanced competence, innovation and leadership in the management and delivery of care interventions appropriate to clients to enable safe, effective and person-centred care
- KS.4. Demonstrates high levels of reflective and reflexive practice acting on feedback from clients, colleagues and the wider public to inform and improve practice
- KS.5. Supports and challenges practitioners on specific aspects of their practice
- KS.6. Promotes respect and support others to consider the dignity, wishes and beliefs of all clients involving them in shared decision making
- KS.7. Understands the structure of organisations and policy influencing health, social care and other relevant sectors
- KS.8. Knowledge of service development and evaluation tools and establishing partnerships to improve and develop clinical pathways and service development and service redesign
- KS.9. Understanding of various leadership styles required to achieve results, encourage effective working relationships, and meet the needs of clients, colleagues and employers.
- KS.10. Understanding of the role of sustainable practice in promoting environmentally friendly working and reduction of health inequalities.

Knowledge & Skills
Advanced Practitioner

- KS.11. Understanding of health economics and demonstrating value for money of Art, Drama, and Music Therapy in clinical pathways.
- KS.12. Knowledge of methods which translate strategy into action and tools to evaluate change, outcomes and impact of service intervention.
- KS.13. Knowledge of NHS organisations, the integrated care system and issues impacting upon own professional area of practice and the wider UK healthcare agenda/ or for the relevant sector in which they are working.
- KS.14. Knowledge and further development of artistic skills and competencies through further training and practice.
- KS.15. Highly developed skills in the formulation, assessment and treatment of clients with complex, high-risk presenting problems and in providing expert clinical opinion and clinical supervision
- KS.16 Understanding of the need for digital confidence and competence, including the potential of digital skills to improve care through telehealth, AI-assisted interventions, and digital therapy platforms and their utilisation in service delivery.

Responsibilities: Advanced Practitioner

- Displays a high degree of autonomy and complex decision-making skills that are underpinned by a wider foundation of knowledge, skills and expertise from their previous roles to enable safe, effective and person-centred care.
- Demonstrates independence in the direction of practice responding appropriately to social, scientific, clinical and ethical issues encountered
- Efficiently organises and manages workloads for self and others, engaging in coproduction to identify the development needs of self and those in the team.
- Assesses clients with complex, high-risk needs for suitability for individual or group Art, Drama, Music Therapy. May be lead specialist in own field.
- Provides specialist individual and group Art, Drama, Music therapy/psychotherapy sessions, liaises with nursing or other care staff, evaluates care
- Develops and supports practitioners to move between the career levels through embedded mentoring and career development
- Provides expert opinion /second opinions to Arts Therapists and those from other professions.
- Drawing on their previous education, training and clinical experience, they have extensive clinical responsibilities and input into the education of interprofessional colleagues and service development.
- Demonstrating leadership capabilities, managing whole levels of intervention in their area of practice supporting multidisciplinary team learning using a range of learning, teaching, supervision, feedback and assessment methods.
- Creates a culture where service development, evaluation and establishing client, public and practitioner partnerships to improve and develop clinical pathways and service redesign
- Contributes to policy, service development with impact beyond own area; leads in specialist field, interprets policies for team
- Manages arts therapies service, including service and policy development, staff management, resource management.
- Plans and organises arts therapies service and interprets policies.
- Provides specialist advice, clinical supervision for other therapists in relevant art form, may lead a team of arts therapists/psychotherapists
- Engages and designs research and evaluation of Art, Drama, Music Therapy in clinical pathway to demonstrate the associated health economics and value of intervention.
- Displays high levels of professionalism to others in the team and acts as a role model, supervisor, mentor, coach and educator to increase the confidence and competence of others
- Contributes to the understanding of the impact of sustainable practice to promote environmentally friendly working and to reduce health inequalities.
- Demonstrates effective leadership in relation to own scope of practice, the team they lead and the multidisciplinary environment they are working in
- Leads in their organisation to represent their specific area of practice, management and development of staff they have responsibility for.

Responsibilities: Advanced Practitioner

- Undertakes research in specialist field. Regularly undertakes research. Co-ordinates specialist research e.g. complex audits, research
- Able to lead research projects using a range of techniques for the dissemination of research findings.
- Communicates complex issues clearly to a wide range of stakeholders, with empathy and compassion and showing leadership when responding to concerns raised by clients, carers, staff and the multidisciplinary team.
- Able to create team experiential learning to promote wellbeing and new thinking around the communication methods available to health professionals.
- Initiates, writes and manages research governance processes at a local and national level perhaps in conjunction with professional body or networks.
- Ensures that they have the structures and personnel available to support advanced practice researchers

Advanced Practitioner: Pillars of Practice Primary Aspects

Professional Practice

- Practices at a higher level of skills than those obtained at registration
- Advanced practice in clinical specialism or care pathway
- Expands practice through a wider range of creative methods
- Practises safely and effectively within their legal, ethical, and enhanced professional scope of practice.
- Widens their understanding of the arts in different cultures and the impact in using in therapy.

Advanced Practitioner: Pillars of Practice Primary Aspects

Facilitating Learning

- Engages in own learning and development to ensure they have the underpinning education, knowledge and capabilities which supports their scope of practice to ensure patient safety.
- Manages others, facilitating the development of staff through education and training in assessment, intervention, outcome measurement theories and tools.
- Promotes a positive and creative teaching and learning environment for students and others directly supervised.

Advanced Practitioner: Pillars of Practice Primary Aspects

Leadership & Management

- Leadership responsibility in their area of practice, and engagement across professional boundaries
- Leads on local and national developments in area of practice and creativity.
- Evaluates own leadership practice and address barriers for leadership in team
- Integrates into practice and shares the need for new and emerging evidence and professional body guidance within team/area of practice.

Advanced Practitioner: Pillars of Practice Primary Aspects

Evidence, Research & Development

- Routine users of research, being able to critically appraise including creativity and the arts in health evidence base to develop their practice and perform service innovation and improvement. Actively engages in practice and service development along with research, seeking client and public involvement to enhance client care and service delivery.
- Manages and oversee audit of practice to provide evidence and assurance of safe, effective clinical practice.

Knowledge & Skills and Role Responsibilities

Consultant Practitioner

- **Safe, Effective and Person Centred Care**
- **Maintains own psychological health.**
- **Professional Judgement and Decision Making**
- **Awareness of own values, culture and position and the impact these have on own work and on others.**
- **Robust understanding and works within the ethical and professional standards expected as laid down in the HCPC Standards of Proficiency and the standards and guidelines set by own Professional Body Code of Conduct.**
- **Works within the national and local policies and procedures.**

An Art, Drama, Music Therapist who acquires highly specialised knowledge, some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work, which they use as the basis for creative, original thinking and/or research. They are inspiring leaders with considerable responsibility, and the ability to research and analyse complex processes. They have responsibility for service improvement or development at a strategic level. They may have considerable clinical and/or management responsibilities, be accountable for service delivery or have a leading education or commissioning role. They will have responsibility for the development and delivery of a service to a population, at the highest level of the organisation. They are accountable for ensuring the safe and effective delivery of clinical services and for adhering to clinical governance frameworks and work collaboratively with other healthcare professionals to provide the best possible care for patients.

