



Finnish Nurses  
Association

# Perspectives on “Why to invest on APN?”

Shining the light on Advanced Practice Nursing (APN) roles and education  
Nordic/Baltic Advanced Practice Nursing Educators network, 7.5.2024

Anna Suutarla, RN, PHN, M.Sc., senior advisor  
Finnish Nurses Association





**New roles  
for nurses –**  
quality to future social welfare  
and health care services





# Nya arbetsbeskrivningar för sjukskötare – kvalitet i framtida social- och hälsovårdstjänster



# Advanced Practice Nursing in Finland - a clinical nursing career model

## Contents:

### Foreword

1. Introduction
2. The current state of Advanced Practice Nursing in Finland
3. The working life relevance of Advanced Practice Nursing job descriptions and education - focus group interviews
4. The FinAME Action Model of Expertise™ as a support structure for Evidence-Based Nursing
5. Recommendations
6. Summary

## Sources

### Appendix – fact sheet



Laajavastuinen  
hoitotyö -  
sairaanhoitajan  
uramalli lähellä  
ihmistä

  
Sairaanhoitajat

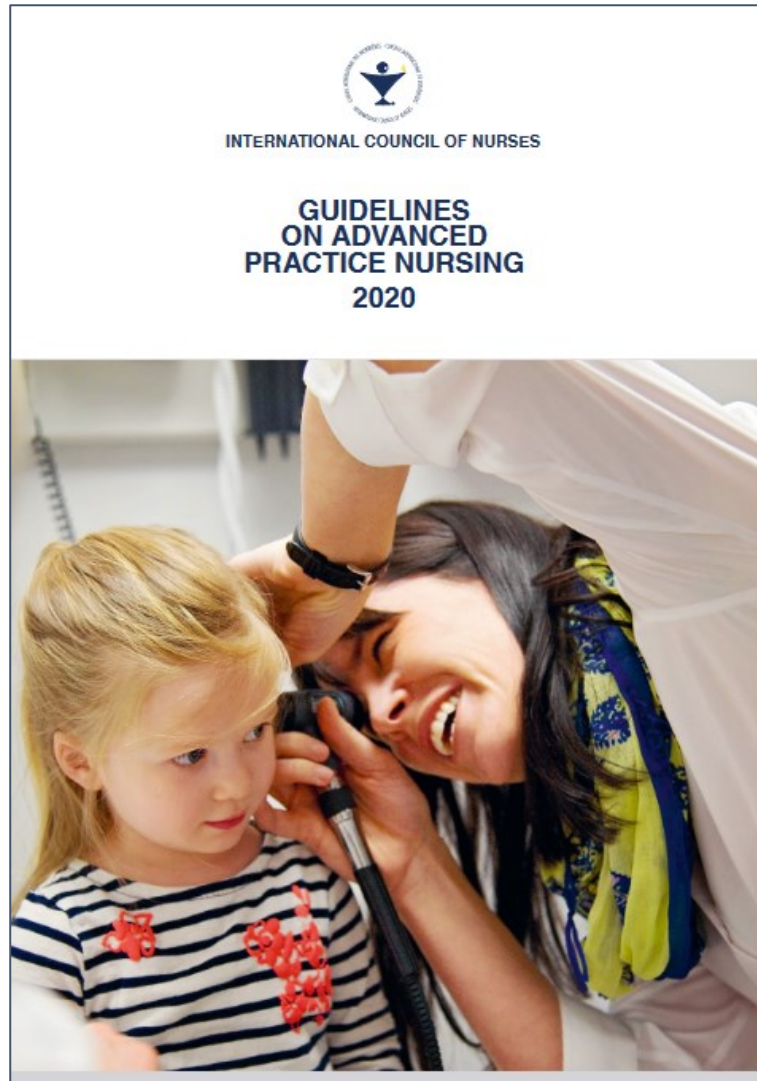
Publication in 2023

## Finnish Nurses Association APN expert group 2021-2023

- Krista Jokiniemi, University of Eastern Finland
- Anna Suutarla, Finnish Nurses Association
- Anna Axelin, University of Turku
- Mervi Flinkman, Tehy
- Sini Hämäläinen, LAB University of Applied Sciences
- Jaana Kotila, Hospital District of Helsinki and Uusimaa
- Tuija Lehtikunnas, Turku University Hospital
- Maarit Palomaa, Wellbeing Services County of Lapland
- Virpi Sulosaari, Turku University of Applied Sciences
- Annukka Tuomikoski, Wellbeing Services County of North Ostrobothnia



## International Council of Nurses, ICN



## European Federation of Nurses Associations, EFN



EFN APN working group, members from:  
Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, **Finland**, Italy,  
Luxemburg, **Norway**, Portugal, Spain, **Sweden**,  
Switzerland, and United Kingdom (Chair).

