Clinical support roles in pediatric and neonatal settings across Europe
2012
Summary of key findings

Austria

There are clinical support roles in paediatrics and neonates. The role title is Pflegehelferin / Pflegehelfer (Nursing assistant). The postholders undertake:

Clinical tasks and procedures in neonatal settings include care for the child on a basic level supervised by a (registered)* nurse - for example

- washing, dressing
- feeding. Feeding could include feeding by gastric tube, but the nurse is responsible.
- generally assisting with patients overall comfort
- monitoring patients conditions by taking temperatures, pulse, respiration's and weight;
- setting up equipment to use in the session/treatment,
- helping to mobilise
- toileting
- bed making
- contributing to record keeping

Clinical tasks and procedures in neonatal settings include care for the child on a basic level supervised by a (registered) nurse - for example

- washing, dressing, feeding
- generally assisting with patients overall comfort
- monitoring patients conditions by taking temperatures, pulse, respiration's and weight
- setting up equipment to use in the session/treatment.
- coaching and support associated to skin to skin care
- diaper changing
- positioning of the baby
- moving the baby
- weighing
- bed making
- contributing to record keeping

There is no regulation or registration of clinical support roles at national level. There is no general or specific education or training required. The “Berufsverband Kinderkrankenpflege” created a curriculum for specific education and training which includes 160 hours theoretical and 80 hours practical education/training. This training is not required by law.
**Belgium**

There are clinical support roles in Belgium (carers and also logisticians). There are also a range of specialist nurses.

Carers work under the direct supervision of nurses and undertake:
- hygienic care
- beds
- weight and length
- power distribution
- transport of patients
- preparation of milk feeding
- logistics tasks

Logistic functions include serving food, clearing, utility, complementary materials, transport of materials, pharmacy transport, steel transport, welcome feature of the unit and administration.

Carers and logisticians are nationally registered. Each employee in paediatrics must submit an application a certificate of good behaviour, given by the government.

There are no specific recruitment policies for paediatrics or neonates. For the neonatal care: only education training on NIDCAP nurses (international course)

**Croatia**

Croatia does not have support staff in pediatrics so that there is no register. All the tasks for primary care are performed by nurses with high school education. There is a trainee who work for one year but does not have a license for independent work.

**Cyprus**

*Information not provided*

**Czech Republic**

*Information not provided*

**Denmark**

There are clinical nursing support roles working in paediatric and neonatal settings. Role titles include Sygehjælpere = nursing auxiliary and Social og sundhedsassistenter = social and health care assistant. These roles are formally regulated with a national register of post holders employed.

Clinical tasks and procedures in paediatric settings include:
• care for the child on a basic level supervised by a registered nurse,
  • washing, dressing
  • feeding. Feeding could include feeding by gastric tube, but the
  registered nurse is responsible.
• generally assisting with patients overall comfort
• monitoring patients conditions by taking temperatures, pulse,
  respiration’s and weight;
• preparing patients for their therapy,
• setting up equipment to use in the session/treatment, as well as
  parental support and education.

Clinical tasks and procedures in neonatal settings include:

• washing and dressing feeding
• generally assisting with patients overall comfort
• monitoring patients conditions by taking temperatures, pulse,
  respiration’s and weight
• preparing patients for their therapy
• setting up equipment to use in the session/treatment.
• Parental information
• coaching and support associated to skin to skin care
• diaper changing
• positioning of the baby
• moving the baby
• daily washing and bathing
• weighing.

There is a specific system and process in place to check the suitability of
applicants to work with babies, children and young people. There is no
specific recruitment policy for employing staff in paediatric or neonatal areas.

Clinical nursing support roles working in paediatric and neonatal settings do
not receive specific education and training for their role with babies, children
and young people.

**Estonia**

*Information not provided*

**Finland**

*Information not provided*

**France**

There are clinical nursing support roles in paediatric and neonatal settings. These post holders are known as ‘auxiliaire de puériculture’ translates to
‘auxiliary childcare/childcare assistant’.


The auxiliary childcare operates under the responsibility of the nurse as part of a role played by the initiative of the latter, defined by Articles R.4311-3 in 4311-5 Code of Public Health relating to professional procedures and the practice of nursing (Arrêté du 16/01/2006 (J.O. du 1/02/2006).

In institutions and care facilities for children under 6 years, the activity is regulated by Articles R 2324-16 to R2324-47 of the Code of Public Health. In these areas the post holder provides as part of the proper role of the nurse or the nurse, in collaboration with or under the responsibility of care and carries out awareness activities and education to preserve and restore the continuity of life, well being and independence of the child.

