Registered Nurse Prescribers' (RNPs') experiences of the benefits and challenges to Nurse Prescribing in Palliative Care, Primary Care in Ireland.

Introduction: Prescriptive authority in Ireland was developed as a result of patients' needs with legislation passed by the Irish Medicines Board Act in 2006, and enactment in 2007. The low uptake of Registered Nurse Prescribers (RNP's) in Palliative Care, Primary Care in Ireland (5 RNP's out of a total of 288 nurses), (HSE, 2016) has remained challenging.

Aim: The aim of this study was to outline RNPs' experiences of the benefits and challenges to Nurse Prescribing from a Primary care perspective in a rural specialist palliative care team in Ireland. Following on, a purposive sample of six Key Informants were identified as being able to discuss Nurse Prescribing from a range of perspectives.

Method: A qualitative, phenomenological Heideggerian (interpretative) approach was selected to gain an understanding to this phenomenon. This was a multi-site, purposeful sample with data analysed using thematic analysis, Braun and Clarke (2006) approach.

Results: In total, eight themes were identified with four under **Benefits:** Impact on Patient Care; Practitioner and Service Delivery; Cost-efficiency and Job satisfaction and four under **Challenges:** Role expansion in relation to RNP's; Support Structures; Education and Lack of remuneration.

Conclusion: Findings of this study indicates that a Nurse Prescribing qualification enhances the RNP's competence and capability within their scope of practice, it improves job satisfaction and is an integral part of their role and practice. It places the patient at the heart of service delivery enabling the RNP as the most suitably placed professional in a given time, optimising symptom control in a timely and efficient manner.

Overall recommendations suggest that there is a need for increased support from nursing leadership and palliative medical consultants nationally, increased research and presentations by RNP's at conferences and a review of systems and processes to facilitate Nurse Prescribing. Challenges for policy makers is to provide and integrated model of care based on patient choice that facilitates the delivery of safe, equitable, efficient and effective services in a resourceful and sustainable manner.