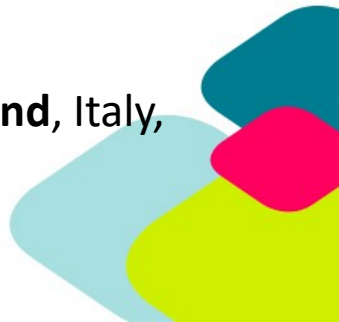


Table 1. Clinical nursing career model (adapted from: STM 2009, Arene ry 2006<sup>64,73</sup>).

Title	Registered nurse	Specialist nurse	Advanced practice nursing, APN (laajavastuinen hoitotyö)	
			Nurse practitioner, NP (asiantuntija-sairaanhoitaja)	Clinical nurse specialist, CNS (kliinisen hoitotyön asiantuntija)
Education	Bachelor's degree 210 credits	Specialist training, continuing education 30–60 credits	Master's degree (from a university or university of applied sciences)  Academic postgraduate degree (doctoral degree)	
		Limited right to prescribe medication (45 credits) Clinical Practice Nursing Certification		
Job description	Implementation and development of evidence based nursing that promotes and maintains health, prevents illnesses, heals, rehabilitates and alleviates suffering. Supporting the resources of people and communities at different stages of their lives. Helping people face their illness, injury and death.	Applying the specialist expertise provided by specialist education in nursing. Applying evidence-based information in the nurse's own specialty and steering and supporting evidence-based practices in the work unit.	At the advanced level, independent clinical nursing and health promotion as well as the related ethical decision-making, teaching and instruction, consultation, evidence-based practices, management, cooperation, research and development.  Broad-based and comprehensive nursing, independent examination of patients and assessment of their need for care as well as starting treatment based on symptoms and monitoring both acute and chronic health issues.	
EQF	6	6–7	7–8	7–8

Table 1. Clinical nursing career model (adapted from: STM 2009, Arene ry 2006<sup>64,73</sup>).

Title	Registered nurse	Specialist nurse	Advanced practice nursing, APN (laajavastuinen hoitotyö)	
			Nurse practitioner, NP (asiantuntija-sairaanhoitaja)	Clinical nurse specialist, CNS (kliinisen hoitotyön asiantuntija)
Education	Bachelor's degree 210 credits	Specialist training, continuing education 30–60 credits	Master's degree (from a university or university of applied sciences)  Academic postgraduate degree (doctoral degree)	
Job description	Implementation and development of evidence based nursing that promotes and maintains health, prevents illnesses, heals, rehabilitates and alleviates suffering. Supporting the resources of people and communities at different stages of their lives. Helping people face their illness, injury and death.	Applying the specialist expertise provided by specialist education in nursing. Applying evidence-based information in the nurse's own specialty and steering and supporting evidence-based practices in the work unit.	At the advanced level, independent clinical nursing and health promotion as well as the related ethical decision-making, teaching and instruction, consultation, evidence-based practices, management, cooperation, research and development.  Broad-based and comprehensive nursing, independent examination of patients and assessment of their need for care as well as starting treatment based on symptoms and monitoring both acute and chronic health issues.	
EQF	6	6–7	7–8	7–8

# Background: health care reform in Finland in 2023

A major reform for organizing public healthcare, social welfare and rescue services took place in 2023 as the services were transferred from municipalities and joint municipal authorities (n=309) to **well-being services counties** (n=21 + City of Helsinki and Helsinki University Hospital).

This change in service provision arrangements aimed to e.g.

- create better integration between primary and specialised health care and social services
- safeguard equal and quality health and social services
- reduce inequalities in health and well-being
- secure the supply of skilled employees
- improve the quality and availability of services
- contain expenditure growth.





# Why to invest on APN? National level

International research evidence on the benefits associated with Advanced Practice Nurses, such as

- positive linkage of access to care and outcomes
- the attractiveness of the health and social services sector and the job satisfaction of nursing professionals
- potentially reduced costs

>>> consistent with the objectives of the Finnish **social and healthcare reform**, taken in 2023

Especially

- systematic use of APN job descriptions in services for older people could bring
  - better quality of services
  - fewer emergency room visits
  - increased attractiveness of the gerontological nursing speciality.
- also benefits in the prevention and treatment of various non-communicable diseases, including the increasing need for mental health services.



# Recommendations 2023

1. The roles and education of Advanced Practice Nurses are outlined in a national ministerial level advisory board.
2. There is close collaboration between the education system and the working life.
3. Wellbeing services counties systematically utilize and increase the positions of Advanced Practice Nurses.
4. Advanced Practice Nurses are involved in the social and health services development committees
5. Organizations produce and analyze effectiveness assessment data of Advanced Practice Nursing.

# Why to invest on APN? EU and European level

APN has a key role to play in building the resilience of the health and care system in the EU and Europe.

EFN is calling upon the EU Institutions and other health stakeholders to join efforts and make rapid progress in developing advanced practice nursing in the EU and Europe by:

- Promoting evidence-based nursing, patient safety, universal health coverage (UHC), sustainable development goals (SDGs), high quality care, nurse retention and recruitment by fostering APN roles in EU area;
- Facilitating member states to develop nationally agreed-upon, as a minimum, master's level standards for preparation programmes for advanced practice nursing;
- Facilitating member states to establish formal recognition and licensing (protected title) of APN nurses at the national level; and
- Exploring the potential for a European framework for advanced practice nursing, that can be used at national level to enable regulation, mobility, national and international comparison, cooperation in research and development and sharing of expertise.