Knowledge & Skills

Consultant Practitioner

- KS.1. Has the education and training to support their practice, leadership, education or area of research activity
- KS.2. Understanding of the legal, ethical, and professional frameworks governing their consultant practitioner role and the wider healthcare agenda
- KS.3. Has advanced communication and relationship building skills at a local, national and international level
- KS.4. Understanding of the current and emerging clinical and technological developments in their profession and other professions they lead on and how these might impact on service delivery and design.
- KS.5. Knowledge of theories relating to service development, evaluation and research at a strategic level.
- KS.6. Understanding of principles and developments underpinning specialist interventions within their scope of practice
- KS.7. Knowledge of the existing and evolving professional body, national and international guidance relevant to own practice area and the wider profession/professional groups.
- KS.8. Knowledge of NHS organisations, the integrated care system, national NHS and health and social care issues which relate to their profession, or those relevant to the sector in which they work.
- KS.9. Knowledge of what constitutes values-based practice across a care pathway, service, organisation and system.
- KS.10. Knowledge of supervision, mentoring and coaching theories which support the provision of their service and wider development of the profession(s).
- KS.11. Knowledge of education theories and systems which support staff development and workforce transformation promoting excellence in service delivery.

Knowledge & Skills

Consultant Practitioner

- KS.12. Knowledge of current and most recent service evaluation and research on health, mental health, or other relevant outcomes and person-centred care.
- KS.13. Knowledge of the impact of current service delivery and research on health, mental health, or other relevant outcomes and person-centred care.
- KS.14. Understanding of how to develop a research and inquiry culture of development, service improvement, innovation, capacity and accountability.
- KS.15. Knowledge of ongoing development of arts and creativity practice which leads to further service improvement.
- KS.16. Knowledge of ongoing developments in digital technology to improve service delivery and leading on their development and utilisation in service delivery.
- KS.17. Knowledge of all the Art, Drama, and Music Therapy professions, practice guidelines, and standards of proficiency.

Responsibilities

Consultant Practitioner

- Practises autonomously demonstrating an understanding of the strategic role of the Consultant Practitioner/ Head of Professions in whichever context they are practicing.
- Demonstrates skills for assessing clients in specialist caseload and deciding on appropriate therapy, including referrals requiring expert opinion.
- Assesses, develops & implements specialist Art, Drama, Music therapies/psychotherapies service;
- Provides advice to Art, Drama, Music Therapists/Psychotherapists concerning specialist area.
- Demonstrates expert clinical skills, a high level of autonomy and complex clinical decision-making within own scope of practice, whilst advocating for patients in an interdisciplinary environment
- Develops and supports practitioners to move between the career levels through embedded mentoring and career development
- Supports appropriate decision-making and risk-management strategies in interdisciplinary teams while promoting client advocacy and shared decision-making with clients
- Actively consults and involves clients, carers, the public and practitioners involved in partnership at all stages in service development, evaluation, innovation and improvement to meet local and national health outcomes
- Builds links with the wider community of practitioners in the pursuit of improved professional and clinical outcomes through effective negotiation and influencing.
- Leads on and contributes to training, accreditation and learning cultures within their team, the multi-professional community and their specific profession.
- Evaluates the quality of education and training provision and support quality improvements in education and training.
- Communicates on highly complex and sometimes emotive and challenging issues to a wide range of stakeholders, with empathy and compassion
- Provides professional leadership and consultancy, lead clinician for own specialist area, responsible for clinical governance
- Leads on dissemination of the existing and evolving professional body, national and international guidance to the wider profession/professional groups.
- Shares their knowledge of NHS organisations, the integrated care system, national NHS and health and social care issues which relate to their profession and initiatives being developed in their area/ or those relevant to the sector in which they work.
- Identifies and manages the facilitation of education systems which support staff development and workforce transformation promoting excellence
- Shares knowledge of supervision, mentoring and coaching theories which support the provision of their service and wider development of the profession(s) within their area of practice/responsibility.

Responsibilities

Consultant Practitioner

- Identifies and manages the facilitation of education systems which support staff development and workforce transformation promoting excellence in service delivery and which meets the requirements of the HCPC.
- Leads on service development locally and nationally, review outcomes and communicate learning to the wider community
- Contributes to knowledge of current and relevant research evidence base and support others to develop their skills in this area integrating it into facilitation of learning and professional practice.
- Evaluates the impact of current service and research on health, mental health or other relevant outcomes and person-centred care
- Facilitates audits and supervise the performance of others while applying appropriate governance methods across their organisation.
- Provides consultancy which affects service, staff and professional development local, regional, national international levels within their professional area of practice.
- Demonstrates the ability to take a broad and strategic overview on the current and longer-term factors impacting on service delivery rather than focussing solely on the clinical, research, management or education aspects specific to their day-to-day roles or profession.
- Actively supports, contributes to and promotes the work of their professional, regulatory and professional networks, while also contributing to government bodies, and education provision.
- Develops and supports cultures across their organisation where psychological safety, enhanced health and wellbeing is prevalent in all strategic plans and actions.

Consultant Practitioner: Pillars of Practice Primary Aspects

Consultant Practitioners have a commitment to, and demonstrate evidence of, operating at the highest standards across all four pillars of consultant-level practice.

Professional Practice

- Demonstrates professional clinical leadership, using innovation and values-based approaches towards clients, carers and all they have responsibility to lead built on previously developed experience and learning.
- Practises autonomously, and has extensive expert knowledge of policies, procedures and guidelines
- Strategically analyses and applies evidence for evolving practice.
- Communicates their expert knowledge while ensuring the clinical service adheres to legal and ethical requirements of employer, regulator and professional body
- Widens the understanding of the arts in different cultures and the impact in using in therapy.

Consultant Practitioner: Pillars of Practice Primary Aspects

Facilitating Learning

- Builds and leads teams where ongoing learning is an inherent part of the culture.
- Ensures that appropriate learning and creative opportunities are in place for multi-professional teams and may hold education responsibilities in both clinical and academic environments.
- Evaluates the quality of education and training provision and support quality improvements in education and training.
- Leads on and contributes to training, accreditation and learning cultures within their team, the multi-professional community and their specific profession.
- Identifies and manages the facilitation of education systems which support staff development and workforce transformation promoting service excellence.

Consultant Practitioner:
Pillars of Practice Primary Aspects

Leadership & Management

- Promotes expert-level critical thinking to improve services through strategic leadership.
- Actively leads engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, to strategically develop and enhance services
- This role is usually a leading role in a profession/organisation and carries significant leadership responsibilities
- Leads development of thinking, discussion and planning for inclusive change in service evolution and design.
- Provides professional leadership and consultancy as lead clinician for own specialist area, responsible for clinical governance.
- Develops and supports practitioners to move between the career levels through embedded mentoring and career development.

Consultant Practitioner: Pillars of Practice Primary Aspects

Evidence, Research & Development

- Facilitate audits and supervises the performance of others while applying appropriate governance methods.
- Promotes and generates new and creative evidence to improve services through research.
- Contributes to knowledge of current and relevant research evidence base and support others to develop their skills in this area integrating it into facilitation of learning and professional practice.
- Evaluates the impact of current service and research on health, mental health or other relevant outcomes and person-centred care.
- Actively consults and involves clients, carers, the public and practitioners involved in partnership at all stages in service development, evaluation, innovation and improvement to meet local and national health outcomes.

Leadership development opportunities for Arts Therapists

Ways to develop leadership skills:

Although leadership courses are helpful, they are not available to all. There are other ways to develop the different skills and knowledge required of a leader:

- Shadowing leaders – spending a day with a manager or professional lead, or shadowing them on a particular project.
- Clinical supervision training and clinical supervision of staff.

It is worth asking if your employer can fund this training, emphasising how it will enable you to supervise other staff and develop leadership skills. Each NHS Trust receives an annual CPD budget for nursing and AHPs. If your manager supports you doing a clinical supervision training, enquire if funding could be found from this budget. Your line manager may not be aware of it so approach your AHP Lead.

