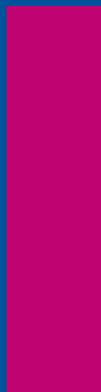


Widening Participation Directory



A directory of best practice



Introduction

Health Education England (HEE) exists to improve the quality of care for patients by ensuring we have enough staff with the right, skills, values and behaviours available for employment by providers (HEE 2014).

HEE has been required as part of its mandate to develop a widening participation strategy with the aim of increasing the diversity of the future and current workforce; and increasing applications and participation in healthcare education and workforce developments from those from underrepresented groups. This is all with a view to creating a healthcare workforce that is representative of the community that it seeks to serve. It is also about ensuring that the health sector can, through the way it supports educational development, also maximise its potential for increasing equality, diversity and social mobility, not just for the healthcare workforce but for the benefit of society and the wider UK economy.

Widening Participation - Responses to a call for best practice

In order to support the development of **HEE's Widening Participation : It Matters** strategy , we have begun to capture and highlight areas of innovation and best practice to encourage wider awareness and the sharing of expertise. HEE issued a call for best practice which sought information from healthcare organisations and education providers about any widening participation developments that they were currently or had recently supported.

The call for best practice was particularly concerned with seeking developments which focused and had impact in at least one of the three areas:

- widening access and recruitment for training and/or employment to the healthcare workforce
- developments designed to aid career progression for under-represented groups
- initiatives, such as local policy and procedures developments, leading to an increase in diversity of the healthcare workforce.

Over eighty submissions were received from a wide range of organisations and partnership developments. This directory provides an overview of these submissions. Wherever possible we have tried to use the words, provided by the authors of these submissions, in order to reflect the nuances of practice and to underline institutional commitments and values. This directory should be seen as a starting point for opening up and extending wider dialogue across sectors about widening participation agendas and their value. The contents of this directory will evolve and we will use your feedback to support the directory development and navigation.

The directory as it stands only reflects the organisations that responded to this first call for best practice. The range of interventions and initiatives documented are diverse and include examples of engagement with people across their life course; from children in primary school to young unemployed adults, to lone parents or carers contemplating a return to work. Case studies include examples of organisations working with individuals with learning disabilities as well as those engaging with the long termed unemployed, and crucially examples of how provider organisations themselves need to communicate and learn from each other to support their populations.

Some of the developments that have been shared are small scale, some only in an early stage of development or partially complete. Consequently, it is difficult or too early to judge the impact of a number of the submissions received. However, despite this there are some strong and emerging themes and clear indications of frequent 'lessons learned' which can be usefully shared.

The most compelling message from the perspective of all contributors is that widening participation agendas make sense for individuals and organisations, in terms of both moral and ethical considerations and from a business perspective. These are not presented as separate considerations but interlinked. In this instance 'doing the right thing is good for business' and the community.

More specifically our contributors tell us widening participation agendas:

- highlight significant gaps in the development and provision of high quality, accurate and timely health careers information, advice and guidance
- provide a platform to open up and support both internal and external communications and dialogue more generally
- promote partnership working whilst generating collaborative advantage which creates resource to drive forward both transformation and integration agendas for collaborating organisations
- develop and extend the talent pool on which the health sector can draw and support workforce planning
- create a focus for investment in education and training for those groups who typically miss out on continuing development opportunity
- support transition into employment for disadvantaged groups, reduces attrition and turnover which drives down recruitment costs
- provide paid and voluntary work opportunity for those groups traditionally disadvantaged in the labour market, which improves people's lives and reduces demand for support services as socio-economic advantage is shared
- contribute to individual, organisational and societal wellbeing.

Widening Participation Directory-The initiatives

We have included all the submissions we received in this first directory of widening participation initiatives given the pressing need to raise wider awareness and interest in the developments being supported; and to maximise the opportunities for different stakeholders to share and connect around widening participation agendas.

Each submission seeks to capture key information and follows a simple format. We have tried to strike a balance in terms of continuity and consistency, whilst reflecting the nuances of each unique case study and stage of development.

We have therefore included:

- organisational and individual contact details - to provide a context and to support follow-up
- an outline of the target audience
- brief information on focus and the purpose of the intervention, including institutional contexts
- an indication of the practice supported
- key lessons learned.

Submissions have been categorised using a number of headings to support the navigation of the directory, to start to identify clear patterns of activity and any gaps; some developments clearly relate to one or more of the categories and so for ease of the reader they have been included in each relevant category.

We have coded all entries using seven categories and also provided short definitions for these to support your exploration of this document.

- Health Careers Advice and Information and Guidance (CIAG)
- Pre-employment Programmes (PeP)
- Apprentices (A)
- Bands 1-4 Workforce Development (B1-4 WD)
- Foundation Degree Development (FD)
- Career Pathway Development (CPD)
- Access to Professions (A2P).

Navigating the Directory

To access details about a particular initiative review the directory list of entries and click on the hyperlink for a development that you are interested in examining.

Alternatively use the Previous or Next buttons at the bottom of each page to go to a particular page.

We do not envisage, given the nature and size of the document, that users will print the entire document out in full but rather should with the available navigation just access those sections and entries of most relevance to them.

Health careers advice and information

Initiatives aimed at providing or supporting information, advice and guidance to participants to raise awareness of the range of careers in the health sector and or specific opportunities. This work may include the provision of seminars and workshops, talks and tours, work experience opportunities, work shadowing and informational interviewing and taster days.

Pre-employment programmes

Programmes delivered in partnership and which are aimed at increasing a participant's ability to move into entry level jobs in the health sector and to ultimately undertake paid employment. These initiatives focus on ensuring that training and recruitment opportunities are open to people who are disadvantaged in the labour market.

Apprentices

This section identifies initiatives focused on promoting the uptake of apprenticeships within the health sector. An apprenticeship is a framework of nationally recognised qualifications that combine work-based training and formal education to provide structured, clear progression pathways for healthcare staff who wish to develop their careers within the NHS.

Bands 1-4 workforce development

This section identifies programmes that focus on promoting internal staff development and mobility through the provision of better education and training for the support workforce. They reflect the commitment of organisations in valuing and developing their workforce, seeking to provide structured training pathways and potential progression opportunities. These initiatives reflect the type of development and commitment which will be reflected in the **Talent for Care strategic framework** which sets out HEE strategy for the development of the support workforce.

Foundation degree development

Foundation degrees are vocational higher education qualifications that combine academic and work-based learning. These initiatives reflect the structured but flexible approaches that education providers and employers are engaging to provide underpinning knowledge and skills to support the development of new support roles.

Career pathway development

These initiatives underline the benefits of promoting awareness of opportunities for both personal and professional (role) development and career advancement. Such initiatives recognise the importance of supporting staff who want to widen their knowledge, learn new skills and take on more challenges and responsibilities.

Access to Professions

This section identifies a range of initiatives and specific pathways which provide a broad-based experience to support entry into a range of higher education courses in the health professions from underrepresented groups. Many of these initiatives are designed for people who would like to study at university but who left school without the usual qualifications.

Acknowledgements

We are extremely grateful to those organisations that have been able to share their widening participation initiatives and to those people who have more generally supported this directory development. We look forward to building upon this work by providing a flexible online resource whereby details about any new and emerging widening participation activity can be presented, shared quickly and interrogated easily. We would therefore welcome your feedback on the content and structure of this directory to ensure it meets real needs and to inform its future development.

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A centrally administered work experience process across Nottinghamshire

Health Education East Midlands

Project Aims

Developing a work experience hub and central point of contact

This project provides a central point of contact for work experience across Nottinghamshire, managing the process effectively and providing a central point for expertise on all things related to work experience.

Who is the main target audience?

School and college students

The focus of this project is mainly school and college students but there are no age restrictions. The project can therefore also attract and support applications from those thinking of a career change, both wishing to enter professional education and/or direct employment.

What is the practice?