The role is part of a comprehensive approach to the child and takes into account the relational aspect of care and communication with the family as part of parenting support. The auxiliary participates in the welcoming and the social integration of children with disabilities, chronic illnesses, or at risk of exclusion. These clinical tasks are described in the training program leading to the degree of state auxiliary childcare.

There is specific education and training for these support roles with babies, children and young people. It is a 10 month training programme, with periods of theoretical and practical teaching from September to June. This education is provided by “instituts de formation des auxiliaires de puériculture” (training institute for childcare assistants), that is approved by the State to provide such training.

The training program includes theoretical (lectures, tutorials, practical) organised as eight modules, as well as six training periods. The content of eight modules is as follows:

- Module 1: support for a child in early learning activities and daily life - 5 weeks (175 hours)
- Module 2: the clinical condition of a person at any stage of life - 2 weeks (70 hours);
- Module 3: Child Care - 4 weeks (140 hours);
- Module 4: ergonomics - 1 week (35 hours);
- Module 5: relationship, communication - 2 weeks (70 hours);
- Module 6: hygiene of the premises - one week (35 hours);
- Module 7: transmission of information - one week (35 hours);
- Module 8: organization of work - one week (35 hours)

In the full course of training, internships are six in number, of 140 hours each, or four weeks. Inclusion in the training course is provided in the educational project of the institute and allows the progressive acquisition of skills by the student. They include health facilities, social or medical-social:

- An internship in the maternity ward;
- An internship in service of sick children;
- Two courses in childcare for children under 6 years (nurseries, day nurseries);
A training structure in childcare with disability or child psychiatry or social support structure for children

An optional internship

After validation of all modules and internship training, applicants obtain a state diploma child care auxiliary.

The Childcare assistants are formally regulated with a national register. The roles are regulated by health regional agencies and Health Ministry. Once the State diploma is obtained, the auxiliary childcare must register on the ADELI file. This file lists all health professionals in France.

There is a specific system and process in place to check the suitability of applicants to work with babies, children and young people (including ensuring that individuals do not have a criminal record). This provision is provided by almost all employers in France, public or private (request for criminal records in hiring). There is no specific recruitment policy for employing staff in paediatric or neonatal areas. Auxiliary childcare are preferably employed in childcare services in France but there are nurse assistants ("aide-soignant" in French) acting auxiliary childcare, or nurse acting paediatric nurse.

**Germany**

There are clinical nursing support roles in paediatric settings. These post holders do not work in the direct care of children. There are "Medizinische Fachangestellte" who are responsible for administration and organization. In neonatal settings there are "Stationsassistenten" ("ward assistants") who are responsible for administration and organization.

The "Medizinische Fachangestellte" are registered in the medical association. These roles in paediatric and neonatal settings are not formally regulated with a national register of post holders employed.

In Germany all people working with children have to have a special certificate of good conduct, that ensures they have no criminal record (according to child protection act). All applicants have to prove the successful completion of their professional training and all applicants have to bring the complete job references from former employments. Every hospital has its in-house (internal) standards and assessment instruments for recruitment. For neonatal wards there is an obligatory guideline for staffing qualifications, as part of the "Quality Assurance Agreement on the Care of Premature and Neonatal Babies".

Clinical nursing support roles working in paediatric settings receive individual on-the-job-training and supervision by qualified nurses.

The German Paediatric Nursing Organization (BeKD) stands for the recruitment and employment of fully trained paediatric nurses (3 years) for the
direct care in all paediatric and neonatal areas, support roles can only include administration and organization

**Greece**

There are clinical nursing support roles in paediatric and neonatal settings. These post holders are known as Paediatric or Neonatal nursing assistants, and stretcher bearers.

Nursing assistants work within a paediatric hospital (or adequate community settings) under the guidance of a registered nurse. They are responsible for basic care services such as:

- Assisting with personal hygiene and bed making
- Assisting with motion exercises and other rehabilitative measures
- Assisting with ambulating and mobilization of patients
- Assisting with meal preparation and food and fluid intake.
- Reporting vital signs
- Collecting specific specimens for required medical tests
- Preparing patients for their therapy
- Disposing contaminated supplies and sterilizing medical instruments.
- Assisting nurses with medical equipment
- Arranging examining room instruments and equipment
- Maintaining supplies and equipment
- Keeping waiting and examining rooms neat and clean.