- Taking opportunities to be a rep/champion in an area of interest in the team or wider organisation or take on an extra responsibility.
- Getting involved in your professional body. This is a really great way to develop leadership skills and is brilliant to have on your CV. This could be joining one of the committees or the board, helping organise CPD activities, conferences or coordinating area/regional or specialist interest groups.
- Presenting at conferences or running workshops in areas of expertise.
- Reading about leadership theory.
- Applying for partner roles in the HCPC. https://www.hcpc-uk.org/about-us/work-for-us/become-a-partner/

In the NHS:

NHS England offers opportunities to develop leaderships skills for all staff at all levels through its leadership academy. Each region has its own academy, which runs courses, coaching and mentoring. Each NHS Trust will have access to regional training places or may run its own internal training either following the NHSE programmes or an alternative.
For NHS staff, interest in leadership development opportunities should be discussed with your manager and form part of your personal development plan (PDP).
The NHS Leadership Academy website is the go-to place to find out about opportunities. All the areas below can be accessed through the main Leadership Academy site.

Leadership Academy – Better Leaders, Better Care, Brighter Future

1. The learning hub Leadership Academy – Learning hub: Easy to access learning materials for all NHS staff
https://learninghub.leadershipacademy.nhs.uk/
offers bite size online preprepared sessions for all NHS staff at all levels to work through at their own pace. These include topics such as inclusion, team dynamics, compassionate leadership, self-care, resilience.
They also offer an Inspiration Library – Leadership Academy https://learninghub.leadershipacademy.nhs.uk/inspiration-library/
containing short video learning and links to blogs, podcasts, ted talks.Topics include cultural competence, managing through crisis, psychological safety.

2. Leadership Programmes – Leadership Academy https://www.leadershipacademy.nhs.uk/programmes/
If you go to the main page, you can complete a questionnaire to help you find the programme that is right for you. The Edward Jenner programme is the first level. It is open to all colleagues in health and social care who are new to leadership and are exploring what it means. It also acts as a preliminary learning programme for newly qualified nursing and clinical staff.
The Mary Seacole programme is open to first time leaders in healthcare, in a 'formal' position of leadership with responsibilities for people and services. Some organisations deliver the programme internally, and although The Leadership Academy try to advise applicants of this where appropriate, it's always a good idea to check with your HR or learning and development team first before applying.

There are higher level courses for those in senior leadership roles such as the senior leadership apprenticeship level 7 Senior Leader Apprenticeship Level 7 (with Elizabeth Garrett Anderson programme and Masters (MSc) in Healthcare Leadership) – Leadership Academy https://www.leadershipacademy.nhs.uk/programmes/

3. Coaching and mentoring can also be accessed through the website Coaching and Mentoring – Leadership Academy.
Each region holds a register of coaches and mentors that are available. They also provide CPD for coaches and mentors.

4. Regional support and programmes Regional Academies – Leadership Academy
https://www.leadershipacademy.nhs.uk/regional-academies/

You can find out what is available in your region in all the areas mentioned above and further locally supported opportunities. There may be additional local leadership development opportunities for Allied Health Professionals in your area. For example, the Herts and West Essex ICS secured funding to run an AHP Leadership Development Programme in 2024. It focused on influencing within a system, addressing the challenges of bringing the AHP voice into high level decision making. The feedback was very positive and there is interest to run this again in the future if further funding is available.

5. 360 Feedback
The 360 Degree Feedback Tool is designed to give you insight into other people's perception of your leadership abilities and behaviour. The process includes getting confidential feedback from line managers, peers and direct reports. This can be helpful to highlight strengths or areas for development. You are supported by a 360 facilitator to interpret and reflect on the feedback report.

Using this tool would need to be agreed by your line manager as there is small cost involved.
https://www.leadershipacademy.nhs.uk/healthcare-leadership-model/360-degree-feedback-tool-2/

CQI Leaders training
Many NHS employers will encourage staff to develop their skills in carrying out continuous quality improvement (CQI) and offer training in skills to lead projects, which can be small initiatives within your own area of work.

For leadership training and development opportunities in the NHS in Wales, visit this page: https://heiw.nhs.wales/our-work/culture-leadership-succession/

For leadership opportunities in health and social care in Scotland, visit this page: https://leadingtochange.scot/

For Northern Ireland

Leadership in research
The National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) offers training and support for those working in health research to develop leadership skills. https://www.nihr.ac.uk/career-development/research-leaders-courses-and-support

Research development opportunities for Arts Therapists

Considering the increasing need for research-informed practice and evidence-based advocacy for the professions, clearer pathways into academic and research leadership roles would be of benefit to practitioners in all roles and at every stage of their careers. Research, evaluation and innovation activities are integral to improving services and providing clients with high quality care.

There are many ways to engage in evidenced based advocacy and research including:

- team audit,
- service evaluation,
- coproduction/evaluation with clients &
- local quality improvement projects within your own profession or through multidisciplinary engagement.

For those interested in further research The Community for Allied Health Professions Research (CAHPR) is a useful site to learn more information about national and local supports available to Art, Drama and Music Therapists.

The Community for Allied Health Professions Research (CAHPR) vision is to improve the health and care of the UK through Allied Health Professions (AHP) research, evidence-based practice, evaluation, and innovation. The CAHPR mission is to ‘promote excellence and inclusive engagement in research, evidence-based practice, evaluation, and innovation in all allied health professions’ . It is best placed to support Art, Drama and Music Therapists who want to engage in research which will impact on service delivery and more importantly the outcomes for the clients we work with.

CAPHR delivers its aims through four routes:

1. Strategy Committee – members from the 14 AHP professional bodies, along with other representatives oversee the outward facing activity and ongoing development. Representatives for the three Professional Bodies sit on this committee to ensure the voice of the professions are represented.
Strategy Committee members can be accessed at: https://cahpr.org.uk/strategy-committee/

2. Regional Hub Forum – there are 12 hubs across the UK which support AHP's in a local area and help support:

- Networking Peer review
- Research training Mentorship
- Funding applications Collaboration
- Dissemination of research findings Building of evidence-base
- Using evidence in practice Influencing policy

The hubs can be accessed at: https://cahpr.org.uk/hubs/

3. Research Champions – CAHPR and the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) have Research Champions in regional clinical research networks which help promote the active involvement of AHPs in clinically-focussed research activities, building momentum, and increasing the visibility and impact of AHP research across the UK. The Research Champions in each area can be accessed at https://cahpr.org.uk/research-champions/

4. Directory of Professors - CAHPR has a UK Professors directory to help you search for Professors who may:
a. Be in your professional field,
b. Be in your area of research interest,
c. Become a collaborator or advisor, or who could
d. Help facilitate networking and knowledge.
The directory can be accessed at: https://cahpr.org.uk/research-leaders/

Educator Workforce routes for Art, Drama and Music Therapists

The NHS has engaged in significant work relating to the Education Workforce and the Educator Workforce Strategy, part of the Long-Term Workforce Plan, aims to improve healthcare education and training by defining career structures and promoting the educator role, including continuous development, academic opportunities, and digital delivery support. There is an opportunity for practitioners to engage in more of this activity and further engagement with the NHS.

There are seven strategic priorities are highlighted in the NHS England Workforce Strategy and these arose from consultation with educators, learners, healthcare education and training partners, patients, staff, regulators and professions. https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/educator-workforce-strategy/

As practitioners we could review these priorities and consider where our work fits?