Creating and maintaining one centralised information and administration point for all trusts

The project has a centralised and robust process of application for all trusts in Nottinghamshire. Students apply via a website and Health Education East Midlands administrate the process. Every student receives an induction prior to attending any work experience and they are briefed on conduct, confidentiality, infection control and preparation on any emotional situations. Students, parents and staff contact the central team for advice and guidance and they work closely with provider organisations to develop the work experience offer, proactively seeking to increase the number of placements where possible. The team administrated nine hundred placements in the year 2012/13.

What has been the impact?

Reducing administrative burdens for partners and developing a centre of expertise

This Health Education East Midlands initiative centralises work experience administration and key staff become a repository for expertise on work experience. The centralised application process for applicants is clear and there are project members of staff on hand with expertise to answer any questions and queries applicants may have. Health Education East Midlands manages the work experience process and ensures that policy and procedure are followed. The project seeks to ensure all communications are clear. The project website and phone line are extremely busy with enquiries and applications.

What is the best lesson learned?

Having knowledge and expertise in one place improves the experience for applicants and placement providers

"To have a central process and associated expertise means that the project can provide a good service and quick responses to queries from both colleagues and those accessing work experience."

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Access to medicine

Liverpool Heart and Chest Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Project Aims

[Widening access to medicine through the provision of accessible work shadowing and work experience opportunity](#)

Access to Medicine (ATM) is a fully-funded widening participation initiative developed by Liverpool Heart and Chest Hospital NHS Foundation Trust to support access into medicine. Access to Medicine provides students with an opportunity to gain valuable work experience in the field of medicine. It is delivered in close working partnership with local schools and colleges and provides a unique work shadowing experience for students which also seeks to optimize their enrolment potential, in what is a highly competitive admissions system.

Historically, it has been widely acknowledged that students who do not have any family or other links to the medical profession have found great difficulty in securing the required work experience to support university applications. Liverpool Heart and Chest Hospital has sought to create an opportunity to help prospective students to overcome these barriers by opening Access to Medicine to all individuals, irrespective of their background. Through this process, the Liverpool Heart and Chest Hospital project aims to successfully widen participation for all aspiring individuals looking to enter the medical profession and support them in their future chosen careers.

Who is the main target audience?

[Young people in schools and colleges in Merseyside, Cheshire and Wales who do not originate from identified feeder schools into medicine](#)

The main geographical audiences for Access to Medicine are schools and colleges within Merseyside, Cheshire and Wales. Access to Medicine has a specific focus on schools which are not usually seen as traditional feeder schools for higher education medical institutes, where there is an increased likelihood of students coming from lower socio-economic groups. Positive discrimination is applied in some instances for students when achievement of grades at GCSE does not reflect their true potential. As a result, the Access to Medicine programme is targeted to students aged sixteen years and above who demonstrate clear potential in terms of both academic and personal commitment levels to gain successful entry/enrolment onto medical courses. Access to Medicine takes into account references received from tutors and the programme actively engages tutors in the interview process whereby Liverpool Heart and Chest Hospital NHS Foundation Trust explores the level of student motivation, commitment and ability.

What is the practice?

[On-going engagement with prospective students through hands on activity in a clinical setting over an extended period of time](#)

The Access to Medicine project seeks to promote best practice through engaging aspiring young individuals who have the drive and passion for career in medicine. Access to Medicine entails a one day trust induction during the February half-term. In line with trust policy, the induction incorporates all the necessary health and safety requirements and an Access to Medicine project overview.

Post induction, individuals undertake a two day session during the Easter holidays. This encompasses cardiothoracic teaching and informs students of requirements within the clinical setting and roles within the multi-professional workforce. Finally, students undertake a practice week during the summer period. Each candidate is allocated a consultant mentor and exposed to a range of experiences inclusive of multi-professional clinics, theatres, wards and intensive-care. Furthermore, all candidates have the option to enrol onto the Lancashire Teaching Hospitals Trust volunteer scheme. The programme concludes with an evaluation day designed to reflect on experiences gained and the opportunity to undertake mock interviews chaired by the trust's medical director.

What is the practice?

Enhanced understanding and greater insight

Access to Medicine is now in its third cycle of student engagement. From 2010, student engagement within the programme has seen an increase in cohort size from ten (2010-11) to thirty two (2011-12) to thirty seven (2012-13). The success of the programme can be determined through the number of offers received from the higher education institute medical schools. Of the 2012-13 cohort, eleven students received offers from Liverpool, Leeds, Manchester, Nottingham, Sheffield, Birmingham, Lancaster and Cardiff. Further positive outcomes have been acknowledged through the feedback from students. Improvements in interview skills, confidence, cardiothoracic knowledge and an enhanced insight into the medical profession have all been fed back by those individuals on the programme and this feedback helps to sum up the success of the Access to Medicine programme for the trust.

What is the best lesson learned?

GCSE grades are not always a good indicator of potential

“Liverpool Heart and Chest Hospital believe widening participation within the medical profession is a plausible endeavour through a structured and supportive approach. The attainment of GCSE grades is not always a good predictor of how well students can perform and that drive, passion and motivation should be acknowledged within these young aspiring professionals.”

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Advice for school based staff and advisers

Newcastle University School of Medical Education

Project Aims

Supporting the provision of appropriate and accurate advice and guidance in schools

Newcastle University run annual advisory sessions for both teachers and careers advisers based in local and regional schools. These sessions seek to provide the key information that schools need to be able to advise their pupils on career options and in making good applications to medicine and dentistry courses.

Who is the main target audience?

Advisers and teachers who are involved in supporting career and course choice

The university has found frequently that prospective students are not receiving the right kind of information, advice or guidance about applying to medical school. This is why the university set up advisory sessions for teachers and advisers, in order to reach and inform those key people who are involved in advising school pupils about their future options. The sessions are designed for anyone who advises students regarding career progression from across the region.

What is the practice?

Advising the adviser

The university sessions are structured to cover the application process at Newcastle University and what the institution is looking for at an interview. The university then opens up the sessions for a panel of discussion and questions from the audience. The university has also developed a poster which contains key information that can be put in staff rooms to inform wider staff groupings.

What has been the impact?

Positive feedback and returning teachers keen to update themselves

“The university always receives very positive feedback from the sessions and teachers return to stay up to date. Over a two year period fifty teachers have attended the sessions.”

What is the best lesson learned?

Appropriate advice can only be given if those advising have the opportunity to continually update

“The university medical school is frequently reminded about just by how many young people are given out of date or incorrect information and advice on applying to medicine.”

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Apprenticeship taster workshops

Gloucestershire Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Project Aims

Raising young people's awareness of vocational opportunities through apprenticeships

This Gloucestershire Hospital NHS Foundation Trust initiative aims to engage with a local school which do not have sixth forms, to inform students of vocational employment opportunities through apprenticeships, post GCSEs.

Who is the main target audience?

Local students in Year 11

What is the practice?

Increasing awareness and knowledge of the range of health careers supported through apprenticeships and raising the profile of the trust as an employer

Apprentice taster days include finding out about the local acute trust, clinical and non-clinical activities (including simulation), meeting the apprentices and having an opportunity to ask questions.

What has been the impact?

Greater awareness of apprenticeships and a range of alternative career routes

- students from the local school have applied for apprenticeship vacancies or have been informed of alternatives available to them post 16 years
- raising the profile of Gloucestershire Hospital NHS Foundation Trust across the county.

The Gloucestershire Hospital NHS Foundation Trust will repeat this project.

What is the best lesson learned?

The value of practical interactive sessions

"Activity has to engage and be interesting to students to be successful."

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Development of an information, advice and guidance support worker

Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Trust

Project Aims

Timely and appropriate advice for all staff grades

Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Trust believe all staff should be able to access and benefit from timely and appropriate advice, guidance and support in the workplace. Therefore there should be the skills and competence within peer groups at all levels to provide supportive and constructive challenge of practice, to provide feedback, to reinforce acceptable standards and behaviours and to improve techniques or performance - for example, when communicating with patients and others in the team environment.