In neonatal services nursing assistants are responsible for basic care services such as:

- Assisting with neonatal bathing, massaging and warming
- Assisting mothers with breast feeding
- Assisting with milk preparation, dietary planning, and fluid intake.
- Taking and recording vital signs
- Collecting specimens for required medical tests
- Disposing contaminated supplies and sterilizing medical instruments.
- Assisting nurses with medical equipment
- Arranging examining room instruments and equipment
- Maintaining supplies and equipment
- Keeping waiting and examining rooms neat and clean.

Stretcher bearers in a paediatric hospital transport patients, assist in personal hygiene (bathing, toileting), assisting nurses to prepare patients for their therapy or examination and assisting nurses to transport heavy equipment.

Clinical nursing support roles working in paediatric and neonatal settings receive specific education and training for their role with babies, children and young people. In order to work as a nursing assistant you must have a diploma of nursing assistant. You can get a diploma of a nurse assistant as a graduate of a specialised technical lyceum (3 years of theoretical education and 6 months of clinical training (B level) or 2 years of theoretical education.
and 12 months of clinical training) or as a graduate of a public or private Institute of Professional Education (IEK) after a two years theoretical education and 3-6 months obligatory clinical hospital training.

When a nursing assistant is employed in a paediatric, neonatal or maternity hospital he/she is thought as a trainee for a period of two years. During the first month has to follow a special training program (8-80 hours, depending on each hospital’s educational program) followed in some cases by exams and a 3-6 months specialised clinical training on neonatal or paediatric care.

The stretcher bearers working in a paediatric or neonatal setting follow a brief theoretical education (usually 8-24 hours), they are periodically trained in paediatric BLS and they follow a 1-3 months skills training program.

Nursing assistant and stretcher bearer post holders are not formally regulated and there is no national register. Each hospital or maternity centre has a local register of their staff and they are obliged to send an annual report to the minister of health.

There is no a specific system and process to check the suitability of applicants to work with children and young people. Nevertheless, there are minimum requirements concerning training and experience. In both public and private hospitals the employers ask for a clear criminal record and a signed certification of psychological examination.

There is no specific recruitment policy for employing staff in paediatric and neonatal areas. In the private sector each hospital has its own recruitment strategy. In the public sector there is a unified recruitment procedure common for adult, paediatric and neonatal personnel. Recruitment processes and policies do not meet the checklist for safer recruitment http://www.safenetwork.org.uk/help_and_advice/employing_the_right_people/pages/safer_recruiting.aspx)

**Hungary**

*Information not provided*

**Iceland**

*Information not provided.*

**Ireland**

*Information not provided*
Italy

There are clinical nursing support roles in paediatric and neonatal settings. These are varied and evolving with different types of curricula.

Italian legislation defines the skills for the support roles in general, not only in the paediatric fields. The evolution of these roles has been important and includes:

- Direct tasks (washing, dressing, feeding, helping people to mobilise, toileting, bed making, generally assisting with patients overall comfort, transport of the patient in collaboration with nurses or alone, transport of different type of materials from and to the Unit)
- Activities related to hygiene and patient health
- Management and organizational support (contributing to record keeping, support of new operators/students)
- Technical skills (sterilization, sanitization, detersion, simple medication in collaboration and supervision of nurses)
- Relational skills with the patient, the family and the team

Clinical nursing support roles working in paediatric and neonatal settings do receive specific education and training for their role with babies, children and young people.

Those undertaking clinical support roles in paediatrics and neonates do not complete a specific education programme. The curricula includes adults, elderly, children and babies.

The post holders are not formally regulated and there is no national register. There is a specific system and process to check the suitability of applicants to work with babies, children and young people. There is no specific recruitment policy for employing staff in paediatric and neonatal areas. In Italy there is not a checklist like http://www.safenetwork.org.uk/help_and_advice/employing_the_right_people/pages/safer_recruiting.aspx, but in general the recruitment covers all these items.

Lithuania

Information not provided

Luxemburg

Information not provided

Malta

Information not provided
Netherlands

There are clinical nursing support roles working in paediatric and neonatal settings depending on each individual hospital and ward.

Role titles in paediatric settings include:
- Nursing assistants - involved in basic paediatric care
- Ward assistants - not involved in paediatric care, but cleaning materials, logistics and other household tasks.

