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*Health Education England*

# First Contact Practitioners (FCP) in Primary Care

## Implementation and Delivery Guidance 2021/22

**Audience:** Training Hub Local Office Leads, Training Hubs  
July 2021

**Final Version – Approved 24 August 2021**

## 1. Purpose

This document has been written, alongside information available on the [Roadmaps to Practice Landing Page](#) to guide Training Hubs in supporting AHPs to become recognised FCPs in Primary Care with the Centre of Advancing Practice. It will provide a consistent approach to support implementation of the roadmap to practice for first contact practitioners in primary care.

## 2. Introduction

As part of the Long-Term Plan, Primary Care Networks (PCNs) and General Practices are encouraged to build a team with diverse skills and competencies to support increased access for patients, alleviate pressures on existing staff, and improve the quality of care and services. The Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme (ARRS) provides PCNs with funding for some of these additional roles. Staff can be reimbursed in line with their skills and capabilities, and the role that they are undertaking, up to the maximum level of reimbursement set out in the Network Contract DES. To be eligible for reimbursement staff must be able to deliver the responsibilities of the role set out in the DES.

Employers need to ensure that staff are operating within the limits of their capability and scope of practice, and that they are provided with appropriate supervision to enable them to do so. It is not a requirement for AHPs to be FCPs or Advanced Practitioners (APs) to work in primary care.

To support FCPs, a national Primary Care educational pathway has been created for clinicians moving into FCP roles which may lead to AP status.

This will ultimately:

- Provide a pipeline of professionals at different levels of practice.
- Help recruitment and retention in primary care.
- Create sustainability for multi-professional FCP roles.
- Demonstrate the capability of the clinician assuring both patient and clinician safety.

The Roadmap to FCP and AP is a supportive document that provides this clear educational pathway from undergraduate to advanced practice for clinicians wishing to progress their career in primary care.

## 3. Funding

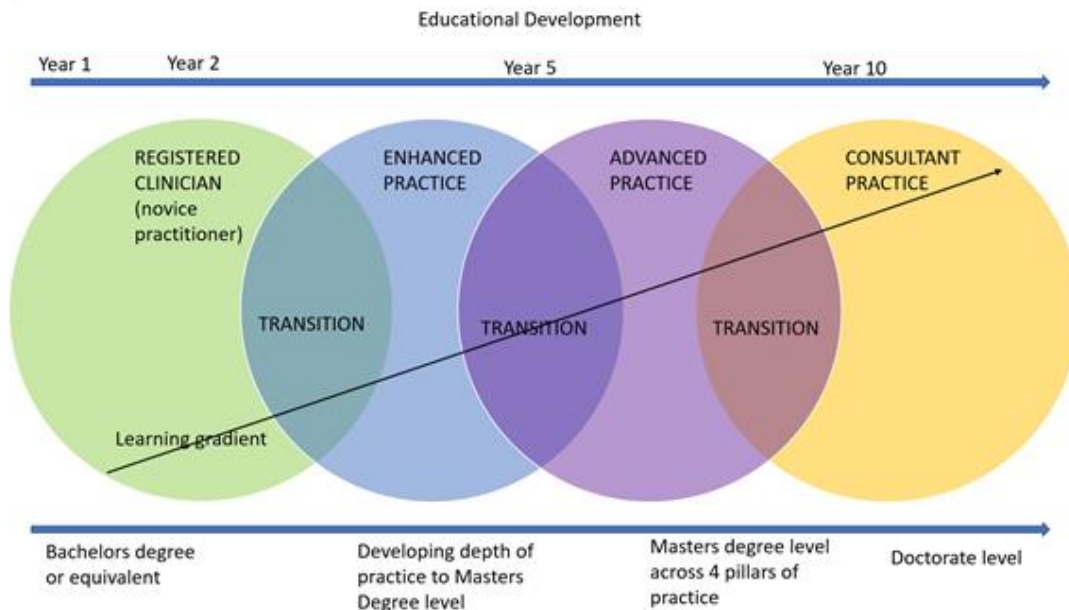
FCPs are one of the additional roles for which funding is available via the ARRS scheme. This scheme is managed by NHSE via the network Contract DES.

No allocation has been made to HEE to support the FCP programme, however Primary Care Schools and Training Hubs are able to help coordinate and support supervisor training.

## 4. What is an FCP?

FCPs are diagnostic clinicians working at masters level, managing complexity and uncertainty at the first point of contact. AHPs with a minimum of 5 years postgraduate experience (3 years' experience required for MSK Physiotherapists) can be verified as an FCP, the route to do this is detailed in [item 5](#) of this guidance.

