



# Reframing the art and science of psychiatric nursing through advanced practice: An analysis of the impact of ANP implementation in one Irish Mental Health Service

## Background

Psychiatric nurses hold a unique position in healthcare and mental health nursing is often poorly understood. More than ever, there is a greater need for complex mental health interventions to address these increasingly complex mental health needs.

The advanced nurse practitioner (ANP) in mental health represents the highest level of clinical competency within a particular area of specialty. The ANP working in mental health services range from perinatal mental healthcare, primary care mental health, liaison, early intervention in psychosis, CAMHS, cognitive behavioural psychotherapy, eating disorders, liaison psychiatry, ADHD / neurodiversity and emotional dysregulation. The dynamic complex needs of individuals in mental healthcare services requires nurses with a sound knowledge base, emotional intelligence, compassionate care and understanding of the sensitive needs of individuals. Advanced practice includes the utilisation of complex mental health interventions to manage complex clinical care in partnership with individuals, families and carers.

While ANP roles have been successfully implemented and evaluated in many settings, such analysis remains in its infancy from a mental health perspective.

ANP -	Mental Health Interventions
Eating Disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ MEED Risk Assessment</li><li>➤ Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Enhanced for Eating Disorders (CBT-E)</li><li>➤ Maudsley Model for Anorexia Nervosa in Adults (MANTRA)</li><li>➤ Motivational Interviewing for Eating Disorders</li><li>➤ Internal Family Systems Therapy</li></ul>
Mental Health of Intellectual Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Co-produced, community-based psychosocial intervention program</li><li>➤ Positive Behavior Support</li><li>➤ Restrictive Practice Oversight and Reduction</li></ul>
Talking Therapies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing for Complex Trauma</li></ul>

## Aim

To explore the impact of investment in and development of advanced nurse practitioner roles on the development and implementation of complex mental health interventions in one Irish mental health service.

## Methods

An analysis was conducted on the development and implementation of Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP) led complex mental health interventions. These interventions were offered to patients over a two-year period following the development of the ANP role. The analysis covered three specialist services:

- 1.Eating Disorders
- 2.Mental Health of Intellectual Disability
- 3.Talking Therapies

The study focused on evaluating how these interventions were delivered and the impact of the ANP role in improving patient care across these services.



**An Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP) in Ireland** is a registered nurse with advanced education and skills, enabling them to practice at a higher level of autonomy and expertise.

## Results

- Three advanced nurse practitioner positions created between 2022 and 2024.
- Significant progress in the development and implementation of complex mental health interventions evidenced.
- Integrated interdisciplinary educational interventions improved expert service teams' knowledge and competence in specialist mental health.



## Discussion

Three ANP posts were developed between 2022-2024. These ANPs developed advanced mental health interventions whilst also demonstrating enhanced knowledge and clinical competence.

The ANPs manage all stages of ANP nursing process, overseeing complex mental healthcare. They possess leadership, educational, and interdisciplinary competencies. Multidimensional interventions have had varied outcomes for specific patient populations.

This analysis demonstrated ANP potential as pioneers in service development and leaders in psychiatric nursing and mental healthcare provision.

## Conclusion

The development of advanced nurse practitioner roles in mental health has significantly enhanced the delivery of complex mental health interventions, demonstrating the critical importance of integrating specialised competencies and collaborative care within psychiatric nursing. This evolution not only empowers individuals in their recovery journeys but also positions ANPs as pivotal leaders in advancing mental healthcare practices to meet the increasingly complex needs of diverse populations.

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