Role titles in neonatal settings include:
- In NICU’s only Ward assistants – not involved in paediatric care, but cleaning materials, logistics and other household tasks. In one NICU there are nurse assistant that solely support and comfort the baby under supervision during simple caring procedures.
- In general hospitals with low dependency wards Nursing assistants - involved in basic paediatric care

In some hospitals they help with making the beds and giving a bottle to babies that have no feeding difficulties and have no other medical problems and only if the parents are not available.

These roles are not formally regulated formally regulated and there is not a national register of post holders employed

There is no specific system and process in place to check the suitability of applicants to work with babies, children and young people. In every hospital personnel identity is asked by means of a passport. There is no specific recruitment policy for employing staff in paediatric and neonatal areas.

Clinical nursing support roles working in paediatric settings receive specific education and training for their role with babies, children and young people. This is done by courses in the hospital on patient safety, privacy and on the job training is given by nursing staff for the competencies needed on paeds ward. In neonatal settings this is by on the job training on low dependency neonatal units. On the Neonatal wards of general hospitals nursing assistants are involved in basic paediatric care. In one NICU the nurse assistant that solely support and comfort the baby under supervision and together with a nurse during simple caring procedures. In NICU’s Ward assistants – not involved in paediatric care, but cleaning materials, logistics and other household tasks. On low dependency neonatal units they receive hospital courses given on patient safety, privacy hygiene, infection control and by training on the job by nursing staff on the ward for the competencies needed. In one NICU the nurse assistant that solely support and comfort the baby under supervision and together with a nurse during simple caring procedures are given a course on developmental care, pain reduction and are supervised by NIDCAP personal. In NICU’s Ward assistants – not involved in paediatric care, but cleaning materials, logistics and other household tasks receive hospital training on patient safety, privacy, hygiene and infection control and
they receive on the job training by technicians and others how to clean and work with special technical equipment.

**Norway**

There are clinical nursing support roles in paediatric and neonatal settings. These post holders are known as *Hjelpepleier* (Certified Nurses Aid); *Barnepleier* (Certified Nurses Aid with additional training in newborn and children). These individuals may be asked to do the following tasks;
- breast feeding guidance
- newborn feeding and care. They are also trained to do tube feeding
- daily chores on the unit like keeping it tidy, serving food and drink
- taking and recording vital signs, temperatures and weight/height
- some have additional training and are certified to administer oral medications

There is specific education and training for these support roles with babies, children and young people. The training is 18 months duration on a part-time basis. At the current time the content, titles and framework of this education programme is changing. In addition most neonatal units will have their own trainee program when hiring new staff.

The situation is in transition. Education and titles are changing rapidly. Many hospitals will not employ new certified nurse aids. Hospitals are recruiting nurses when certified nurse aids retire. In most neonatal/and paediatric units there is majority of registered nurses and registered nurses with 1.5 years additional paediatric training.

The Certified Nurses Aids are formally regulated with a national register. There is specific system and process in place to check the suitability of applicants to work with babies, children and young people (including ensuring that individuals do not have a criminal record). It is however not a national requirement to ask for a police certificate before recruiting people into pediatric/neonatal settings. Over recent years some university hospitals have such procedures in place. Most nursing education institutions require this before students can commence pediatric clinical training. There is no specific recruitment policy for the employment of staff in paediatric and neonatal areas.

**Poland**

*Information not provided*

**Portugal**

There are no clinical nursing support roles working in paediatric or neonatal settings.
Romania

*Information not provided*

Republic Serbia

There are currently no clinical support roles providing direct clinical care in Serbia.

Slovakia

*Information not provided*

Slovenia

There are clinical nursing support roles in some paediatric and neonatal settings depending on each individual hospital and ward. Ward assistants are also employed but they are not involved in paediatric or neonatal care, but cleaning materials, logistics and other household tasks.

The nursing technician works with the registered nurse to provide direct care. They undertake a range of duties including washing and dressing, feeding, helping children to mobilise, toileting, bed making, generally assisting with overall comfort, monitoring patients conditions by taking temperatures, pulse, respiration's and weight; preparing children for treatment, setting up equipment to use in the session/treatment, assisting the nurse in treatment, contributing to record keeping, administering medicines under supervision, supporting parents and family members.

Nurse technicians must hold a valid licence from the Ministry of Health in order to work.