Embedding a culture of inter-professional learning that transcends existing professional and grade boundaries

Working in partnership with Skills for Health the Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Trust developed a new set of additional competencies to support the implementation of the Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Trust's Learning Environment Policy and to further embed a culture of inter-professional learning. This work will enable staff, at all levels, not only to possess the necessary skills and competence but also to have the confidence to support, role model and/or appropriately challenge staff and learners when working in the operational environment.

This work will not replace any professional or regulatory requirements for education support in the workplace but will provide a framework for the wider provision of mentorship, advice, guidance and support which transcends existing professional and grade boundaries

Who is the main target audience?

Non-registered staff in Bands 1 to 4

The new competencies will enhance roles across a range of community based and corporate services. Initial take up of the additional skills development programme has been predominantly from a pilot of eleven qualified assistant practitioners who are employed at Agenda for Change Band 4. They work in a range of clinical services and specialities across the trust including district nursing, palliative care, children's and adult services, cardiac and continence care. It is envisaged that this programme will be implemented widely once the participants on the pilot have evaluated their experience fully.

The pilot programme consists of:

- leading an empowered organisation (LEO) programme information
- advice and guidance NVQ (Level 3)
- difficult conversations workshop
- introduction to mentorship workshop.

What is the practice?

Developing learning champions and promoting experiential learning for all

The development of additional competencies to support inter-professional learning will effectively create learning champions within the workplace and provide opportunities for supported experiential learning; this in turn will add confidence to those staff to improve their practice which will benefit patients through the quality of their experience. Equally this will support the translation of competencies into practice and reinforce the trust's values and behaviours framework.

The learning champion activity represents a cross-cutting enhancement of an individual's existing role. It will provide a role enhancement opportunity for individuals whilst supporting the development of others and will underpin the provision of better quality care (direct or indirect).

What has been the impact?

Evaluation on-going

This pilot project is still being evaluated. But it is envisioned that the new role competencies will:

- directly support the personal and professional development of the non-registered workforce (Bands 1-4)
- underpin and reinforce the Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Trust's Learning Environment Policy whereby staff at all levels will possess the skills, competence and confidence to appropriately support colleagues and learners when working within the operational environment
- reinforce professional/regulatory requirements for education and assessment in practice
- create a framework for the provision of mentorship, advice and guidance that transcends existing professional and grade boundaries
- recognise and utilise the wealth of knowledge, skills and experience that exists within our non-registered workforce (Bands 1-4)
- support the trust's 'Leadership at all Levels' pledge and further develop the organisational culture in this area
- offer increased and enhanced continuous development opportunities for staff in Agenda for Change Bands 1-4
- provide additional and appropriate support for learners and new starters in the workplace – this will increase capacity to appropriately support learners in the community healthcare arena, e.g. cadets, work experience placements and apprentices and thus support the development of the future workforce
- create learning champions within the workforce and provide opportunities for greater experiential learning
- enhance the offer to the Bands 1-4 workforce and as a consequence increase levels of engagement, morale and motivation.

What is the best lesson learned?

Recognising and harvesting talent at all levels pays huge dividends

"Untapped latent talent exists within the workforce and there are many ways in which it can be utilised."

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Development of year 10 taster days for secondary school students across East Lancashire

East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust

Project Aims

Raising awareness of health care careers with young people whilst increasing local knowledge about East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust (ELHT)

East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust believe it is important to ensure that young people have an overview of the range of jobs and careers in the NHS (professions and support roles) and that they are also able learn about East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust (ELHT) as an employer.

Who is the main target audience?

Year 10 pupils aged 14-15 years and their teachers

What is the practice?

Effective provision of careers information for young people and the proactive management of work experience requests, facilitated through a local authority led business education partnership

East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust works collaboratively with the Via Partnership [See: www.cxl-uk.com/](http://www.cxl-uk.com/) to link with secondary schools across East Lancashire in order to identify students who are interested in NHS careers. Careers sessions are held in the training departments of both Burnley and Blackburn hospitals. These take the form of interactive workshops which aim to provide a diverse overview of services and job roles in a safe and appropriate teaching/learning environment.

This model was set up to address the issue of requests for work experience from the under sixteen age group. East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust staff also link where possible with other Via Partnership initiatives, for example: careers events, practice job interview sessions etc.

What has been the impact?

Increased engagement with the local community and the effective provision of careers information

This East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust project has:

- increased engagement with the community through schools and the Via Partnership
- provided up to date information for teachers responsible for career guidance, adding value to their role
- developed awareness of how the NHS works both locally and nationally
- given young people more direction and confidence when pursuing their career/job aspirations
- generated positive publicity for ELHT and the NHS as a whole.

What is the best lesson learned?

There is a very real need for timely and appropriate information on health careers

“Both young people and their teachers are surprised by the number and diversity of career and job opportunities in the NHS.”

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Discover medicine

Newcastle University School of Medical Education

Project Aims

Supporting student ambassadors to encourage more medical school applications

Discover Medicine as a project originally evolved from an initiative developed by a proactive group of medical students who went back into their home schools and colleges to encourage pupils to apply to study medicine. These students then approached the University of Newcastle Medical Faculty to see if the university was able to offer support in developing this activity further.

The university now has a core team of four medical students who they liaise with each year on organisational matters and there are also around twenty additional students who help to deliver school sessions. The university liaises with the schools to organise times for the students to visit and to provide funds for resources and expenses. At the request of the students this is a voluntary scheme.

Who is the main target audience?

Local school pupils in Year 8, 10 and 12 aged 11-16 years (Key Stage 3-4)

The university and the medical school ambassadors target local state schools within the Tyne and Wear area.

What is the practice?

Student ambassador led tailored outreach in local state schools

Newcastle University medical school student ambassadors have developed three Discover Medicine sessions aimed at school pupils in Year 8, 10 and 12 to support university widening participation activity. The university coordinates the Discover Medicine activity sending out an email communication to local state school contacts. This covers the dates that are available (they only offer Wednesday afternoons so that it doesn't impact on student studies) and the sessions that they have to offer and how to book them. Once the schools make a booking, the university then arranges with their student ambassadors who will lead on the actual school sessions. This is very much a student led activity, with students identifying both the school year groups (in discussion with university) and leading on school session development and content.

The Year 8 session is very practical and it focuses on raising awareness and aspirations. The Year 10 session is again activity based but it also looks at what pupils will need to be doing if they are thinking about applying to medicine. The Year 12 session focusses on the application process, admissions and interview skills.

What has been the impact?

Watch this space

The university doesn't currently evaluate this activity but this is a development for the future. However, the university does receive good feedback from the teachers they have contact with and the medical school is also starting to see an increase in the number of students applying from widening participation backgrounds. The future plan is to collect the details of the students attending these student led sessions so that the university can track progression.

This is just one of a range of activities the university offers local schools, and as such it is seen as a way of helping to develop good links with local state schools and colleges, by raising aspirations and supporting local students in their applications to medical school. The university believes that this activity is also helping their medical students develop valuable skills and the confidence that they will need throughout their careers.

What is the best lesson learned?

Student ambassadors are a huge and powerful resource when harnessed

“Internal partnerships between staff and students can be incredibly powerful.”

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ENACT “NHS Success!”- theatre performance

Health Education East Midlands

Project Aims

Staged targeting of school pupils at a key career juncture

This project is focused on reaching as many students as possible in Year 9, when they are considering their options, giving them information on careers in the NHS in a unique format.

Who is the main target audience?

Year 9 school pupils

What is the practice?

Developing high quality theatre performances which act as a vehicle to convey key information at decision making junctures

Giving careers information can be quite dry but the ENACT performances provide information in an engaging, fun but informative way. In February 2014 this project delivered performances to nearly 8,000 students across the five counties of Health Education East Midlands. Feedback from teachers and students has consistently rated the performances highly over a five year period.

What has been the impact?

