

BIOS Support Workforce Development Project

A vision for our support workforce

Members of the orthoptic clinical support workforce are employed mainly in Agenda for Change bands 3 and 4¹. They work in service user facing roles that are not regulated by the Health Care Professions Council. They work under the supervision of registered orthoptists and have long played a key role in providing safe and effective care.

This important part of the workforce has not, however, always been developed consistently. For example, they can be utilised in different ways in different services. They do not always have clear career progression pathways or are able to access to occupationally relevant education, meaning, that the benefits of apprenticeships are not maximised. There are also many different and locally determined titles for roles, which can cause confusion for potential recruits, staff and service users.

There is now a pressing need if the NHS is to meet the unprecedented increase in demand for services now and in the coming years - to maximise the contribution of the support workforce to deliver safe and effective care.

The Support Workforce Development Project, led by BIOS is working with a United Kingdom-wide expert group to deliver the following:

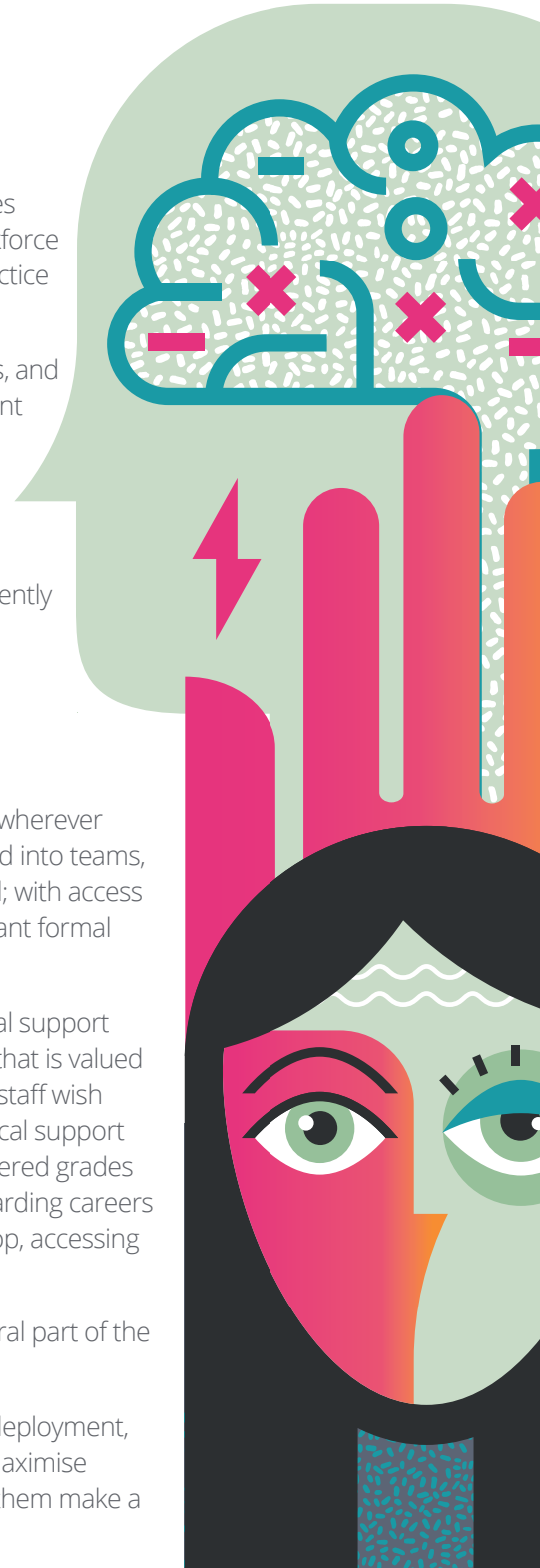
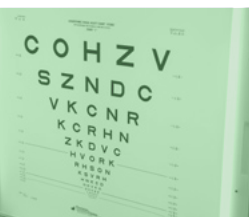
- Guidance on the roles and responsibilities and capabilities expected of the support workforce employed at each level of practice
- Recommended entry-level requirements for new recruits, and their learning and development needs once employed
- Recommended national job titles
- Information addressing frequently asked questions about this workforce
- Updated resources on BIOS webpages.

Our vision is for all orthoptic staff wherever they work to feel valued, integrated into teams, able to work fully to their potential; with access to lifelong learning including relevant formal qualifications.

We wish employment in the clinical support workforce to be seen as a career that is valued and valuable. Moreover, whether staff wish to pursue their careers in the clinical support workforce or progress onto registered grades we want to ensure they have rewarding careers and are clear how they can develop, accessing the support they need.

The support workforce is an integral part of the orthoptic clinical team.

Now is the time to invest in their deployment, education, and development to maximise their contribution to care to help them make a difference.



¹Band 2 roles will be employed in many orthoptic services but will not carry out direct service user facing clinical tasks