There is no specific policy for the recruitment of clinical support staff to paediatric or neonatal settings

There is no consistent standardised specific education and training programme for nurses working in paediatric and neonatal settings. The **NURSING TECHNICIAN** or **Nursing Assistant in Nursing** will have completed a secondary professional education program in nursing. This means 4 years of nursing school. A part of this program is paediatric module

Spain

*Information not provided*
**Sweden**

There are clinical nursing support roles in paediatric and neonatal settings. These post holders are known as ‘Paediatric assistant nurses’ and Assistant nurses’. They care for the child on a basic level supervised by a registered nurse, this includes washing, dressing and feeding. Feeding could include feeding by gastric tube, but the registered nurse is responsible. Other duties include generally assisting with patients overall comfort, monitoring patients conditions by taking temperatures, pulse, respiration's and weight; preparing patients for their therapy, setting up equipment to use in the session/treatment, as well as parental support and education.

In neonatal areas this includes activities such as washing and dressing feeding, generally assisting with patients overall comfort, monitoring patients conditions by taking temperatures, pulse, respiration's and weight; preparing patients for their therapy, setting up equipment to use in the session/treatment. Parental information, coaching and support associated to skin to skin care, diaper changing, positioning of the baby, moving the baby, gavage feeding, breastfeeding, baby’s temperature, daily washing, bathing, and weighing. In neonatal areas in Stockholm, the proportion of the nurses and assistant nurses is 60% and 40% respectively.

Clinical nursing support roles working in paediatric and neonatal settings do not receive specific education and training for their role with babies, children and young people.

For neonatal areas the requirements for appointment as assistant nurse are three years in high school and work experience or Paediatric assistant nurse, with three years in high school, work experience and one year special education after high school. The latter includes child and youth care, anatomy and physiology, child and adolescent development, living conditions and rights, children and adolescents with disabilities.

Clinical nursing support roles are not formally regulated and there is no national register of those employed in such roles. There is no specific system and process in place to check the suitability of applicants to work with babies, children and young people (including ensuring that individuals do not have a criminal record). A system for checking that those employed do not have a criminal background is due to be brought in during 2012. There is no specific recruitment policy for employing staff in paediatric or neonatal areas. Policies vary from organisation to organisation. Organisation policies do not meet the checklist for safer recruitment (see [http://www.safenetwork.org.uk/help_and_advice/employing_the_right_people/pages/safer_recruiting.aspx](http://www.safenetwork.org.uk/help_and_advice/employing_the_right_people/pages/safer_recruiting.aspx)).

**Switzerland**

There are clinical nursing support roles working in paediatric and neonatal settings. The role title for post holders is FAGE stayes for Fachangestellte Gesundheit, which means health assistant.
There is a 3 year training/apprenticeship for these roles. The training is not specific for paediatrics or neonates. If they undertake the training in a children’s hospital they learn the child specific tasks there. They can give medication under supervision of a nurse, washing, dressing patients under supervision, dressing changes and medical procedures, all under supervision. They have no responsibility on their own about patient related tasks, all their interventions have to be pre-discussed, supervised or guided by a nurse.

The education and training programme is specific to babies, children and young people if undertaken in a children’s hospital. It includes all aspects in a health care setting like hygiene, nutrition, medical tasks but also different age categories and is 640 hours in first and second year and 320 hours in third year.

The health assistants are formally regulated with a national register. There is no system or process in place to check the suitability of applicants to work with babies, children and young people (including ensuring that individuals do not have a criminal record). It is the responsibility of the employer (in this case the hospital or institution) to check references of applicants. There is no specific recruitment policy for the employment of staff in paediatric and neonatal areas. This is something that is currently under discussion.

**Turkey**

There are no clinical nursing support roles working in paediatric or neonatal settings.

Some units such as PICU and NICU have specific recruitment policies for nursing staff.

**United Kingdom**


Post holders undertake a range of duties including washing and dressing, feeding, helping children to mobilise, toileting, bed making, generally assisting with overall comfort, monitoring patients conditions by taking temperatures, pulse, respiration's and weight; preparing children for treatment, setting up equipment to use in the session/treatment, taking blood, assisting the nurse in treatment, contributing to record keeping, administering medicines under supervision, supporting parents and family members.
There is no consistent standardised specific education and training programme for clinical nursing support roles working in paediatric and neonatal settings. There are Foundation degree programmes for assistant practitioners but these are not specific to babies, children and young people.

Clinical nursing support roles are not formally regulated and there is no national register. There is a system and process in place to check the suitability of applicants to work with babies, children and young people (including ensuring that individuals do not have a criminal record). There is a specific recruitment policy for the employment of staff in paediatric and neonatal areas that meets the checklist for safer recruitment http://www.safenetwork.org.uk/help_and_advice/employing_the_right_people/pages/safer_recruiting.aspx

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