Evaluation and feedback of the performances is consistently high as is demand for places

One-hundred percent of the teachers involved viewed the engagement as “informative, a useful as part of the careers curriculum, and enjoyable.”

“Impact has been very hard to measure as the fruits of our labour won’t be realised for years to come, when those we have spoken to begin to start working in the NHS. The evaluations about the performances are consistently high and schools are eager to let us into their schools year on year.”

What is the best lesson learned?

Using drama for advantage

“It is amazing to see a whole year group of fourteen year olds totally engrossed without exception!”

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Enrichment programme

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Project Aims

Better equipped degree applicants who understand the value of practical experience

This Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust pilot initiative had the broad aim of providing students at a local Catholic sixth form college, who had expressed an interest in the allied health professions, with the opportunity to develop high quality applications for degree courses in the allied health professions; and with 'the skills that cannot be taught in the classroom' but are essential for a career in health care.

This pilot programme gave the opportunity for selected candidates to attend timetabled practical sessions held at Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust which were delivered by members of the hospital clinical education team. These sessions were then supported by further activity delivered at the college which provided underpinning theory.

Who is the main target audience?

Year 12 students at the Cardinal Newman sixth form Catholic college

This project was aimed at Year 12 students who were preparing to apply for an allied healthcare professional degree course.

What is the practice?

Undergraduate medical students develop relationships with key school groups over time

This pilot project enabled Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust to support young and ambitious students that had a desire to pursue careers in the health sector. In addition, the delivery of the programme at Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust provided the opportunity to encourage local students to pursue their future career in their local hospital/community setting by highlighting Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust as an employer of choice.

What has been the impact?

Although this pilot project came to an end in spring 2014, the feedback from students has been excellent. Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust has been able to support students with their career choice and provide students with the knowledge and experience to help them through the degree application process.

Benefits for participants to the programme have included:

- gaining knowledge and experience to improve interview performance
- an opportunity to experience and gain a realistic insight into delivering care
- the development of the key vocational skills needed to provide care
- an understanding of how to improve the quality of degree applications.

This pilot activity will be extended to three additional colleges in the autumn term of 2014.

What is the best lesson learned?

Investment in supporting more informed students pays off

"Young and ambitious students are full of motivation and a pleasure to teach!"

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Evaluating work experience placements

Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust

Project Aims

To support the exploration of healthcare careers and to gain feedback on what is effective

This Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust initiative provided an opportunity for students to explore their interest in pursuing careers in a health profession by providing relevant work experience in clinical areas within the community. It also sought to obtain student feedback following work experience placements to support project evaluation.

There was strong emphasis on the analysis of key data in order to:

- monitor the quality of placement experiences
- provide information to enhance the quality of future work experience placements
- provide student feedback to clinical areas and with relevant stakeholders.

Who is the main target audience?

Candidates undertaking work experience

This initiative focused on a number of different audiences including:

- all students that complete a work experience placement with the Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust
- future students that will undertake work experience placements within the trust
- placement areas that receive student feedback
- key individuals at Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust
- schools and colleges.

What is the practice?

Developing and using student placement evaluation and feedback to support change

This project sought to ensure:

- all students are given the opportunity to complete a placement evaluation feedback form
- evaluation feedback received is recorded in a central database, analysed and reported upon
- student evaluation feedback is cascaded to clinical areas and relevant stakeholders.

What has been the impact?

High levels of evaluation returns and high levels of satisfaction from students have reinforced the institutional commitment and understanding of the value of work experience

This project has resulted in:

- 84% of student feedback received rated their overall work experience placement as excellent.
- student evaluation and feedback to clinical areas conveying how much student's value the opportunities the teams provide for them.
- a high student evaluation questionnaire response rate at 57% to date.

The Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust believes positive feedback from work experience students makes it more likely that clinical areas will continue to support work experience placements in the future.

What is the best lesson learned?

Work experience is a key component of career decision making

The Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust work experience placement evaluations have underlined the value of placements and that the experience students receive positively influences their future career pathway.

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Gateway to medicine

Durham University

Project Aims

The Durham University Gateway to Medicine programme provides a route into the medicine (MBBS) degree delivered at Durham University, for young applicants from low socio-cultural and poor educational backgrounds. This initiative was a response to the well documented concern that traditional admissions to medical study does not deliver the diversity of doctors that we would like to see in practice.

The aim of this project is to deliver a programme that allows students, for whom education and social opportunities have limited their achievement and aspirations, an opportunity to develop and demonstrate their academic potential and personal aptitude for medicine. In this way, it is hoped that greater representation of the wider population can be reflected amongst Durham's medical students.

Who is the main target audience?

School pupils studying in North East England who are deemed to be underrepresented in higher education and medicine

The university targets school pupils who:

- have home fee status
- have a clear and demonstrable interest in medicine, which is supported by a personal statement from the student and a testimonial from an academic member of their school or college.

Candidates must also meet at least two of the following:

- first generation applicant including those who have a parent or parents who graduated from their first degree within the last five years or are currently studying for their first degree
- attend a school whose GCSE performance is below the national average
- be eligible for free school meals
- be resident in an area that falls within the lowest 40% of the Index of Multiple Deprivation.

Additional consideration is given to applicants who have spent time in local authority care, or are from a traveller family, or have a registered disability.

What is the practice?

Market segmentation

The university targets applicants from the North East of England, and from under-represented groups in higher education who are identified and referred in partnership with their school or college; and who participate in a programme of activities during their AS year (pre-entry phase). Up to ten successful pre-entry phase students then spend one year (year zero) at Durham University's Foundation Centre developing the skills and subject knowledge required for successful study at degree level. On successful completion of the foundation year students will progress to the first year of their MBBS medicine degree course.

The pre-entry phase includes a three day summer school delivered jointly by the Durham's Foundation Centre and Durham's School for Pharmacy, Medicine and Health. Students receive information, advice and guidance about applying for medicine, both at Durham and other providers across the UK. They participate in a range of hands-on activities in the medical training labs and also develop and present a mini-project relating to a patient case study. Students also attend a first year undergraduate lecture and lab session. Students are observed to identify personal and academic potential.

Students successfully completing the pre-entry phase may apply to the Gateway to Medicine foundation phase via UCAS (Jan 15th deadline). They must be predicted three GCE A levels in the grade range AAB - BCC which would normally be completed within two years and taken in one sitting). In order to progress to the

Foundation Centre phase final GCE A level grades must not fall below BCC and must include A2 Biology and Chemistry at grade C or above (for 2015 entry). All applicants meeting the academic criteria are interviewed. Applicants also require a successful DBS check and a UKCAT score (with concession from standard entry requirement).

During the foundation phase students study a 120 credits academic programme including the following specific modules:

- key skills and language for higher education
- scientific imaging
- anatomy
- physiology and disease
- basic clinical skills for medics
- foundations of statistics
- advanced Chemistry
- core foundation biology combined
- core foundation chemistry.

Successful completion of the foundation phase provides progression to Level 1 of the MBBS medicine degree.

What has been the impact?

This programme has increased the number of students from low-socioeconomic and state school backgrounds entering the Durham medicine (MBBS) programme from the North East region.

The following table provides details of the number of students participating in the various phases of the programme since 2009.

	<i>Applied pre-entry</i>	<i>Attended pre-entry</i>	<i>Applied for A190</i>	<i>Entered Year 0</i>	<i>Entered Year 1</i>	<i>Entered Year 2</i>	<i>Entered Year 3</i>
2009	16	15	11	4	4	3	2
2010	25	19	15	10	10	8	
2011	37	21	15	3	3		
2012	36	23	6	2			
2013	46	31	11				
Total	160	109	58	19	17	11	2

What is the best lesson learned?

Market forces don't support widening participation agendas

"Market forces are the prime influence on medical school admissions and alternative ways of identifying merit and potential amongst students from under-represented groups in higher education are necessary to overcome educational disadvantage in entry to medical school."