The Priorities are:

1: The educator workforce must be a key consideration in integrated workforce and service planning. Integrated planning seeks to set out how workforce planning can best be integrated with population health, service and financial planning.

2: Establishing and protecting educator time and resources to support the implementation of Integrated Care Board workforce plans. The framework states that the aim of education ‘should be to facilitate the provision of the most effective, person-centred and integrated care for people. Without educators, we do not have a future workforce’.

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3: Introducing career frameworks for educators of all professions- the framework highlights a ‘need to set out clear career pathways to support those looking to a professional role in education and to support those in educator roles to progress in their careers, anticipate next steps and continue their development (and remain up to date)’.

4: Supporting the development and wellbeing of educators – the framework highlights the importance of ‘keeping educators well and reducing absence, but also to empowering educators to innovate and improve both training and services for patients’.

5: Supporting improvement through defined standards and principles - the framework highlights the need for ‘consistent principles and approaches to applying evidence will be developed and be applicable across all professions, regardless of regulation status, and should reduce duplication wherever possible’.

6: Promoting the NHS aspirations to improve equality, diversity and inclusion- the framework highlights that ‘tackling inequity and inequality is an urgent priority and shared responsibility. Not only is it the right thing to do, it’s also essential to retain and develop a sustainable workforce for the future’.

7: Embedding evolving and innovative models of education -the framework highlights that this there is an ‘opportunity to develop a matrix of key areas of shared work and interdisciplinary learning that builds mutual understand and respect and team based skills, which is understood by professions, and will realise the potential of all and enhance the capacity of the educator workforce’.



For more information visit: https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/educator-workforce-strategy/

Documents reviewed for this framework

- Advanced AHP Practice Framework Guidance for Supporting Advanced Allied Health Professions Practice in Health and Social Care DHNI 2017 - https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/advanced-ahp-practice-framework
- Allied Health Professions Framework for Wales Looking Forward Together (2020) https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-02/allied-health-professions-framwework-for-wales.pdf
- Career Framework Levels Skills for Health: https://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/wpcontent/uploads/2020/11/Career_framework_key_elements.pdf
- Consultant-level practice capability and impact framework (2023) https://advanced-practice.hee.nhs.uk/consultant/consultant-level-practice-capability-and-impact-framework/
- Education and Career Framework for the Radiography Workforce (4th edition), (2024) Society Of Radiographers https://www.sor.org/learning-advice/professional-body-guidance-and-publications/documents-and-publications/policy-guidance-document-library/education-and-career-framework-fourth
- Educator Workforce Strategy, NHS England https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/educator-workforce-strategy/
- Health Education England (2021). Allied Health Professions' Support Worker Competency, Education, and Career Development Framework, Available at: https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/alliedhealth-professions/enable-workforce/developing-role-ahp-supportworkers/ahp-support-worker-competency-education-careerdevelopment.
- Modernising Allied Health Professions' Careers in Wales A post registration framework (2016).

- Multi-professional Framework for Advanced Practice in England 2025 https://advanced-practice.hee.nhs.uk/mpf2025/

- NHS England Testing accessibility document (skillsforhealth.org.uk)

- Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professionals (NMAHP) Development Framework. ‘Maximising potential and impact at every level of practice’. https://www.nmahpdevelopmentframework.nes.scot.nhs.uk/

- Royal College of Occupational Therapists (2021). Career Development Framework: Guiding Principles for Occupational Therapy (2nd ed.). RCOT. https://www.rcot.co.uk/publications/career-development-framework

- RCSLT (2023). RCSLT Professional Development Framework. London: Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists.

- The CSP Career Framework (2024) , Chartered Society of Physiotherapists. https://www.csp.org.uk/publications/physiotherapy-career-framework

- The Principles of Enhanced Level Practice (2022) https://www.hee.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/documents/The%20Principles%20of%20Enhanced%20Level%20Practice.pdf

CASE STUDIES



Case Study: Regina Okeke, Arts Therapies Assistant

‘A Day in the Life’ of a Forensic Psychological Therapies Assistant

The relationship between service users and their therapist is important, protected and confidential. This is what makes my role as an Arts Therapies Assistant so incredibly unique. I have had the privilege of experiencing the inside of the therapy room, by supporting and collaborating with four Arts Therapists.

I begin my day by attending to emails, reading notes and checking in with my team, which is made up of Art, Music and Dramatherapists. The Music Therapist and I then head over to the Men’s Medium Secure Unit (MSU) for our first group of the day.

9:45-10:30 Music Therapy Group
I support the therapist in setting up the room full with instruments. The instruments have their set places, stationed for the group members to freely move between. We briefly discuss the previous sessions, what themes came up and what to look out for. We think together about the upcoming session, including any news we have to share such as breaks or new members joining and how this might affect the group. I help with practical parts of group work, such as receiving handovers from the nursing team, before encouraging group members to attend the group and escorting them to the therapy room.

Case Study: Regina Okeke, Arts Therapies Assistant

My role is dynamic as I interchangeably move between observer-participant roles. We play improvised rhythms that can be free flowing sounds, or structured, steady rhythms together, whilst we play I listen out for the therapist in the music and think about how my playing can support them. I might play rhythms that the therapist plays, playing softly to allow the group to hear them, or loudly to support the therapist and gently guide the service users. Simultaneously, I'm listening out to the sounds, rhythms, beats and melodies being played by group members that I can mirror and respond to. In those moments I change my playing to reflect the playing of others in the group. The therapist prompts the group members to think about what the music sounded and felt like, and to share any themes or images that might have come to mind. In these moments I offer support by modelling for the group members. I'm able to share my experience of the music, and I pick up on some things that might feel difficult to say. For example, I might share that the music felt explorative and exciting, but at the same time there may be a feeling of uncertainty of what or how to play. The group members see me as an example and may feel encouraged to share in a similar open and honest way. In this way, the Music Therapist is able to support and contain the group within the music, and I offer a small helping hand in this by supporting them. This helps them to think more broadly about the music and the experience of the group and its members.

10:50-11:50 Art Therapy Group

My second group of the day is an Open Art Therapy group in the Men's MSU with the Art Therapist. Although there is a core membership to the group, we encourage attendance from anyone on the ward. Working together, the therapist and I create a safe, open space for curiosity, creative ideas and group discussions to emerge. I support the Art Therapist through a process of modelling both art making and engagement in verbal discussions. The fact that I am not by any means a trained or skilled artist is helpful, as I can model a process of art making and creativity that is about freedom of expression and exploration rather than artistic skill. The topics of group discussions range from daily life on the wards, progress and recovery, to personal dilemmas, ward dynamics and difficult topics such as violence, vulnerabilities and change. In some ways, the therapist and I represent a containing parental relationship. Our co-facilitating dyad boasts a model that recognises difference, similarity and autonomy, whilst also demonstrating teamwork, union and containment.

Case Study: Regina Okeke, Arts Therapies Assistant

12-13:00 Weekly Team Meeting
Our weekly team meeting doubles as a business meeting and peer supervision, where we bring aspects of our caseloads to think about together. I often see service users in the different modalities, at different days and times of the week and through their recovery journey. Therefore, I can offer a unique and robust perspective and observation to the therapists. I also take the meeting minutes, read out any actions set from previous weeks and inform the therapists of upcoming CPA's from their caseload.

13:45-14:30 Music Therapy Group
I support the Music Therapist in another closed group in the afternoon in the Women's MSU.