*Diagram: Overview of the advancing practice pathway  
(First Contact Practice sits in the transition between Enhanced and Advanced Practice)*



FCPs role includes:

- Managing undifferentiated undiagnosed conditions.
- Identification of red flags and underlying serious pathology and taking appropriate action.
- Working within practice, across PCN, or ICS geographies.
- Working with multi-organisational and cross professions boundaries.
- Working across care pathways and systems including health, social care, and voluntary sectors.
- High-level complex decision making to inform diagnosis, investigation, management, and onward referral within scope of practice.
- Actively taking a personalised care approach to enable shared decision making with the presenting person.
- Contributing to or leading audit and research projects.
- Contributing to education and supervision within their scope of practice for the multi-professional team and healthcare students.
- Facilitating interprofessional learning in areas of expertise.
- Promoting and developing areas of expertise across care pathways.

## 5. How to become an FCP

For each of the eligible FCP roles, a roadmap to practice with a knowledge, skills and attributes document (KSA) has been created to outline the requirements to become an FCP. In order to be recognised as an FCP with the Centre of Advancing Practice, individuals must comply with the following two stages:

- *Stage 1* – provide a portfolio of evidence of working academically at masters level against the KSA plus the 2 sets of e-learning modules.
- *Stage 2* – provide a portfolio of evidence demonstrating the application of stage 1 academic masters level knowledge into practice using the Work Based Placement Assessment Toolkit in the primary care clinical setting.

Comparison table for portfolio and taught routes for FCP recognition:

	FCP Portfolio route (Roadmap Supervision & Verification – RMSV)	FCP Taught route (FCP master’s level 7 module)
RMSV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires a trained RMSV who has completed the RMSV course.</li> <li>• RMSV are multi-professional.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not require a RMSV.</li> <li>• Requires a named clinical mentor for the stage 2 clinical placement.</li> <li>• Clinical mentor can be an AP or GP.</li> </ul>
Sign-Off	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RMSV verify and sign-off stage 1 and stage 2.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HEIs verify and sign-off stage 1 and stage 2.</li> </ul>
Stage 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires an average of 5 hours for a RMSV to mark and sign off stage 1.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stage 1 signed off as marked academic assignments within the course.</li> </ul>
Stage 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Required to be working in primary care.</li> <li>• Stage 2 signed-off by the RMSV.</li> <li>• Requires 20 minutes per day debrief and 1 hour a month for work-based placement assessment (WBPA).</li> <li>• Length of time to complete will vary depending on the clinician’s capability.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires a 75-hour clinical placement in primary care.</li> <li>• Stage 2 signed off by the HEI (the clinical mentor does not sign-off stage 2).</li> </ul>
CPD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Once stage 1 and stage 2 are signed off, the clinician requires access to relevant regular practice supervision/CPD.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Once stage 1 and stage 2 are signed off, the clinician requires access to relevant regular practice supervision/CPD.</li> </ul>

### 5.1. Career Progression for FCP

If a clinician has completed the FCP training and wants to progress to AP, they can map their FCP portfolio of evidence against the [AP multiprofessional framework](#). Once they have mapped against this framework, they can continue to build their portfolio of evidence across the remaining domains to completion and gain recognition as an AP.

## 6. Training Hubs Role

### 6.1. Process and governance

- Primary Care School will identify HEE employed regional leads for FCP delivery to be the named point of contact for their region, for HEE meetings, governance, communication sharing.
- Support FCPs to become recognised on the directory with the Centre of Advancing Practice via either the portfolio or taught module route. (See 6.2).
- Liaise with regional AP faculty leads for recognised FCPs who wish to progress to advanced practitioner in primary care.
- Manage the roadmap supervision (RMSV) training and local roadmap supervision capacity.
- Monitoring and Reporting
  - Every 6 months progress reports should be submitted, which will be collated and shared with the Primary Care Training Hubs Delivery Group. This should be submitted as part of the standard regional Training Hubs report in September and April.
  - Each region has been given an RMSV target to be met by 30 November 2021. Funding has been released to each region to pay the national roadmap trainers to deliver RMSV courses. Please note that these regional targets do not include those RMSV trained nationally.
  - Report the number of RMSV courses and delegates delivered each month – this should be sent by the last working day of the month to [primarycare@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:primarycare@hee.nhs.uk).
  - Retain a list of approved Roadmap Supervisors for their area who have completed the 2-day RMSV training course.