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Getting into the NHS

Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust

Project Aims

First steps in to care work

The Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust has worked collaboratively with Princes Trust GET INTO programme to deliver Getting Into the NHS to nine young unemployed people. The short term aim of this programme was to enhance the CVs of the participating individuals by providing them with care work experience and a Level 1 Qualifications and Curriculum Framework (QCF) Progression Award (APT). The programme consisted of a two week study block which incorporated fundamental aspects of patient care and personal development opportunities. This was then followed by a two week clinical placement within an acute general hospital. The longer term aim was to assist the individuals in obtaining a career in care.

Who is the main target audience?

Young unemployed people and potential employers

This project focused on:

- young unemployed people who had a desire to explore the possibility of obtaining a career in care
- potential employers for these individuals would have gained experience and knowledge.

What is the practice?

Providing participants with new skills and career resources to move forward

The Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust's programme built on standard NHS safe recruitment checks which were performed to enable the participating individuals to access patient care areas. The individuals received a two week study programme which focused on fundamental aspects of patient care using a blended learning approach. Transferable life skills in basic life support and manual handling were included. Careers advice and guidance was also given to the group to develop their CVs, and increase their skills in completing application forms and interviews. Ward sisters volunteered to offer supportive two week clinical placements for each individual and they ensured they were assigned a mentor during this experience.

What has been the impact?

Participants have been equipped to make informed career choices and get jobs

The trust programme has provided:

- clear evidence of an increase in self-esteem of the individuals participating
- clear insight into the role of a healthcare assistant to enable an informed career choice.

Three participants have obtained substantive employment within the trust with two more awaiting interviews.

What is the best lesson learned?

It is important to put in place the building blocks which support career decision making

"A half day visit to a clinical area prior to commencing the programme would have ensured individuals had more realistic expectations of care work from the onset."

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Go4it

Exeter College

Project Aims

Building self-esteem and confidence to promote wellbeing and employability

Go4it is designed to help lone parents to develop confidence and general skills which can then be of use in their home life and working life in future.

Who is the main target audience?

Lone parents

Both parents and their children benefit through greater awareness and understanding of the importance of their own and their children's health, nutrition and education.

What is the practice?

Targeted interventions supported through effective cross sector partnership working

Go4it works with local charities, education partners and support organisations. Targeted lone parents are invited to attend a course to improve their health and welfare. The course is taught by the Exeter College Health and Social Care Department. College staff teach nutrition, healthy eating and food hygiene.

What has been the impact?

Increased awareness of how to promote self-health

Advice and guidance has improved knowledge of nutrition to those who have unhealthy life styles and weight issues.

What is the best lesson learned?

Hands on sessions work best

Practical sessions bring to life the ease of preparing healthy and nutritious meals.

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Health ambassadors east

Health Education East of England

Project Aims

Increasing the opportunity for young people and their advisers to access timely and appropriate healthcare careers information and advice

Health Ambassadors East is currently funded by Health Education East of England (HEEoE). The aim of this project is to bring healthcare professionals together with young people to talk about job opportunities within healthcare, in order to ensure that the NHS has a highly skilled workforce for the future. This includes ensuring that young people and those advising them have up-to-date information on careers and job opportunities within healthcare, in particular the NHS.

Health Ambassadors East seeks to increase knowledge and the understanding of healthcare careers in a number of ways:

- increasing the number of NHS organisations holding open days, careers events, work experience programmes, work shadowing and volunteer placements
- connecting education and healthcare professionals in order that young people gain an insight into the world of work
- embedding Health Ambassadors East as part of the regional workforce planning.

A key component of this initiative is the project website development [See: www.healthambassadorseast.org.uk](http://www.healthambassadorseast.org.uk)

The website includes information on:

- project achievements
- resources to support healthcare professionals who would like to become ambassadors
- advice and ideas for ambassadors who are currently working with young people
- how schools and careers advisers can engage an ambassador
- a range of careers available within healthcare
- news about Health Ambassadors East.

Health Ambassadors East is a vibrant project that seeks to share new ideas on how to bring together young people and healthcare professionals with the help and assistance of schools and careers advisers.

Who is the main target audience?

Young people, their teachers/advisers and key health professionals

This project focuses on:

- young people who may be interested in a job or career in the NHS
- school teachers and careers advisers who are looking for up to date information on jobs and careers in the NHS
- members of staff who are health ambassadors who are looking for resources to help them plan and deliver sessions to young people.

What is the practice?

Health Ambassadors East is providing a range of platforms for NHS managers and educationalists to explore what information young people require about careers in the NHS and the best ways to communicate those messages

This project operates across the six counties that form Health Education East of England. There are two different models in delivering the project. Essex, Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire engage an Education Business Partnership to provide a brokerage with the schools and colleges and to train new health ambassadors. Cambridge, Norfolk and Suffolk provide the brokerage service through the Workforce Partnership and empower organisations to train their own health ambassadors.

The project is supported centrally through a steering group and a project website which links to NHS Careers, Step into the NHS and NHS Jobs. There is a central funding pot for marketing materials to support local events. This project has also forged links with other national ambassador schemes like STEM and Care Ambassadors. A quarterly e-newsletter highlights events and raises the profile of the project.

What has been the impact?

Making a difference through effective joint working and increased engagement with schools and students

Through effective joint working and collaboration this Health Ambassadors East initiative has increased the number of schools they have engaged with over a four year period.

The project has:

- engaged with 360 events in 2013/14
- made direct contact with over 16,000 individuals
- made 39,000 people aware of job and career opportunities in the NHS
- trained 400 health ambassadors
- had 2,000 website hits.

“We believe this is making a difference.”

What is the best lesson learned?

Working with others provides collaborative advantage

“NHS Organisations need to engage in careers events to ensure that they have a skilled workforce for the future.”

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Health and employment positive action initiative

The Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust

Project Aims

Developing a health workforce that reflects the community it serves

This Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust intervention seeks to directly address concerns about the disproportionality identified in workforce equality monitoring reports and support the appointment of more candidates that hold protected characteristics, for example: black and minority ethnic (BME) groups and older and disabled people.

Furthermore this initiative has sought to:

- act as a precursor to NHS pre-employment programmes and direct employment for diverse groups
- aid changing national NHS recruitment statistics that evidence discrimination in recruitment for black and minority ethnic staff (Middlesex University)
- improve equality performance outcomes for Equality Delivery System goal 3.1 (Fair NHS Recruitment and selection processes lead to a more representative workforce at all levels)
- improve the reputation of the NHS as an employer committed to tackling inequalities in recruitment and selection
- advance equality through supporting unemployed people into accessing employment, training and volunteering opportunities in the NHS
- provide next steps for participants through the provision of personal action plans and the registration on NHS Jobs and Universal Job Match
- support progression to further training, voluntary work or employment.

Who is the main target audience?

Those people who are not currently represented in the workforce and those individuals and agencies which can support change

This project specifically targets those defined as unemployed black minority ethnics (BME), disabled and older people. It also seeks to engage with key stakeholders across The Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust, Mersey Care NHS Trust, Liverpool Community Health NHS Trust and local communities.

What is the practice?

Positive Action

This pilot positive action initiative was developed in the summer of 2013 by Skills for Health Academy North West with the Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust and in partnership with Mersey Care NHS Trust, Liverpool Community Health NHS Trust and Jobcentre Plus. This initiative was tailor made and targeted at unemployed groups where disproportionality in recruitment outcomes has been identified.

This project provides 'identified applicants' with NHS specific job application support. This support includes:

- building communication and team work skills
- understanding job descriptions and person specifications
- how to use NHS Jobs, complete an application form and write a supporting statement
- confidence building and interview skills with the aim of improving applicant recruitment outcomes in short-listing and appointments for these groups.

All participants completing the programme have to complete a personal action plan to map out their next steps and they are tracked and supported post-completion of the course for three months.

What has been the impact?

This pilot programme was developed and delivered to address disproportionality identified in both shortlisting and the appointment of candidates from particular groups in comparison to the number of applications received for employment.

