It is often thought that practice nurses need acute secondary care experience. Let’s dispel that myth right now. Through our experience with the advanced training practice scheme (ATPS), which provides substantive training placements for student nurses in more than 130 general practices in the Yorkshire and Humber region, we are identifying two key issues. First, as a result of student nurses’ exposure to general practice, many more of them (a shift from 30% to nearly 80%) are considering a career in practice nursing. Second, practice teams hosting these students are increasingly employing them when they qualify.

Exposure to practice nursing has historically been minimal for student nurses. This has often led to a poor understanding, at both student and university level, of the practice nurse career pathway. This is now improving. In a number of universities in our region, the ATPS is involved in curriculum planning, student nurse induction programmes and careers fairs.

Feedback from both student learners and their practice nurse mentors has been overwhelmingly positive. After their placements, many more of them (a shift from 30% to nearly 80%) are considering a career in practice nursing. Second, practice teams hosting these students are increasingly employing them when they qualify.

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