



Internationally, nursing is responding to the increasing need to develop the capacity for nursing leaders, particularly in advanced nursing practice roles (Elliott et al., 2016; Maier et al., 2016). Master's level education is required in most countries to prepare for advanced nursing practice roles. In

business acumen, informatics skill and policy analysis. These doctoral-level competencies influenced the approach taken by members of the global team in the international community to assess the current state and consider critical factors which may influence contemporary educational requirements for advanced nursing practice in Ireland.

International practice scholarship approach exemplar:  
 assessing advanced nursing practice in Ireland

To address the increasing need for nursing practice leaders globally, a unique approach through the lens of practice scholarship was used to assess advanced nursing practice in Ireland. Particularly, this group focused on contemporary nursing care practice requirements in accordance with global policy and new models of care delivery. The overarching goal was to explore through discourse, the current state of graduate-level nursing education in Ireland to meet the evolving needs of patients, populations and systems through policy. Therefore, the practice doctorate approach was used to guide the project process, beginning with assessment of the current state of advanced nursing practice related to healthcare policy in Ireland.

**Sources of Evidence**

The sources of evidence for this project involved a review of not only the current literature, but also a critical review of

evolving policy. Guided by a conceptual framework, a comprehensive assessment was performed on the status of graduate nursing education and the healthcare environment in Ireland.

Literature review

A thorough literature and policy review was completed to assess the current status of healthcare providers in Ireland. A search of the research literature was undertaken using online databases (PubMed, CINAHL, Google Scholar) from 2013 to 2019. Terms and supplemental keywords searched included “nurse practitioner,” “advanced nursing practice,” “advanced practice nurse,” and “advanced practitioner” and only English language publications considered. To further understand and compare the education and regulation of advanced practice nurses globally, a thorough review of the relevant, unpublished grey literature, such as policy briefs and governmental reports related to national nursing education guidelines was performed from September 2018 to December 2019 with the following results.

The *Ireland* *National Evaluation of Clinical Nurse Manager, Specialist Clinical and Advanced Practitioner Evaluation (SCAPE)* study collated healthcare policymakers’ views of specialist and advanced nursing practice roles in Ireland. Policymakers believed that advanced practice nurses contribute to higher

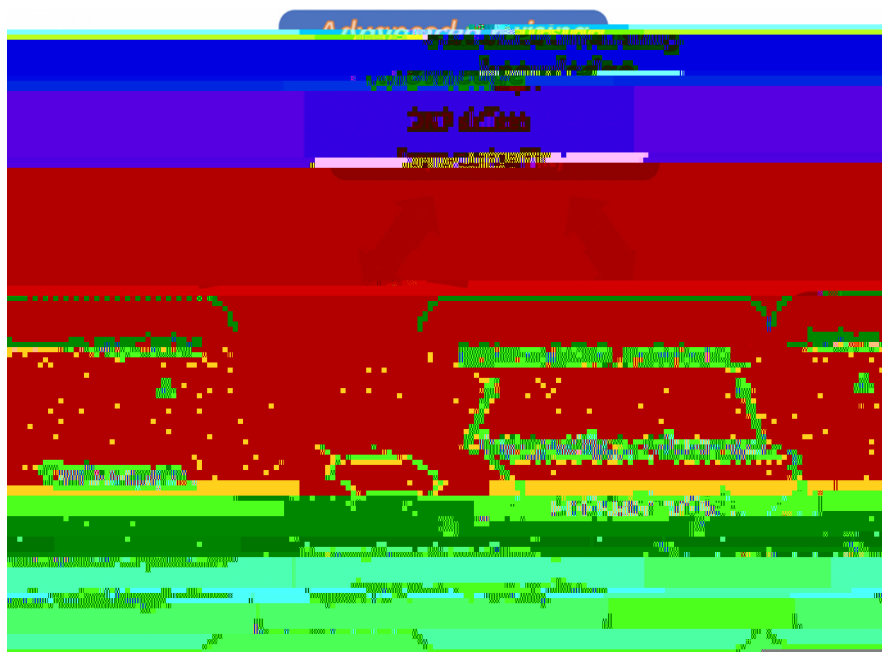


Figure 1 Actualized DNP Model (Burson et al., 2016).



of enduring relationships between U.S. and Irish universities was established.

#### Assessment process

The intentional assessment of the Irish healthcare environment was accomplished with interviews, dialogue and the development of working relationships with policymakers, academics and advanced nurse practitioners currently in practice in Ireland. The current state and future vision (desired state) of graduate nursing education in Ireland evolved from this input. A focus in the areas of nursing informatics competencies and chronic disease management, particularly for primary care ANPs was considered. Institutional review board (IRB) determination from both the U.S. and Irish universities designated the project as quality improvement and not research, meaning that official IRB approval was not warranted.

The literature and the assessment identified the specific regional healthcare challenges and opportunities for improvement. Ireland is poised for significant change with the implementation of *á , a* and the Health Services Plan's goal to move integrated person-centred care to community-based care from acute services. General practice physicians (GPs) are in short supply (Department of Health, 2018; Irish

Medical Times, 2017), and the preparation of primary care ANPs to practice in community settings alongside GPs and in primary care centres is a proposed solution to increase the number of community practitioners.