15:30-16:30 Storytelling (Dramatherapy Group)
The Dramatherapist and I choose stories together and briefly think about the themes which may arise. We also plan exercises that encourage and strengthen listening, exploration, imagination, connectivity and interpersonal relationships. This group takes place on-ward, therefore we set-up together with the group members, which gives them a sense of ownership of the group. Sometimes I'm invited by the therapist to read parts of the stories, taking up different roles and characters. At other times, having not read the story I can form my own opinions which I share with the group off the cuff, in an authentic and genuine way. I might help to guide discussions by asking challenging questions, and inviting others to share their views. I help to pack up before leaving the group to attend to other commitments as part of my own psychotherapy training.

Other Therapeutic Groups
Where I have spare moments in the day, I spend some time giving thought to my other groups in the week such as the Hospital Choir, Band and an on-ward, mixed modality Creative Writing group, which combines the Arts Therapies model with Occupational Therapy. The Arts Therapists support me through encouragement and by offering opportunities for debriefing, and helping me to think more widely about the Arts in Health groups and projects that I run.

Case study: Rachel Lambie, Service Provider, CEO NESSIE IN ED CIC

What is your current role and what do you find rewarding about it?
I am a founder and CEO of a voluntary sector service that works with children and young people with complex needs. The service is made up of arts therapists and Autism specialists as we work with children, young people and their families who would struggle to express their mental health concerns verbally. My role continues to involve working directly with (a small number) of children and young people, supervising senior arts therapists and teaching professionals. I am also in my 5th year of a Professional Doctorate which is an arts based participatory project. I find working and researching arts based approaches to health rewarding as well as being in a position to support new and qualified arts therapists with employment (53 in the team to date)

How have you developed in the role? / How do you help others who work for you develop their careers/skills and knowledge?
My professional practice has been influenced by the national transformation programme for CYP mental health (CYP-IAPT) which is part of the NHS programme to increase the workforce. This funded training opportunity has provided myself and the team within the service with funded specialist training. I have also been privileged to receive 1-1 supervision throughout my career with experienced and clever therapists (not all Arts therapists)! One of the missions of the service is to support the therapists with opportunities for professional development through funded professional development and providing regular supervision. We also provide peer led experiential workshops that bring good practice from all areas of the arts therapies drawing on current literature and practice. As stated, I am currently researching and a member of the BADth research sub-committee. I am also part of ARU's Arts and health network and Brighton University Arts in research network.

Case study: Rachel Lambie, Service Provider, CEO NESSIE IN ED CIC

What has supported you to develop your career to date? Involvement with professional body?
I have supported myself through further training and qualifications, research and supervision including to become a supervisor myself. I am part of local and national networks, where we can share good practice. I'm also supported through professional body memberships. I link with the national NHS agenda for change which offers funded training and access to professional networks. I link with other modalities through their professional memberships.

Is there any advice you would give to others ?
Make sure you are on top of the national and local agenda for mental health within your area. Reach out to colleagues regardless of discipline – you will learn a lot from each other. If research and training benefit your clients, then follow what works and is evidence based. The arts therapies can benefit from working across disciplines.

What advice can you give on moving into research/education/leadership/ roles?
Go for it! You will find the resources and support network that you need when you need it. Look to local networks and partnerships as well as gaps in literature so that the work that you develop is meaningful.

How has your creativity in thinking strategically about services and the needs in your community enabled you to make a unique contribution?
I 'think outside the box' - the children, young people and families we work with don't fit into a box – it's a match made in heaven! Only 36.5% of children and young people currently access NHS funded therapy and most wait for up to 10 years. The art therapies have a lot to offer for those people that can't access traditional approaches to therapy. Also, we can communicate and demonstrate impact both quantitatively, qualitatively abut also through the arts. In other words, we can evidence our outcomes both through data and through the arts so transcend the limitations of words. This symbolic, holistic approach can be under-valued but have lasting impact for the person. That's the bit people remember. Arts have an ability to increase access to ways of knowing that reports and stats just don't reach.

Case study: Rachel Lambie, Service Provider, CEO NESSIE IN ED CIC

What advice would you give to others considering a career in Art/Drama/Music Therapy?
I would suggest that people considering training as an arts therapist would benefit from exploring and reading about the concept of mental health so that they can understand where the philosophy of arts therapies 'sit'.Arts therapies believe that a person has the capacity to find balance and healing within themselves and that the arts can support this process. Other routes to training align with a positivist philosophy, one that is medicalised that looks to 'treat' a 'patient'. There are many routes to training in a medicalised model through the NHS, but arts therapies offer a holistic approach to health that can work in the arts, communities, hospitals, education or social care. Once you know your personal philosophy to health, you will know what approach works for you. The arts therapies are emergent, which can be challenging as it is still considered novel, but this offers great opportunities to work in a person-centred, creative approach to support lasting change for people who struggle to respond to traditional forms of therapy. Finally, connect with as many arts therapists that you can. Read their published research. Go and see their work. It is a great starting point.

Case study: Daniel Thomas, Services Lead at Chroma

As the Managing Director and a Music Therapist of Chroma, I find my role incredibly rewarding. Leading a team of passionate therapists and witnessing the transformative power of creative arts therapies in our clients' lives is truly fulfilling. Great therapy and great business is all about building relationships and this is part of what inspires me. I'm also inspired by building quality into the business as it grows, so we can always focus on improvement.

Career Development and Supporting Others

My journey at Chroma has been one of continuous growth and learning. I've developed not only as a Music Therapist but also as a leader and entrepreneur. I'm a firm believer in the phrase "throw your ball over the fence and then work out how to get it back". This is about entrepreneurship and working to create new possibilities, and collaborating to make things actually happen in the world. My process and what has helped me grow over the last 20 years as a music therapist entrepreneur spans across four pillars of practice:

- **Professional Practice:** I've honed my clinical skills through ongoing supervision and case reviews, ensuring our therapies remain effective and client-centred. Even though I'm not in clinical practice any more, I still do all the training and CPD so I understand what we're about and what services we selling.
- **Facilitating Learning:** We've implemented a robust preceptorship program called the PEP or Professional Excellence Program. This program pairs experienced therapists with newcomers to foster knowledge sharing and skill development offering structured transitional support to bridge the gap between the end of training and the start of working as a therapist.
- **Evidence and Research:** I've spearheaded initiatives to collect and analyse data on our therapy outcomes, contributing to the evidence base for creative arts therapies. A virtuous circle linking evidence-based practice leading to practice-based evidence has been important to establish.
- **Leadership:** I've cultivated my leadership skills through personal therapy, coaching and by taking on increasingly complex organisational challenges. Authenticity as a leader is the key "skill" to feeling at ease in the role, but also to bring people along with you. Being fully myself allows other people to be themselves too and this shouldn't be underestimated.

Case study: Daniel Thomas, Services Lead at Chroma

I have never had a clear mapped out career framework, ever. I have a gut sense of where and what I want to do, that has been founded on my core beliefs. These have been instrumental in supporting and trusting my development. They provide a clear roadmap for progression, helping me identify areas for growth and set meaningful goals. For our team members at Chroma, we use creative and standardised tools such as performance reviews and career planning discussions. But it is all centred on our core beliefs: “Culture is created when people spend time together” (Brynulf Stige) is a great guide.

What advice would you give to others considering a career in Art, Drama, or Music Therapy?
My career development has been significantly supported by active involvement in professional bodies, attending conferences, and networking with peers in the field. Since qualifying as a music therapist in 2002 I have attended national and international conferences every single year, consciously budgeting for them and setting time aside to submit abstracts for presentations. These experiences have broadened my perspective and opened up new opportunities for collaboration and innovation. I now have a wonderful “international family” that I see every year somewhere around the world and I find this rejuvenating, inspiring and deeply lovely!

