

Statement regarding the application of APLS certification against the Quality Surveillance Team 'Major Trauma Services Quality Indicators' (NHS England, 2016), Emergency Trauma Nurse/Allied Health Professional Level 2 educational standard

This statement provides additional detail and clarification in relation to the level 2 educational standard in the Emergency Trauma Nurse/Allied Health Professional (AHP) major trauma services quality indicators for adult and paediatric settings.

**Background:**

The Major Trauma Services Quality Indicators<sup>1</sup> for adult and paediatric settings state that there must be a registered paediatric nurse/AHP who has attained the level 2 education and competency standard available for paediatric major trauma patients 24/7. This is applicable to Major Trauma Centres (MTCs), Paediatric MTCs and Trauma Units.

The National Major Trauma Nursing Group (NMTNG) published guidance<sup>2</sup> which provided detail and clarification in relation to the level 2 standard in April 2016 and which accompanied the publication of the new quality indicators. Within that document 'recognised trauma courses' were defined as:

- Advanced Trauma Nursing course (ATNC)
- Trauma Nursing Core Course (TNCC)
- European Trauma course (ETC)

However, whilst it is recognised that the ATNC, TNCC and ETC cover both adult and paediatric trauma, the focus is predominantly on the adult population. It is therefore understandable that many EDs have accessed the Advanced Paediatric Life Support course (APLS) for their paediatric staff, rather than the above trauma nursing courses, for many years as it includes a significant component on paediatric major trauma care.

In 2015 the NMTNG carried out a review of all trauma training currently available in the UK as part of work to define the level 2 educational and competency standards. At that time candidates on APLS had summative assessment via an OSCE and a written paper. However there was no guarantee that the candidate's final OSCE assessment would be major trauma and so was not felt to meet the essential criteria as applied to ATNC, TNCC and ETC.

From April 2016 the APLS course assessment process changed and now candidates undergo continuous assessment. Each candidate is assessed and must pass on cardiac, illness and trauma scenarios. This then has fundamentally changed the assessment process and the NMTNG paediatric sub-group are recommending reappraisal of the standard.

**Recommendation:**

With the establishment of continuous assessment, which includes trauma, and which every candidate must pass on the APLS course; the NMTNG are now recommending that APLS be included as a recognised trauma courses for level 2 educational standard compliance for paediatric major trauma if undertaken since April 2016. This does not confer compliance with the competency standard which must still be completed by all nurses and AHPs in practice.

**Application:**

Paediatric registered nurses/AHPs that have successfully completed the Advanced Paediatric Life Support course since **April 2016** will be deemed compliant with the level 2 NMTNG educational standard in relation to the 'Emergency Trauma Nurse/Allied Health Professional' NHS England quality indicator for paediatric major trauma patients.

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**References:**

1. NHS England (2016) Major Trauma Services Quality Indicators  
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2. NMTNG (2016) Emergency Trauma Nurse AHP Quality Indicator. Level 2 Educational Standard Descriptor.  
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