BIOS | BRITISH AND IRISH ORTHOPTIC SOCIETY

British and Irish Orthoptic Society statement on Agenda for Change pay recognition for trainee and Advanced Clinical Practitioners

May 2024

Summary

Guidance on Agenda for Change (AfC) pay recognition for Orthoptists progressing to trainee Advanced Clinical Practitioner (tACP) and qualified Advanced Clinical Practitioner (ACP) roles within the NHS.

Detail

Changes and challenges in health and eyecare have led to an evolution in professional healthcare roles, contributing to opportunities for role development and service innovations including ACP roles, which cross traditional profession-specific boundaries.

Trainee Advanced Clinical Practitioner posts should be AfC band 7, progressing to 8a and above (dependent on the scope of practice), upon completion of a full Master's degree. Lead roles exist nationally up to band 9 for those wishing to pursue routes with a greater focus on leadership, education and/or research. This aligns with several regional frameworks such as the Yorkshire and Humber Advanced Clinical Practice Framework, the East Midlands ACP framework and the Suffolk and North East Essex training hub for Advanced Clinical Practice. All new tACP positions on NHS jobs are advertised at band 7, with ACP positions advertised at band 8a.

Lack of consistency with regard to AfC posts presents risks to the Orthoptic profession and employing NHS Trusts. Should ACP workload become absorbed into a band 7 role, core Orthoptic role banding could be driven down, destabilising professional recognition. Organisations who invest in upskilling tACPs, risk losing their employee to a higher banded role offered by another Trust, upon qualification.

**Please note that the Advanced Clinical Practitioner role is accredited by the NHS England Centre for Advancing Practice and is distinct from other roles such as Advanced Orthoptist*