Participants completing the programme progressed into employment, volunteering and further training/support. Feedback from participants was extremely positive. There were twenty candidates who commenced the initial programme and only one early leaver.

The programme resulted in a number of successes including:

- nineteen participants completed action plans
- nineteen participants registered for NHS Jobs
- nineteen participants completed CVs
- three participants progressed to further training
- two participants applied for ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages)
- two participants progressed to voluntary work
- six learners progressed into employment
- Knowsley Council has commissioned and funded an additional programme and delivery for forty residents with local trusts supporting the initiative.

Both external referral organisations/stakeholders and trusts have expressed a desire to roll out this initiative across the North West.

What is the best lesson learned?

[This intervention made a difference](#)

“That putting in place this intervention has resulted in delegates being successful in recruitment and being appointed.”

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Health and social care recruitment partnership group

Sheffield Hallam University

Project Aims

Promoting social and economic wellbeing through raising student ambition and attainment

The Sheffield Hallam University's (SHU) partnership with local schools and colleges is based on a shared commitment to raising students' ambition and attainment and with it the prosperity and wellbeing of the region. The Health and Social Care Partnership group is one several staff continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities underpinning the Associate Schools and College Partnership.

The Associate School and College Partnership was established in 2005 with the aim to enhance and extend student participation into higher education through a planned programme of activities to inspire learners. This initiative included the development of comprehensive transition support arrangements, and information and resources, to support staff through each stage of the process. As part of SHU's commitment to supporting staff in partner schools and colleges, a Health and Social Care Advising the Adviser group was set up to provide effective links between the university and the staff involved in supporting student progression into key professional areas.

Who is the main target audience?

Teaching and advisory staff in schools and colleges

This initiative targets staff in schools and colleges, including teachers and careers advisers from part of a Health and Social Care Recruitment Partnership group. This is open to those staff involved in the delivery of teaching, or advice and guidance for students interested in health and social care.

What is the practice?

Establishing an effective forum which supports partnership working, information sharing and the spread of best practice

The Health and Social Care Recruitment Partnership group meet three times a year at key points in the recruitment cycle. These meetings provide an opportunity to ensure the advice, guidance and information given in schools and colleges reflects the rapid changes in the health and social care sector and university recruitment processes. Sessions are delivered by staff who manage school and college engagement and recruitment within the faculty.

What has been the impact?

Real collaborative advantage generated through effective joint working

This initiative has directly promoted positive and productive stakeholder relationships particularly with key staff in schools and colleges. It has and provided a platform for effective collaborative working and supported consultation with staff from schools/colleges on important issues and changes to course entry requirements in terms of qualifications and experience.

What is the best lesson learned?

Effective communication structures support partnership working and build trust

"The Health and Social Care Recruitment Partnership group has led to a greater sense of partnership working providing an appropriate forum to discuss key issues and share opinions from both the school/college and the university's perspective and this has built trust and enhanced relationships."

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Local health community approach to engagement around careers

Health Education East Midlands

Project Aims

Promoting the NHS as an employer of choice

With a centrally funded resource of dedicated widening participation staff, Health Education East Midlands aims to promote the NHS as an employer of choice with the residents of Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City, on behalf of the whole local health community, and to raise the aspirations of residents to pursue a career in the NHS.

Who is the main target audience?

Residents of Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City

Health Education East Midlands engages with education providers including schools and colleges, with Jobcentre Plus clients and with residents who do not fall into the two preceding categories.

What is the practice?

Extensive partnership working to maximise the opportunities to raise the profile of NHS careers

Health Education East Midlands has an extensive diary of events throughout the course of a year, ranging from small individual school events to large-scale public events. On average the project reaches around 6000 people annually. This activity is underpinned by a centrally funded resource of dedicated widening participation staff with specific expertise around the delivery of information, advice and guidance on how to enter the NHS at various junctures.

What has been the impact?

Increased opportunity to raise the profile of NHS careers

What is the best lesson learned?

Having a specialist team with careers expertise is vital

"At any event you will meet people with a range of questions. As much as is practicable, know your stuff!"

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MaD Days (medicine and dentistry)

Newcastle University School of Medical Education

Project Aims

Raising aspirations and awareness of the range of medical careers

The aim of the university MaD Days is to raise pupil aspirations by introducing them to medicine and dentistry and increasing their awareness of the different careers available through science subjects. MaD Days explore both medicine and dentistry at Newcastle University. They offer prospective students the opportunity to spend a structured day on campus in the university medicine and dentistry facilities, taking part in a variety of activities developed around these subject areas.

Who is the main target audience?

School pupils in Year 9 and 12

The Newcastle University medical school targets young people in state schools in the Tyne and Wear area.

What is the practice?

Immersive campus based activity tailored to year group needs and interests

The university offer MaD Days for Year 9 and Year 12 school pupils. The Year 9 pupils spend the day exploring both medicine and dentistry to raise their awareness and aspirations about both subject areas. The Year 12 pupils choose whether they would like to attend the medicine or dentistry session and then spend a morning looking at the application process, communication and interview techniques, professionalism and difficult decisions. This is followed by an afternoon in practical sessions in the relevant clinical skills unit.

Year 9 MaD Days allow Year 9 pupils to experience a day of interactive and informative sessions exploring medicine and dentistry. School pupils have the opportunity to take part in a session in the medical clinical skills lab and the dental learning resource center through a series of hands on activities. Pupils spend time in the Faculty's lecture theatres, as well as interacting with the university's current medical and dentistry students. Year 12 MaD Days allow Year 12 pupils to experience what it is really like to study medicine or dentistry at university.

The day includes:

- interactive lectures on the application process
- interview and communication skills
- difficult decisions in medicine, as well as
- an afternoon spent in the university clinical skills laboratories exploring the practical side of either medicine or dentistry.

Pupils also have the opportunity to work alongside university medicine and dentistry student ambassadors throughout the day. Unlike the Year 9 MaD Days, pupils must decide if they would like to spend the day exploring medicine or dentistry, as the day is much more focused.

What has been the impact?

This intervention is building relationships with local schools and developing key skills for existing medical students

The university intend to expand the MaD Days programme over the next academic year (2014/15) by offering those who attend a Year 12 MaD Day session the opportunity to be linked with a current medical school student as an e-mentor, in order to support them further through their actual application and in the lead up to interview should they be successful.

What is the best lesson learned?

Tailor the sessions to the year groups and their interests

“Different year groups have different needs subject to where they find themselves in relation to course and career choice.”

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Norwich and Norfolk careers information literature

University of East Anglia

Project Aims

Providing clear, concise and accessible careers information for secondary school students

This University of East Anglia initiative is concerned to raise the profile of different health professions to secondary school students by providing clear, concise and accessible information. The project is delivered in collaboration with the University of East Anglia's Outreach Department and by using 'SMOG plain language' it is aimed at underrepresented secondary school students and parents/carers. The SMOG (Simplified Measure of Gobbledygook) test provides a measure of readability of a text. Readability is an attempt to match the reading level of written material to the "reading with understanding" level of the reader. It does not necessarily equate to a "reading age" of the text.

Who is the main target audience?

Young people

The initiative is aimed at students aged between 13-18 years who are considering health careers. Activity is also accessible to parents and teachers.

What is the practice?

Developing key messages about roles, values and behaviours in health and social care

The university produces a series of leaflets linked to a range of health courses at the University of East Anglia. These introduce different professions, possible career pathways and different entry routes. Explicit reference is made to NHS values and other non-academic skills specific to each profession. Students are signposted to 'Step into the NHS' and 'NHS Careers'. Each leaflet also introduces students to the idea of university and additional benefits gained by a university education.

What has been the impact?

Printed careers literature provides a valuable resource for local trusts, school children and school staff

Over 3000 leaflets have been distributed to local secondary school students. Local NHS trusts have also requested copies as they like the format. Although leaflets can be costly, there seems to be a need for concise information in this format, especially as many career services within schools no longer exist.