For those looking to advance their careers, I would advise:

1. Embrace continuous learning
2. Seek out diverse experiences
3. Build a strong professional network
4. Don't be afraid to take calculated risks

Case study: Daniel Thomas, Services Lead at Chroma

Strategic Thinking and Impact

At Chroma, I think we've made a unique impact by thinking creatively about service delivery. We've identified gaps in the sectors we work in - Health, Education and Social Care - and looked to develop our services to benefit our communities. We've developed innovative programs to address them. This strategic approach has not only expanded our reach but also demonstrated the versatility and effectiveness of creative arts therapies in addressing complex health challenges. It's a testament to how creativity can drive both clinical excellence and business success in our field.

We've also thought very clearly and strategically about money and the financial side of what we do as therapists. Chroma is a limited company, consciously not a charity or not-for-profit. This allows us to be in control of our finances and therefore of our opportunities that secure our future and enable us to offer long term therapy to clients.

Case study: Louise Aylin, Specialist Dramatherapist, NHS

What is your current role and what do you find rewarding about it?
I currently work as a Dramatherapist for Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Trust (HPFT). I provide both individual and group dramatherapy assessments and interventions to adults with complex mental health needs. One of the most rewarding aspects of my role is being able to use the creative arts. I have always had a passion to make a difference and support adults who are experiencing mental health challenges.

How have you developed in the role?
I worked as an actor and workshop leader for 30 years. In 2019 I decided to retrain as a Dramatherapist and was offered a place to study for my Dramatherapy Masters at Anglia Ruskin University. During this time, I started my placement with HPFT. My previous experience as an actor provided a wealth of practical creative experience necessary for the role.
As a student with previous life and work experiences, I brought with me transferable life skills, but I had limited clinical experience. My placement provided the opportunity to be part of a busy multidisciplinary team and to work with mental health professionals who shared their considerable knowledge whilst supporting me to manage my own caseload. Part of professional practice has been keeping records up to date and where necessary liaising with other professionals to ensure continuity of care. Working with a wide variety of clients with different diagnosis I have had the opportunity to develop my clinical theory skills, and I have gained a better understanding of the challenges that adults with mental health challenges face.

I have taken opportunities for continuing professional development (CPD) including in my theoretical and practical skills as a therapist, which have enriched my learning. I recently completed the National Autism Awareness Training, a series of Masterclasses in ADHD and a course with the Gestalt Institute working with adult mental health and creative writing.

Case study: Louise Aylin, Specialist Dramatherapist, NHS

What has supported you to develop your career to date?
Having the opportunity to work for HPFT has played the most significant part in supporting me to develop my career as a Dramatherapist. Being part of a vibrant and supportive arts therapies team has been invaluable in helping me to grow as a therapist and to feel confident within a team of multidisciplinary professionals. Regular team meetings and team CPD days allow for learning opportunities, we are also actively encouraged by the creative arts lead to share ideas and ways of working in order that we can continue to improve the way we work and to create an awareness of dramatherapy and the other arts therapies within the trust.

Professional and clinical supervision has encouraged me and given me the confidence to think about how I can use dramatherapy in a variety of ways to support the services and service users. My professional lead has been extremely supportive, I always know that if I have question or a concern that I will be heard and supported which is incredibly reassuring and something that I am extremely grateful for. The annual British Association of Dramatherapy (BADth) conference is a wonderful opportunity to meet with other Dramatherapists and to participate in workshops and attend lectures. BADth also have a programme of courses and online forums which support learning and development.

How would you like to develop your career further in the future?
I am always looking for ways to add to my skill set and for professional learning and development opportunities. I would like to undertake training in clinical supervision so that I am able to support my fellow Dramatherapists within the trust and would like to be able to supervise trainee Dramatherapists. I believe it is important to advocate for the creative arts therapies within the NHS to demonstrate the many ways in which creativity can support mental health in adults and children who have mental health challenges. I would like to further develop the learning from the National Autism Training programme and to deliver the training to the wider team.

Case study: Louise Aylin, Specialist Dramatherapist, NHS

In your experience how important is it to make links with the wider professional community to maintain your professional identity, to support yourself, and practice self-care and creative practice? Can you give any examples of how you may have done this, and the benefits?

Linking with other professionals within the wider professional community is incredibly important and helps me to feel connected and supported. Because I trained as a Dramatherapist relatively recently I am still in touch with my university cohort. This is a wonderfully supportive network. Not only did we train together, many of us started work at the same time and have helped each other navigate the way through the early days of our careers, providing emotional support and encouragement during what can often be an overwhelming time.

Self-care for me comes in the form of personal therapy, this helps to keep me balanced and I am then at my best for my clients. In addition to this I meet once a month with a group of therapists local to me for reflective practice. This also supports my creative practice because we are encouraged to share ideas and try new approaches, for example we recently had as session led by a therapist who practices environmental arts therapy which has given me inspiration for some of my group work. I have found the CPD sessions run by BADth extremely helpful and have met other professionals, and I am on various social media sites and follow other drama and art therapists for inspiration and a sense of community.

Is there any advice you would give to others considering a career in Art/Drama/Music Therapy?

I am a huge advocate of the Arts Therapies, working with a creative medium that you feel passionate about and having the opportunity to support those experiencing difficulties is both a privilege and hugely rewarding.

I would say to research thoroughly before deciding to train, and if possible, do a short course or a taster session so that you are sure that being an art therapist is the right choice for you. You may not know which area you want to specialise in because the arts therapies can be used in a variety of settings, keep an open mind, it's ok not to know and don't be afraid to ask lots of questions. If you have limited clinical experience, then working for the NHS is a great way to gain experience quickly. Take advantage of all the training and CPD opportunities available to you and network with other professionals. Make sure to carve out time for yourself to do the things you enjoy and look for opportunities to nurture your creativity. For me a trip to the theatre or an art gallery as well as spending time in nature nourishes my soul and leaves me feeling restored and inspires the work I do.

Case study: Kirsty Jane, Researcher and specialist Music Therapist Kings College London.

What is your current role and what do you find rewarding about it?
I have an National Institute Health and Care Research (NIHR) Doctoral Clinical Academic Fellowship so I get to have 20% clinical time and 80% research. I love using my clinical knowledge to inform my research and my research knowledge to improve clinical practice.

How have you developed in the role?
Since starting the fellowship I have grown in confidence with my research skills. I am able to feel confident in applying for ethical approval, submitting funding applications and effectively engaging with people with lived experience. Everything I have learnt from my research study has then influenced my thinking about my clinical practice. It has increased my awareness of health inequalities and consider the accessibility of services we provide. I am now more aware of this when I am working clinically and I am continually attempting to make lots of small changes across my work and the teams I work with.

I am now more confident in supporting others in developing their knowledge through coordinating networks for professionals both clinically and in research. Through these I have been able to develop interest in research in other clinicians and consult on the development of practice. Additionally I now am now a guest lecturer at a number of institutions increasing awareness of co-design methodology and true – rather than token! - public and patient involvement (PPI).

How do you see the career framework supporting this?
I currently feel that there is little support for those who have completed a PhD and are at the top of their clinical careers. Currently after having a fellowship there is a high chance I could be returning to an entry level post without having my progress recognised. I feel this is something common across creative therapies as there is little awareness of clinical academic/ consultant roles. Hopefully with a framework this could change.

Case study: Kirsty Jane, Researcher and specialist Music Therapist Kings College London.