EMPIRICAL RESEARCH QUANTITATIVE | Open Access |

# Advanced practice nursing in Europe—Results from a pan-European survey of 35 countries

Paul De Raeve , Patricia M. Davidson, Jochen Bergs, Michelle Patch, Susan M. Jack, Adriana Castro-Ayala, Andreas Xyrichis, Wendy Preston

First published: 17 July 2023 | <https://doi.org/10.1111/jan.15775> | Citations: 1

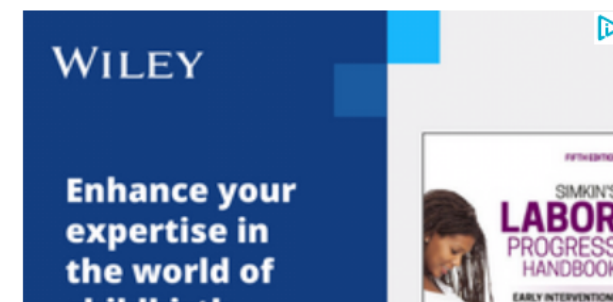
SECTIONS

PDF TOOLS SHARE



Volume 80, Issue 1  
January 2024  
Pages 377-386

Advertisement



Online questionnaire to 35 national nurses' associations across Europe in March 2021, response rate 100%



# Key findings

- Huge variations across Europe
  - definition, sense-making, operationalization, requirements, competencies, scope of practice, level of education and training
- Also: significant progress, great opportunities and persisting challenges
- 57% (n = 20) reported that advanced practice nurses were established in their country
- 31% (n = 11) reported the existence of a national legislation establishing minimum educational requirements.
- Lack of clarity on the development and implementation of advanced practice nursing
- More research is needed
  - to clarify whether variation results from designing models of advanced practice nursing that work in different contexts
  - what impact a standardized regulatory framework could have to grow the volume of advanced practice nurses across Europe.
- Next steps of the working group: Road map to develop APN roles, renew the survey
- Future: developing standardisation of advanced nursing practice across Europe?





# ICN NP / APN Network Conference



9 - 12 SEPTEMBER 2024 - ABERDEEN, SCOTLAND

# Helsinki<sup>2025</sup> ICN Congress

**NURSING POWER**  
to Change the World

9-13  
**JUNE**

**Abstract submission August-September 2024**



# References

Nursing Research Foundation (2022) the Action Model of Expertise (FinAME™). Available at: <https://hotus.fi/en/supporting-structures-of-ebp/>

International Council of Nurses (2020) Guidelines on advanced practice nursing. International Council of Nurses, Switzerland. Available at: ICN\_APN Report\_EN\_WEB.pdf

Jokiniemi K., Suutarla A., Meretoja R., Kotila J., Axelin A., Flinkman M., Heikkinen K. & Fagerström L. (2020) Evidence-informed policymaking: Modelling nurses' career pathway from registered nurse to advanced practice nurse. International Journal of Nursing Practice 26(1), e12777.


De Raeve P., Davidson P. M., Bergs J., Patch M., Jack S. M., Castro-Ayala A., Xyrichis A., Preston W. (2023) Advanced practice nursing in Europe—Results from a pan-European survey of 35 countries. Journal of Advanced Nursing, Volume 80, Issue 1 p. 377-386. Wiley Online Library. Available at: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/jan.15775>

EFN Policy Statement on EU Advanced Practice Nursing, April 2022, Available at: <https://efn.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/EFN-Policy-Statement-on-APN-April-2022.pdf>

New roles for nurses – quality to future social welfare and health care services, Finnish Nurses Association 2016, Available at: <https://sairaanhoitajat.fi/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/new-roles-for-nurses.pdf>

Suomen Sairaanhoitajat (2023) Laajavastuinen hoitotyö – sairaanhoitajan uramalli lähellä ihmistä. PDF-julkaisu. Available at: [https://sairaanhoitajat.fi/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/APN-raportti-2023\\_final.pdf](https://sairaanhoitajat.fi/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/APN-raportti-2023_final.pdf)

Suutarla A., Sulosaari V., Heikkilä J., (2023) The NP Role and Practice in Finland, pages 181-195 in the book: Nurse Practitioners and Nurse Anesthetists: The Evolution of the Global Roles . Ed. Sophia L. Thomas, Jackie S. Rowles. Springer Cham.

 Tuomikoski A-M, Flinkman M., Sulosaari V., Suutarla A., Jokiniemi K. (2024). Laajavastuisen hoitotyön asiantuntijuus ja sen tutkimus Suomessa: kartoittava katsaus. HOITOTIEDE 2024, 36 (1), 82–101.



**Thank you!**  
**See you in Helsinki in 2025!**

[anna.suutarla@nurses.fi](mailto:anna.suutarla@nurses.fi)