A force field analysis was then developed to identify promoting and restraining factors to the desired state of development of the primary care ANP role in Ireland (see Table 1 for a force field analysis derived from themes identified in the interviews).

Given the driving forces to achieve the desired state outlined in the *á , a* policy, the priority focus was on developing community care services. Ireland has standardized master's level preparation for advanced nursing practice roles and universities were willing to expand programmes to prepare graduates for primary care and community settings. Therefore, the country was poised to address increasing capacity for community care to improve patient satisfaction related to prolonged wait times for care and ultimately decrease costs of delayed access to primary care to improve healthcare outcomes.

Restraining forces identified from stakeholder interviews would need consideration to achieve the desired state. These included the varied resources available in both public and

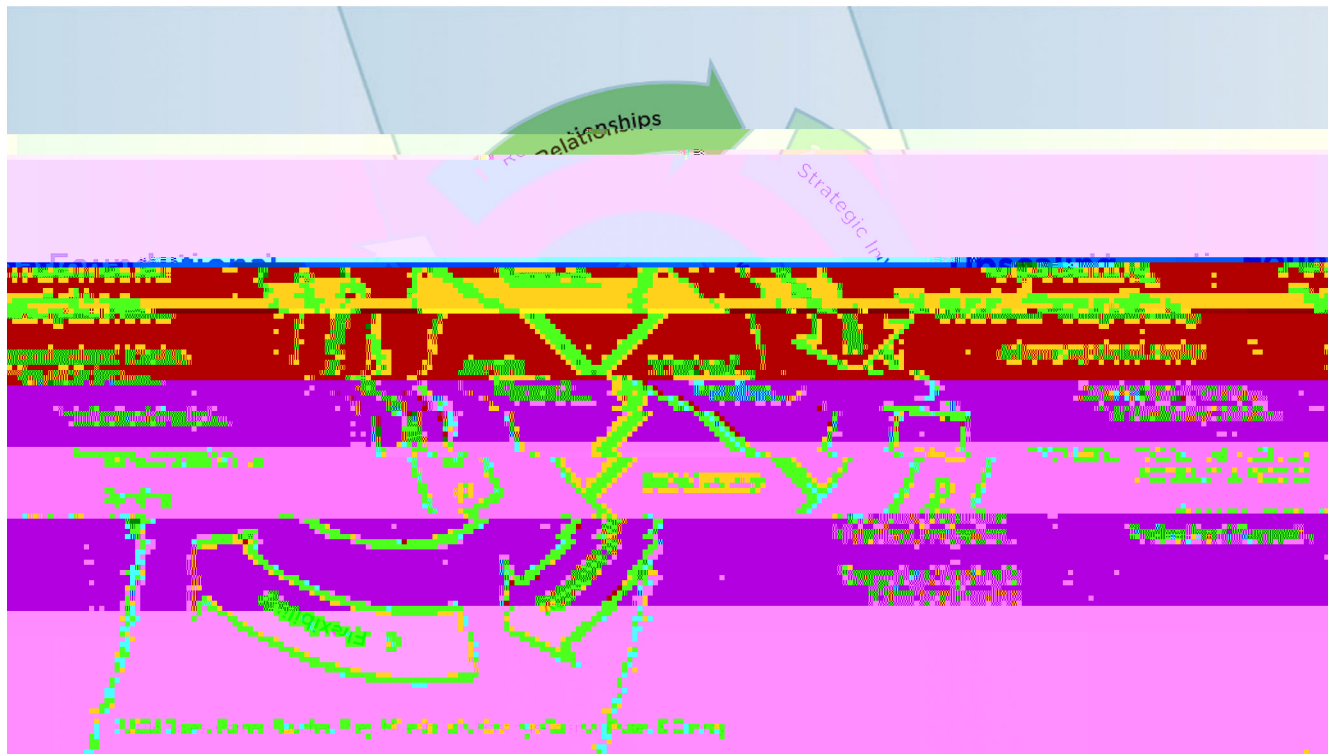


Figure 2 Model for Upscaling Global Nursing and Midwifery Partnerships (Spies et al. 2017).

private sectors of health care in Ireland to expand primary care access. Advanced nursing practice roles are well established in hospitals in Ireland, but intentional dialogue and collaboration was needed by both medicine and nursing to define and support the evolving role of the community primary care ANP to meet the needs in the changing system.

multiple avenues of dissemination. Dissemination of project findings included presentations on the practice doctorate approach to upscaling global capacity at international nursing conferences, including International Network of Doctoral Education in Nursing conference, the AACN Doctoral Education conference and International Council of Nurses Advanced Practice Nursing conference, Diabetes Ireland Conference and Exhibition (DICE) and the World Health Organization Nursing, 2020 conference at the Royal College of Physicians Ireland.

### **Limitations**

Policy work evolves over time, and the main limitation was the short duration of the project work over the period of an

Data analysis: DC, RB

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