What is the best lesson learned?

Working collaboratively increase know how and expertise

The University of East Anglia's Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences has worked jointly with the university's outreach team, who specialise in working with underrepresented groups and this has meant leaflets have been produced in a format, which is accessible to a range of audiences including students, parents and teachers.

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Pharmacy in primary schools (PIPS)

Manchester Pharmacy School University of Manchester

Project Aims

Promoting pharmacy as a career choice in deprived neighbourhoods

The overall aim of this project is to introduce pharmacy as a potentially viable career opportunity to Year 6 pupils living in and attending school in a socio-economically deprived area of Manchester. It also aims to raise aspirations and expectations, introduce the benefits of higher education and generate a feeling of self-worth amongst the pupils.

Who is the main target audience?

Primary school children Year 6 in deprived areas of Manchester

The main target group for this initiative is Year 6 pupils (final year of primary school) in a socio-economically deprived area of Manchester, followed by their parents/carers. A secondary group that also benefit are the university undergraduate ambassadors as it helps them to develop their communication skills and community engagement profile.

What is the practice?

Multi-faceted campus and school based practical learning activities

There is a programme of activities whereby two, two hour visits are made to the class that the university is working with on consecutive weeks to introduce the concept of higher education (week 1) and pharmacy as a career (week 2), which are then followed up by a visit of the class to the Manchester Pharmacy School for half a day. Pupils get to experience a mini lecture, make medicine models and then calamine cream in the dispensing lab before being taken for lunch in the refectory; then finishing the visit with a mini graduation ceremony in the main university at Whitworth Hall.

All activities both at school and in the university are hands-on, informative yet fun. Whilst many have a pharmacy spin to them, they are based on the Key Stage 2 curriculum. Undergraduate ambassadors from the Manchester Pharmacy School support these activities and are excellent role models for the pupils to aspire to. The programme concludes with a class assembly (including lots of photos) held at the school to inform parents / carers about the activities that the pupils have been involved with and to discuss this programme with them directly.

What has been the impact?

Raising expectations and supporting progression

The project has resulted in:

- pupil expectations are raised
- pupils enjoy the experience
- pupils enjoy all of the activities
- pupil interest in science is stimulated.

This programme has been running since 1997. From the first cohort of pupils, at least four have now gone on to study at university.

What is the best lesson learned?

Everybody has something to offer

“Everybody has something to offer, our job is to enable pupils to acquire skills and to develop capability.”

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Preston widening access programme (PWAP)

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Project Aims

Increasing aspirations whilst supporting applications in to medicine

The Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Preston Widening Access Programme pilot activity was aimed at a) supporting and encouraging students from a local sixth form college who aspired to enter the medical profession and b) to help these students to attain a place on the medical school undergraduate programme with the University of Manchester. There was also a specific project focus of targeting those sixth form students from non-traditional backgrounds to encourage an application to medicine.

The programme comprised of a range of practical activities and study opportunities which supported students to enhance their application to university. The sessions were held on site at the trust. Successful completion of the programme, guaranteed an interview with the University of Manchester for a place on the MBChB Manchester/Preston undergraduate programme with a slightly reduced academic entry requirement.

Because this pilot programme was developed by the Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, current medical students were identified as a key resource to provide support for successful applicants through the Preston Widening Access Programme.

Who is the main target audience?

Year 12 students undertaking A levels at a sixth form Catholic college

This pilot activity was designed for students studying at a local college who were undertaking A levels and considering applying to study medicine.

What is the practice?

This Lancashire Teaching Hospitals Trust pilot activity is a first for trusts, in terms of the Lancashire Teaching Hospitals Trust's commitment to deliver the programme on a hospital site. This commitment was felt to be particularly advantageous for medicine for the following reasons:

- it provides continuity and supports transition on to the medicine degree
- it allows the candidates to engage with medical students already on the programme
- it creates continuity with year three and five of the degree which are delivered on site
- it provides candidates with the opportunity to meet degree staff and tutors
- it provides a realistic view of what to expect in terms of being a medical student.

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust believes this pilot programme presents as an exciting opportunity to engage with and support young and ambitious students that have a desire to follow a career in medicine. This pilot will be extended to three other local colleges in autumn 2014.

What has been the impact?

Too early to say

This programme is still in the pilot phase and has yet to be assessed for its impact. This will be measured in terms of how many students gain a place at the University of Manchester to study medicine and then how many actually graduate to become doctors.

What is the best lesson learned?

Managed transitions can support success

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust firmly believes, " With the right support dreams can become reality regardless of background."

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Primary practice after school club

St George's University of London

Project Aims

Raising aspirations by working with children and their families

The St George's after school club is an aspiration raising activity, which offers Year 5 and 6 pupils (aged 9-11 years) the opportunity to learn more about medicine and healthcare by taking part in practical activities and developing new skills such as basic first aid and sign language. This initiative is linked to national curriculum objectives. The course is centred on a Problem Based Learning (PBL) scenario. The problem based learning scenarios are designed to develop pupils' scientific knowledge and awareness of the range of careers in healthcare; whilst enhancing the pupils confidence and team working skills. Siblings and parents/carers are encouraged to participate by way of an activity book to be completed at home.

Who is the main target audience?

Targeted primary schools in Merton and Wandsworth

There are eleven partner schools in Merton and Wandsworth (2013/14) with ten to twelve pupils per school. Schools that are targeted are primary state schools within a maximum thirty minute travel time from St George's University of London.

The initiative adheres to a non-competitive application process because of the pupil age profile. The St George's programme coordinator meets with the school coordinators on an annual basis to discuss and outline guidance on participant eligibility and selection criteria.

As of 2013/14, school coordinators have a responsibility to ensure participants fulfil at least one of the following criteria:

- no parental experience of higher education in the UK
- low socio economic background (The National Statistics Socio-economic Classification: NS-SEC 4-7)
- parents registered unemployed
- looked after children (LACs)
- disability
- claiming/eligible for free school meals (FSM).

Plus all pupils and their parents/carers must be aware and able to commit to attend all six weeks of the scheme.

What is the practice?

Facilitated and sustained after school club sessions

In groups of three, specially trained student ambassadors are assigned to a school and facilitate the club over the six week period. Each club takes place once a week in a school, after lessons have finished and is supervised by the school coordinator or another member of school staff.

Over the first five weeks, pupils work through a problem based learning scenario, following the story of a young boy who breaks his arm. The story is delivered using audio recordings. After each instalment of the story, student ambassadors and participants discuss and work through a tutorial to clarify the story so far, to contribute personal experiences, to tackle the problems presented and to make predictions on diagnosis and treatment. This is followed by a practical activity associated with the healthcare professionals that are introduced in the story that week.

The six week programme consists of:

- week 1: part 1 discussion / tutorial, participants learn what initial steps to take in a medical emergency, participants learn when and how to put a patient in the recovery position

- week 2: part 2 discussion / tutorial, participants learn some of the basics of medical triage
- week 3: Part 3 discussion / tutorial, participants learn basic sign-language greetings, participants begin to learn how to analyse and interpret scans
- week 4: Part 4 discussion / tutorial, participants learn how and when to apply bandaging, participants learn how to link the type of injury with bandaging techniques
- week 5: Part 5 discussion / tutorial, participants learn the hand washing technique and importance of hygiene in a medical environment
- week 6 : Graduation at St George's University of London, participants are given a tour of the university, participants learn basic clinical skills training on mock wards.

In week six parents /carers,siblings and teachers attend an award ceremony which includes a presentation on:

- the work of the St George's University widening participation team
- the aims of the primary practice scheme
- the value of educational encouragement and support
- participants take part in a final awards ceremony, attendd by their parents/carers, siblings and teachers.

This is a multiple intervention programme with participants being invited to attend a St George's Widening Participation Summer School in Year 7/8 and a university application information, advice and guidance event in Year 12. If successfully imbedded following the 2013/14 pilot, students will also be invited to take part in the St George's NHS Trust work experience scheme in Year 11/12.

