Introduction

The prescribing of medicinal products is a new role for nurses and midwives in Ireland in order to meet the needs of patients/clients and the community in general. International literature supports the safe, effective and efficient utilisation of nurse prescribers. The introduction of nurse prescribing in Ireland is informed by International best practice, helping to ensure a high quality approach to nursing and midwifery. It is designed in response to strategic developments by the Health Service Executive and An Bord Altranais and is part of quality and transformation in health care in Ireland.

The Certificate in Nurse Prescribing (Nurse/Midwife Prescribing) (NFQ Level 8 Special Purpose Award) aims to prepare nurses/midwives as independent prescribers enabling nurses/midwives to provide patients with effective access to medications, and expands the role of nurses and midwives in progressing the health care needs of the future.

Duration: 26 weeks/six month period

Entry Requirements:
- Registration as nurse or midwife on the live register of An Bord Altranais
- Minimum of 3 years post-registration clinical experience. The required clinical practice experience must have been gained within the past 5 years with at least one year in the area in which prescribing is proposed and excludes time spent undertaking further post registration programmes
- Possession of competencies recognised at level 8 of the NQAI framework
- Demonstration of continuous professional development and ability to study at level 8
- Support from employer and completed Site Declaration form, signed by the Director of Nursing/Midwifery/Public Health
- Nomination and confirmation of a designated medical practitioner mentor (completed site declaration form signed by the Medical practitioner / Mentor) who will provide the student with supervision support and opportunities including shadowing opportunities during the period of the programme.

Careers: On successful completion of the programme Nurses/Midwives will be eligible to register as a prescriber of medicines in the register held by An Bord Altranais.

Programme Content

Semester 1
- Professional, Ethical, Legal and Interpersonal Dimensions to Nurse/Midwife Prescribing
- Systematic Assessment and Evaluation in Patient Care
- Drug Action and Prescribing
- Clinical Practicum in Nurse/Midwife Prescribing 1

Semester 2
- Clinical Practicum in Nurse/Midwife Prescribing 2

Structure/ Programme Delivery

The Department of Nursing and Midwifery, University of Limerick (UL) offers this programme over a six month period. It is acknowledged that students come from broad geographical locations with busy work demands. In response to these challenges of commuting and working within the challenges of the health services, blended learning has been designed to maximise attendance and engagement in the programme. Collaboration with health service providers has ensured that the programme design facilitates flexible, student friendly access to learning. Hence attendance at University is confined to ten days with a balance of eighteen days, delivered and supported through blended learning modalities online.

Students will be based in practice throughout the programme. The practice dimension to the programme is underpinned by the use of a competency framework enabling the participant to complete and demonstrate the abilities to be a nurse/midwife prescriber. Throughout clinical placement each participant will be under the guidance and supervision of a formally agreed medical practitioner who will act as a mentor for the duration of the programme.

The mentor is expected to provide student supervision, support learning opportunities over the duration of the programme with specific requirements of 12 days (direct supervision) of the prescriptive process. The use of the competency framework will enable the participant to identify and negotiate with the mentor the most appropriate method of achieving competence in the specific practice setting.

The nurse/midwife prescribing programme requires a strong commitment to the integration of theory and practice. Students are expected to integrate theory and practice effectively. Assessment strategies will enable the student to achieve the learning outcomes of the programme.

Blended Learning

The introduction of blended learning has provided more flexibility and accessible development opportunities for registered nurses and midwives with family and work commitments. The use of blended learning facilitates student to learn interactively both on and off the university campus. Furthermore it offers opportunities for learners to assume greater independent roles in their learning, through the use of technology.

Learning Outcomes

- Demonstrate a systematic understanding of the regulatory framework associated with prescribing including the legislation and professional guidelines, supporting safe prescribing.
- Critically utilise evidence based knowledge and skill of patient client assessment and consultation to achieve a holistic approach to patient/client care in the prescribing of medicinal products.
- Apply expert skills in clinical decision making in relation to prescribing medicinal products.
- Demonstrate a critical understanding of pharmacotherapeutics, pharmacodynamics and pharmacokinetics.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the role of the multi-disciplinary team and effective communication processes involved in safe medication management.

For Applications Contact:
Admissions Office
061 202015
admissions@ul.ie
www.ul.ie/admissions

For academic queries on this programme contact:
Jill Murphy,
Course Director
Department of Nursing & Midwifery
University of Limerick
Tel: +353-61-233655
Email: jill.murphy@ul.ie

Disclaimer: The programme details are intended only for the guidance of students. While every effort is made to ensure that the information is accurate it may be subject to change.
Module Descriptions

Semester One

NS5251 Professional, Ethical, Legal and Interprofessional Dimensions to Nurse/Midwife Prescribing
This module enables the student to critically examine professional accountability and responsibility governing the role of nurse/midwife prescribing. It provides opportunities to examine legal and ethical factors influencing the performance of the nurse/midwife prescriber within a multi professional team in a collaborative inquiry process. The module facilitates reflection in and on practice, informed by evidence in preparation for the new role in an ever changing health care environment.

NS5261 Drug Action and Prescribing
This module enables the student to enhance their knowledge and skills necessary for nurse/midwife prescribing. It will provide opportunities to apply biosciences and knowledge of pharmacotherapeutics, pharmacodynamics, and pharmacokinetics in the prescribing process. It will provide students with an understanding of risk medication error reporting processes and the needs of specialist populations. This module integrates the foundational knowledge, skills and challenges essential for performance of the nurse/midwife prescribing role.

NS5271 Systematic Assessment and Evaluation in Patient Care
This module enables the student to develop health assessment skills appropriate for clinical practice and clinical decision making. Provider-patient interaction and subjective and objective data collection is emphasised. The module provides planned clinical laboratory experience where students learn and refine health assessment skills consistent with the prescribing role. Participants develop and practice interviewing and physical assessment skills. Skills will be taught and assessed in the Clinical Skills Laboratories at The Department of Nursing and Midwifery UL.

NS5281 Clinical Practicum in Nurse/Midwife Prescribing 1
This module introduces the integration of theory and clinical practice within the programme. It enhances core elements of the nurse/midwife prescribing role for registration as a nurse/midwife prescriber during clinical practice. Students will gain experience in nurse/midwife prescribing and integrate theory from the programme within the nursing/midwifery setting. The student will complete competencies and reflect on decision-making skills essential to their nurse/midwife practice and development as a prescriber.

Semester Two

NS528X Clinical Practicum in Nurse/Midwife Prescribing 2
The placement provides further clinical opportunities for students to be eligible for registration as a nurse/midwife prescriber. The key emphasis within the practice placement is the application of theory to practice and the utilisation of evidence to enhance nurse/midwife prescribing practice. Students will provide evidence of competence to fulfill the criteria for eligibility to perform in a safe and informed manner within the role of nurse/midwife prescriber. The inclusion of this module takes cognisance of the recommendations of An Bord Altranais (2007) in which the required clinical days must be undertaken while undertaking the education programme. During clinical practice students will gain experience in nurse/midwife prescribing and integrate theory from the programme within the nursing/midwifery setting. The student will complete competencies and reflect on decision-making skills essential to their nurse/midwife practice and development as a prescriber. There must be confirmation from a medical practitioner for medical supervision of the nurse/midwife and agreement to provide the required term of supervised practice.

Note
* This programme is subject to approval by An Bord Altranais