### 6.2. Supporting FCPs to become recognised with the centre of advancing practice

Once the portal with the Centre for Advancing Practice is live and public facing, FCPs will be able to register, both linking them with the Centre's functionality and placing them on a public facing directory.

Health Education England has established the Centre for Advancing Practice to oversee the workforce transformation of advanced level practice:

- establish and monitor standards for education and training.
- accredit advanced programmes.
- support and recognise practitioners.
- grow and embed the advanced and consultant practice workforce.

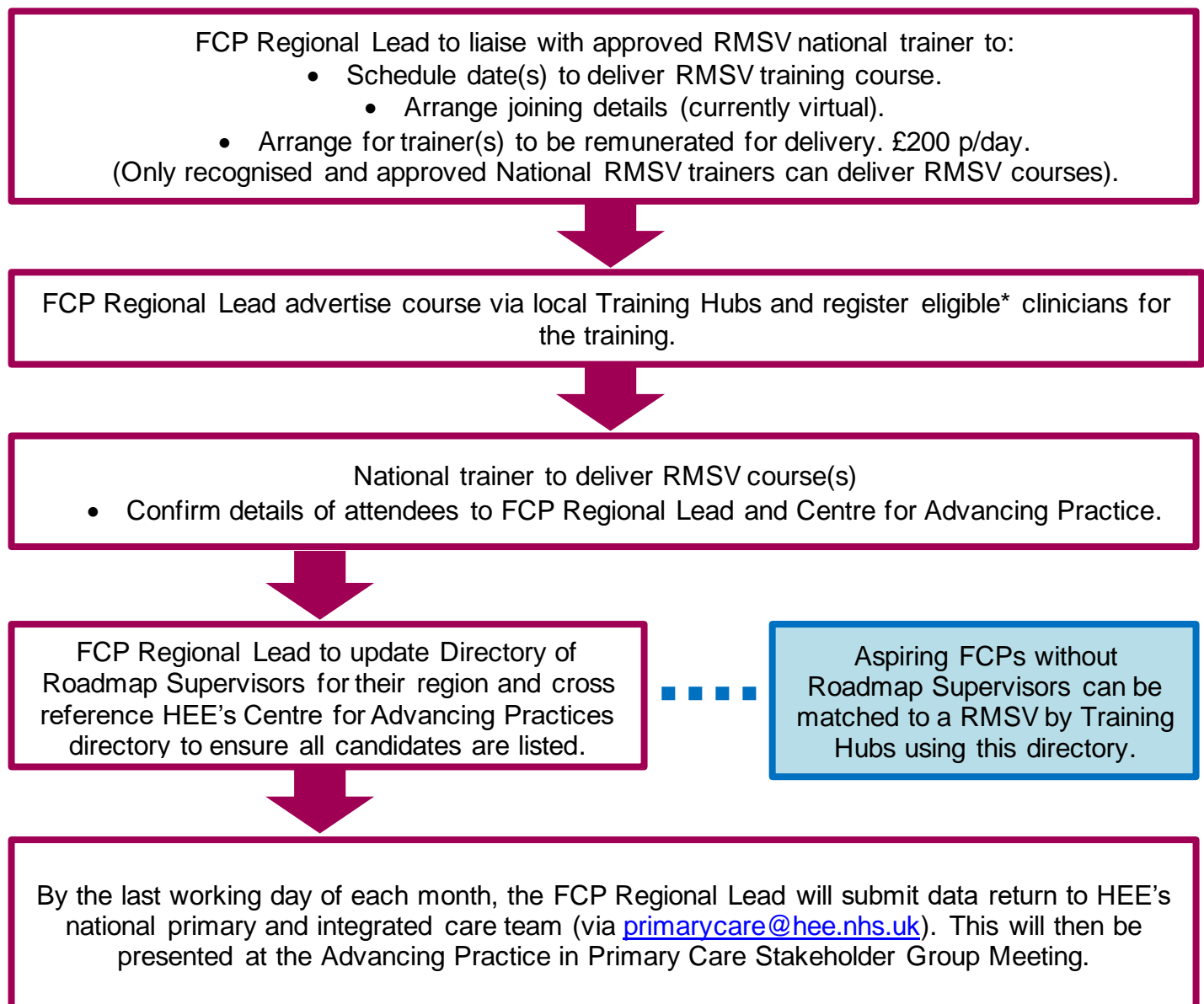
#### 6.2.1. Via the FCP portfolio route

- Build roadmap supervision (RMSV) capacity and capability to verify the portfolio – see process chart below.
- Link approved roadmap supervisors with FCPs on the portfolio route.
- Support CPD to meet identified gaps & needs of FCPs on the portfolio route.