What has supported you to develop your career to date? Involvement with professional body?
I have had a lot of support from other healthcare professionals in developing my work. They encouraged and supported me to write case studies and then develop my research career from here. They helped me identify areas I needed to develop or find training in to be most successful at gaining the fellowship. As my career has progressed I have become more involved with my professional body, coordinating the research and neonatal networks to support the development of future neonatal music therapists and clinical academics. I have also presented at their national conference to disseminate findings from my work.

How could you use the career framework as you continue to develop your career/careers of others?
It would help to create a reference point that would be supportive when developing applications, to demonstrate what career progression looks like within creative therapies. It is also helpful in developing teams and new roles within services that have structure and again clear progression.

Case study: Kirsty Jane, Researcher and specialist Music Therapist Kings College London.

Is there any advice you would give to others ?
Involving people with lived experience is valuable in all careers, definitely get this into all areas of work clinically and academically so that we can improve practice and research.

What advice can you give on moving into research/education/leadership/ roles?
Build a team. Your team will help you reflect and grow. They will be people who are your biggest critics but also your greatest support. Consider them carefully and work closely with them.

How has your creativity in thinking strategically about services and the needs in your community enabled you to make a unique contribution/ impact ?
I have developed hospice therapy roles to consider the journey of parents from diagnosis pre-birth to post death. It has enabled more families to get support from before the baby is born and have life celebrated and acknowledged.

What advice would you give to others considering a career in Art/Drama/Music Therapy?
Getting experience in an environment which is relevant to the area you are interested in working in is hugely beneficial. This does not need to be in a therapy context. It can help give insight and deepen understanding of the experiences some of your future clients may have with the service and the challenges and barriers they face in the system.

Case study: Wendy Ruck - Clinical Lead Specialist Music Therapist and Professional Head of Arts Therapists

What is your current role and what do you find rewarding about it?
My current role is that of Clinical Lead Specialist Music Therapist and Professional Head of Art, Drama and Music Therapy. This means that I have two main responsibilities: a clinical role working with adults with an intellectual disability and an operational manager and professional lead for a team of six arts therapists. I find the dual aspect of the role particularly rewarding.

How have you developed in the role?
Prior to beginning this role I had been a lone practitioner and had not received any formal management training. The skills required for my current role are many as I need to be able to perform in three main areas: clinical, professional and operational.

Clinically, this role requires that I maintain and develop my clinical skills as determined by an ongoing clinical caseload working within the specialist area of Intellectual Disability.

The task to provide professional leadership has required a broader knowledge of the art, drama and music therapy professions to support staff to develop their own clinical skills and forge their own career pathways. Skills such as integrity, collaboration, flexibility, clear communication, empathy, critical thinking and interpersonal skills have all been important in providing this level of leadership as well as good liaison skills with other art, drama and music professional leads within my NHS Trust and the wider profession.
The task to provide operational management in addition to the above has required knowledge and skills including budgeting, time management, employee appraisal, governance and the management of a waiting list as well as the ability to work alongside other professionals who are in non-clinical roles at senior management level.

Developments in my role have been many and include; past BAMT co-ordinator for the Learning Disability network; present chair for the BAMT Clinical Supervision Working Group and Clinical Supervision Advisory Group; project lead for Trauma Informed Care (Service wide); service user collaboration in a video about Art, Drama and Music Therapy; shared representation on the Learning Disability Professional Senate and associated projects; teaching opportunities within NHS England initiatives, and the introduction of development posts – Band 6-7 - for both art and dramatherapy.

Case study: Wendy Ruck - Clinical Lead Specialist Music Therapist and Professional Head of Arts Therapists

Please can you tell us about your development posts?
An art therapies development post, Band 6-7, was introduced to offer employment opportunities for newly qualified or recently qualified therapists within a Learning Disability Community and In-patient Service. This opportunity could only have been considered as the funding already existed for a Band 7 post but it had been a struggle to recruit therapists with the experience and skills necessary for Band 7 role in this service. The aim of the development post is to offer a protected period of time (approx. 18 – 24 months) where the therapist is given additional support and training opportunities to assist them to develop the required skill set and experience for a Band 7 role within the NHS and with the wide-ranging needs of the Service User group. A Band 7 role of this nature requires excellent organisation and self-management skills as well as a high degree of self-confidence in their own specialism.

Examples of additional support have been: beginning with a reduced caseload (building to a full case load approx. 4-6 months before the end of the development period to ensure the therapist is able to maintain full caseload expectations), additional clinical and managerial supervision and opportunities for profession specific peer supervision, shadowing opportunities and joint working with more experienced colleagues, specific learning opportunities related to both their profession and the Service User group.

Examples of skill development alongside clinical skills and professional confidence are: leading on an arts therapies specific project that requires research and liaison with colleagues, presenting to the arts therapies team of a given subject with a view to demonstrating their learning and reflections of the role of a therapist with this Service User group and how this sits with both local and national provision of Learning Disability Services, to be able to organise and chair review meetings with Service Users, their carers and other MDT members as appropriate, to organise and chair organisational meetings and to support trainee placements.

Case study: Wendy Ruck - Clinical Lead Specialist Music Therapist and Professional Head of Arts Therapists

Progress is reviewed formally three times a year with additional smaller reviews as necessary as part of managerial supervision. At a time agreed with both the Arts Therapies manager and the Arts Therapist, evidence is submitted to Human Resources to demonstrate all required achievements leading to the arts therapist being awarded the Band 7 role.

What has supported you to develop your career to date?
Ongoing learning and development has always been supported as a part of my role, whether this be of a clinical or a more operational nature and much of this has been funded through the NHS. In addition to this, opportunities provided by the British Association for Music Therapy, such as clinical networks, professional conferences as both attendee and presenter and to be involved with the work of the Association have all played a part in my personal career development.

My personal role (and that of my team) sits within a larger Allied Health Professions (AHP) structure with a dedicated AHP Trust wide lead and this has provided both a voice and a professional home leading to a number of opportunities for career and service development which may not have been available had I/we not been a part of this group. In addition, collaboration with colleagues from other psychological professions have provided opportunities for improving service development, joint collaboration for the benefit of the service user and personal clinically related training opportunities.

Offering trainee placements has been an integral part of my career and has led to opportunities to train and then provide clinical supervision both within the NHS and on a private basis. Through liaison with universities, I have delivered lectures to trainees on working as a music therapist for People with Intellectual Disabilities.

It has been important to establish relationships with other therapists outside of the immediate workplace throughout my career and in doing so, opportunities for joint presenting, co-authorship, peer professional support and a wide variety of learning activities have all been possible.

Case study: Wendy Ruck - Clinical Lead Specialist Music Therapist and Professional Head of Arts Therapists

How would you like to develop your career further in the future?
Within the NHS, I would welcome the opportunity to develop this role or indeed see the development of a new role for a Trustwide music therapy consultant/lead – or Art, Drama and Music Therapy Trustwide lead. I would also like to develop my career to include more research opportunities and service development projects, whilst appreciating there are logistical challenges to be overcome.

In your experience how important is it to make links with the wider professional community to maintain your professional identity, to support yourself, and practice self-care and creative practice? Can you give any examples of how you may have done this, and the benefits?
In my experience, retaining your membership of your professional association is very important to positive career experiences. Over the years I have been and still am a member of different clinical networks where the opportunity to meet and discuss relevant issues, hear/present case study work and other related issues have been instrumental in supporting a professional identity, peer support and nourishing creative practice and thinking. I have also been and still am involved with some of the work of my professional association which continues to give me opportunities to think about important professional issues, meet with a wide range of therapists working in different clinical areas and work together for the betterment of the profession, e.g. producing professional guidance documents.