#### 6.2.2. Via the taught route

- Support clinicians on the taught route to find clinical placements for stage 2.

**Process chart for roll out of RMSV:**



**\*How do I know if a clinician is eligible for the RMSV Course?**

Clinicians who are eligible will be/have one (or more) of the following credentials:

- AHPs and Nurses with a full Postgraduate Masters degree
- Recognised FCPs on the HEE FCP directory
- Advanced Practitioners on the HEE directory
- GPs

GP Educational Supervisors can access an optional top-up training course via primary care schools.

## 7. Resources

A Microsoft Teams site has been created to store all resources related to the FCP programme, such as:

- RMSV monthly progress template
- RMSV course flier
- Trainer and Supervisor details

If access is needed, please contact [primarycare@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:primarycare@hee.nhs.uk).

To support the roll out of FCP, a number of online resources have been developed and can be found with the following links:

HEE FCP Webpages:

- [Roadmaps to practice landing page](#)
- [AHP](#)
- [MSK Physiotherapists](#)
- [Paramedics](#)
- [Dietitians](#)
- [Occupational Therapists](#)
- [Supervision](#)
- [FAQs](#)
- [Advanced Practice](#)

NHSE/I and Other FCP Webpages:

- [AHPs in Primary Care Networks](#)
- [Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme Guidance](#)

## 8. Glossary & Abbreviations

Term	Abbreviation	Definition
Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme	ARRS	NHSEI reimburse the salary of 14 wider workforce roles in primary care (inc. the 5 AHP roles) to support increased multiprofessional recruitment. <a href="#">Guidance link</a>
Advanced Practice	AP	It is a level of practice characterised by a high degree of autonomy and complex decision making. This is underpinned by a master's level award or equivalent that encompasses the four pillars of clinical practice.
Allied Health Professional	AHP	14 professions (inc. the 5 FCP roles) working across the healthcare system
Centre for Advancing Practice (HEE)		The centre within HEE that manages AP training and delivery
Clinical Mentor		Identified clinician who will support an FCP during stage 2 taught module whilst on placement in primary care.
Clinical Supervisor	CS	The clinician who provides regular day to day clinical supervision to ensure patient and clinician safety.

Directory of Roadmap Supervisors		List of details and geographical locations of those eligible clinicians who have completed the RMSV course and are able to provide roadmap supervision
Eligible Clinician		Advanced practice nurse/AHP with a full PG masters, GP and recognised FCP are eligible clinicians to become Roadmap Supervisors for FCPs
First Contact Practitioner	FCP	An increasingly established model of care designed to deliver a streamlined, patient-centred service and support the growing demands on general practice and secondary care
GP Educational Supervisor	GP ES	A GP trainer working in practice who is able to provide educational supervision.
Key Performance Indicator	KPI	An indication of performance based on meeting targets and regularly reporting on these.
Knowledge, Skills and Attributes	KSA	The knowledge skills and attributes required to demonstrate a defined level of capability.
National trainers of roadmap supervisors		A national pool of approved trainers to deliver the RMSV course
Network Contract Direct Enhanced Service	DES	A contract which PCNs must adhere to operationally. <a href="#">Website link</a>
Pillars of Advanced Clinical Practice		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinical practice</li> <li>• Leadership and management</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Research</li> </ul>
Portfolio of evidence		Used with KSA to compile written evidence against the domains at level 7 which is verified and marked by the RMSV
Primary Care Networks	PCN	A collection of primary care practices aligned to working together – approx. 1250 in England currently. Led by a clinical Director. <a href="#">Website link.</a>
Regional Faculty for Advancing Practice		HEE's Centre for Advancing Practice has established a network of Regional Faculties for Advancing Practice to drive pioneering workforce transformation for advanced practice across England
Regional FCP Lead		A nominated representative to be first point of contact for supporting the FCP programme per region, either via the Training Hub or Primary Care School
Roadmap supervision and verification course	RMSV course	2-day training course for eligible clinicians to become an approved roadmap supervisor
Roadmap Supervisor	RMSV	An eligible clinician who has completed the RMSV course
Roadmaps to practice		A Roadmap to Practice is a supportive document that provides a clear educational pathway from undergraduate to advanced practice for clinicians wishing to pursue a career in primary care
Top up RMSV programme for GP educational supervisors		An optional 2-hour top-up for GPES on roadmap supervision delivered via Primary Care Schools