Is there any advice you would give to others considering a career in Art/Drama/Music Therapy?
The career of a Music Therapist is a rich and rewarding one and can be varied, just as any music related career: and just as with any career or vocation, the career of a Music Therapist takes time, commitment and at times it will be about creating opportunities in different clinical areas. It will be important to maintain your creative skills for yourself too as this will in turn nurture your creative skills and your emotional well-being for your therapist role.

Case study: Francesca Norouzi, Consultant Art Psychotherapist and Head of Arts Psychotherapies

What is your current role and what do you find rewarding about it?
I am a Consultant Art Psychotherapist and Head of Arts Psychotherapist at Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Foundation Trust, a post that I have held since 2016. The most rewarding element of my role has been in creating opportunities and environments within which service users and colleagues have been supported to develop.

How have you developed in the role?
Since qualifying as an Art Psychotherapist in 2001, my career has evolved through a combination of clinical practice, leadership development and innovation in practice. My initial focus was in developing my clinical skills, knowledge and understanding of working clinically within the field of Adult Mental Health Services. I have been privileged to work alongside service users and colleagues who have encouraged me to reflect upon my limitations, to recognise my strengths and challenge my assumptions as a way to improve my clinical skills.

Since securing my first leadership role in 2016, I have supported my organisation to recognise the importance of broadening access to psychological therapies to meet the needs of our diverse communities here in Birmingham. In particular, the significant added value that Art, Drama and Music Therapies offers people who struggle to engage in solely verbal-focused therapies. This has supported the development of a clear referral process and a better understanding of how arts psychotherapies can address some of the gaps in services.

Working strategically has been key to my development and the expansion of the service. By aligning service innovation with NHS priorities and demonstrating impact through evaluation, I have successfully advocated for greater investment in arts psychotherapies resources. Balancing clinical work with my leadership role has helped me to grow in confidence and strengthened my ability to articulate the value of the arts therapies within different clinical services across the Trust.

Case study: Francesca Norouzi, Consultant Art Psychotherapist and Head of Arts Psychotherapies

I have actively sought learning opportunities to develop the skills required to facilitate my role throughout my career. These have included expanding my clinical skills through additional specialist training, shadowing leaders from different disciplines, reflecting upon the challenging leadership behaviours and practices that I have observed throughout my career and participation in the NHS Leadership Academy Elizabeth Garret Anderson Leadership Programme.

How do you help others who work for you develop their careers/skills and knowledge?
Delivering effective clinical services requires workforce development to achieve workforce expansion. Investing in our staff ensures we have the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to deliver safe, effective, evidenced based, quality care. As service users and clinical teams experienced high quality care delivery from our service, we were able to expand our workforce both in terms of numbers and through developing a career structure for arts psychotherapists within our organisation. This structure includes entry-level Band 6 roles, Band 7 practitioner, Enhanced, Advanced and Consultant level roles at Band 8c. In addition, we have recently established a new Advanced Clinical Academic Art Psychotherapist role. This combines clinical work, research development, training and education, and will support improved outcomes for service users whilst enhancing professional pathways for art psychotherapists and evidences our organisation's commitment to research and innovation in practice.

Case study: Francesca Norouzi, Consultant Art Psychotherapist and Head of Arts Psychotherapies

Developing our workforce is key to developing an effective clinical resource which is responsive to service user's needs. Investing in people, providing opportunities for structured growth within a supportive and innovative environment is central to my ethos as a professional lead. I am committed to creating opportunities for staff to expand their clinical, research and leadership and education skills in line with the 4 pillars of practice, through the following:

1. **Professional Practice –** supporting clinicians to develop specialist areas of practice which are responsive to the needs of service users. Ensuring robust clinical supervision structures that support reflection, building confidence and identify areas of development
2. **Leadership and Management –** delegating responsibilities with the aim of supporting skill set expansion. Creating multiple opportunities for development at all levels i.e.undertaking service evaluations, presenting at local and national conferences, proposing service innovations.
3. **Education –** Encouraging colleagues to contribute to training opportunities both internally and externally to the Trust, promoting professional growth and building their capacity to influence practice

Research – Developing research focused roles, with the aim of expanding the current evidence base and building research skills to ensure evaluation is embedded in clinical practice

How do you see the career framework supporting this?

I see the career framework as a vital tool for embedding Arts Psychotherapies within the fabric of a modern NHS service. By outlining clear pathways for progression across professional practice, leadership, education and research it will support Arts Psychotherapists to develop skills that align with service needs and ensure innovation in service delivery that is responsive to the diverse needs of our community. This framework will demonstrate the unique value of the Arts Psychotherapies, highlighting the important role that they play in addressing health inequalities through increasing access to psychological provision for service users.It will also guide staff development, supporting individuals to build expertise and confidence, ultimately enhancing service provision and improving outcomes for service users.

Case study: Francesca Norouzi, Consultant Art Psychotherapist and Head of Arts Psychotherapies

What has supported you to develop your career to date? Involvement with professional body?
To date, my career development to date has been supported by a combination of mentorship, peer and professional networks and through my active involvement with professional bodies. I am an active member of the British Association of Art Therapists (BAAT) representing the membership as an elected council member. This has provided me with invaluable opportunity to support the development of the association, understand its challenges and consider creative solution to engage and resource our practice community. Engaging with BAAT events, research publications through the International Journal of Art Therapy (IJAT) has helped me to stay connected to evolving practice within the field.

Mentorship has also been crucial. Learning from senior leader from across multiple professional groups has given me insight into strategic thinking, service development, and how to articulate the value of art psychotherapy to decision makers. Investing in leadership development programmes, such as those afforded by the NHS Leadership Academy, has equipped me with the skills to navigate complex systems and influence change.

How could you use the career framework as you continue to develop your career/careers of others?
The emerging career framework offers a vital structure to guide career progression for Arts Psychotherapists. I see it as a tool that can clarify pathways for advancing skills across the four pillars of practices. I will use the framework to identify opportunities to enhance my own research and academic contributions and will support my team to engage in meaningful conversations about their own career aspirations, supporting colleagues to map out achievable steps to progress. By aligning development plans with the framework, I can ensure staff feel empowered to build their skills and progress their careers in a way that is sustainable and aligned with service and service users needs.

I believe the framework will help those of us in leadership roles in the Arts Psychotherapies to address some of the workforce expansion and development which is needed, particularly in mental health services, to ensure all those who need a less verbal form of psychological intervention are able to access it.

Case study: Francesca Norouzi, Consultant Art Psychotherapist and Head of Arts Psychotherapies

Is there any advice you would give to others ?
Arts Psychotherapists are often naturally curious, and I would encourage everyone to be open to continue learning throughout their careers. Developing a career in Arts Psychotherapies requires persistence, and creativity, it is as challenging as it is rewarding. I would encourage colleagues to seek out mentorship opportunities, embracing opportunities that stretch your existing skills, and ensure you remain committed to communicating the unique added value that arts psychotherapies brings to the delivery of effective patient care.

Arts Psychotherapists careers can be rich and varied, as we are equipped with the knowledge, skills and behaviours to influence change both within the therapy room and across the wider systems. Our expertise enables us to shape service development, contribute to strategic thinking, and advocate for creative approaches that enhance mental health. outside the therapy room as well as within it. Don't be afraid to advocate for your role - showing how your work makes a difference to the lives and experience of service users, is the key to driving change.