Additional interventions in Year 9-12 are in development, including looking at new ways of engaging with participants using social media, newsletters and online mentoring.

What has been the impact?

100% satisfaction ratings

Participants, parents/carers, school coordinators, and student ambassadors are all invited to complete a post event evaluation/feedback form. Feedback from all parties is consistently positive year on year.

The following evaluation data has been collated from the last six years (2009-14) 100% (327) of parents/carers who completed an evaluation believed their son/daughter benefited from attending the scheme.

Of the 500+ participants who completed an evaluation form:

- 99% indicated they enjoyed the scheme 'very much' or 'a lot'
- 100% thought the activities taught them new things
- 98% thought they would be able to help in a medical emergency
- 100% thought the student ambassadors were friendly and helpful
- 99% enjoyed working with other pupils from their school
- 98% indicated they had helped to solve Sam's story
- 79% indicated they would like to go to university when they are older, 1% said they wouldn't, and 20% were unsure
- 36% indicated they would like a job in medicine and healthcare when they are older, 10% said they wouldn't, and 44% were unsure.

A school coordinator in 2012/13 commented, "Engaging children's interest in human structures and functions in a lively, practical way and linking to first aid was very useful. The homework book consolidated learning. You could see the pride on their faces as they were presented with their certificate and stethoscopes. Please include Links Primary again next year!"

What is the best lesson learned?

Real life scenarios drawing on personal experiences brings learning to life

"Relate new learning to 'real life' and participants' personal experiences. Ensure sessions are informative and interactive. Engage the parents and siblings to consolidate learning."

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Promoting success for all

Manchester Metropolitan University

Project Aims

To develop an admissions process that is inclusive and equitable

Success for All is part of a series of interventions at Manchester Metropolitan University. Designed to build successful educational experiences for students in the context of a wider nursing strategy for supporting inclusive access to the BSc (Hons) Adult Nursing programme. Manchester Metropolitan University works collaboratively with a number of partner organisations to identify potential applicants from the existing health workforce, further education colleges and schools to promote nursing as a career, seeking to raise aspirations of the local community.

This initiative ensures all applications to the Manchester Metropolitan University BSc (Hons) Adult Nursing programme are assessed on an individual basis and the merits of both the application itself and relevant experience are considered fully. This process encourages consideration of a wide range of qualifications both academic and vocational.

Who is the main target audience?

Local schools, further education colleges and the existing healthcare workforce

What is the practice?

Proactive promotion of a diverse range of applications particularly from underrepresented groups with non-traditional qualifications

Manchester Metropolitan University has a cohesive strategy across the university to raise the aspirations of individuals particularly within the local community. At a programme level this involves visits to local schools, further education colleges, as well as hosting open events for students to promote nursing as a career.

Manchester Metropolitan University also hosts a taster day for the NHS cadet programme and runs several events and workshops for both Access to Higher Education students and healthcare assistants from local trusts. The university has a dedicated admissions team at a programme level, who offer advice and support to individual applicants, organisations and local education networks. The programme has a comprehensive support strategy in place, which includes formative, diagnostic assessment for all students within the first few weeks of entering the programme. This allows programme staff to signpost students early to the various support services within the university. The programme has also developed a system to record the level of prior experience recognised. The level of prior experience in the entry tariff and where applicants lack experience but have a good overall application, they make conditional offers subject to a minimum of 3-6 months experience.

The programme is working collaboratively with several local trusts to support the year of care initiative, which seeks to recruit existing NHS staff with experience into nursing.

What has been the impact?

Recognition for reaching recruitment targets and improving retention

The university BSc (Hons) Adult Nursing programme:

- gained autonomy from the Nursing and Midwifery Council in 2010 and was highly commended for the admissions processes
- was awarded best provider 2013 in the Nursing Times Awards
- consistently increased retention rates and met recruitment targets over a three year period
- continued to increase retention from 2011/12 to 2012/13 from 87% to 96%
- received 100% satisfaction within the National Student Survey in 2013
- attracted 70% of students with non-traditional qualifications.

What is the best lesson learned?

Students from diverse backgrounds with non-standard entry qualifications contribute to the nursing programme's success

"Admissions is not just about getting students on the programme it is about ensuring fitness for practice, retention and success across the programme. It is vital that there is a recognition that there needs to be a huge investment of time from all programme staff in the admissions process both in terms of promoting the course, shortlisting and selection year on year. There needs to be clear partnerships between patients and practice/ education colleagues to underpin these processes."

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Providing NHS work experience and work based learning activities

North Bristol NHS Trust

Project Aims

Providing safe and worthwhile work based learning opportunities as an investment in the future

North Bristol NHS Trust has for many years made a commitment to Investing in tomorrow's workforce by providing safe and worthwhile work based learning activities, work experience and valuable careers advice for young people and older members of the community.

The chief executive of North Bristol NHS Trust has formalised the trust's involvement with schools and colleges by the introduction of the Schools Liaison Programme supported by an Ambassadors Network. Staff involved as ambassadors, provide many opportunities for people to develop a clearer understanding of the work carried out by the trust, preparing them for potential employment opportunities in the future.

The North Bristol NHS Trust is committed to achieving this by offering:

- work experience placements provided in clinical and non-clinical work places within the trust for people aged from 14 years old (Year 10)
- pathways into medicine work experience
- work based learning activities (both on and off site) which include visits, tours and conferences, workshops, careers events, mock interviews and e-mentoring.

Who is the main target audience?

People living or working within the North Bristol NHS Trust catchment area

This project has sought to engage with a number of audiences including:

- local schools within the catchment area of the North Bristol NHS Trust
- the North Bristol NHS Trust itself, as a large employer of people within the area
- university applicants wishing to gain valuable work experience prior to applying to university for undergraduate programmes
- young people wishing to experience the NHS work prior to leaving school or applying for courses
- older people looking for a career change
- parents wishing to find out more for their children about working in the NHS.

What is the practice?

Well-structured support for a varied range of work experience opportunities

The North Bristol NHS Trust provides a structured and clear process for young people to undertake work experience within the NHS.

This includes:

- an application, interview and induction programme identified for all to follow
- a wide and varied list of activities provided by the trust to meet the needs of schools and colleges, and other individuals, applying for work experience- including a taster week work experience.

Taster week work experience placements involve students being offered a tailor made week of work experience which include exposure to a variety of health careers such as:

- pathways into medicine work experience where students spend a week with a variety of different doctors
- assistant healthcare practitioner pathways where students spend time with a variety of allied health professionals

- midwifery placements
- nursing placements
- extended work experience for those attending relevant courses at the local colleges.

The Trusts also attend local school careers events and some of the larger more regional events promoting careers in the NHS.

What has been the impact?

An increased range of work placements in diverse settings coupled with a higher profile for NHS opportunities

North Bristol NHS Trust has established a:

- robust standardised programme and policy for the implementation of the work experience programme
- an extensive list of staff who act as ambassadors and undertake these activities both on and off North Bristol NHS Trust sites
- successful schools and college work experience programme which has led to the development of a second work experience project linking with the local Jobcentre and the commencement of traineeships
- series of alternative education pathways into the NHS such as apprenticeships
- wider understanding and knowledge of the different roles in the NHS and that it is not all about doctors and nurses
- system that supports students developing increased insight into the job roles of the professional programmes they are applying for at university.

And this work experience initiative has also:

- increased the number of applicants from people under the age of eighteen applying for North Bristol NHS Trust posts
- increased the acceptance in the workplace of the younger person by employing managers
- achieved the bronze standard work experience quality mark from Fair Train in 2014 for all the North Bristol NHS Trust work experience programmes.

What is the best lesson learned?

The provision of safe and worthwhile work experience benefits the host organisation and the individuals participating

“Providing safe and worthwhile work experience and work based learning activities for people who are interested in finding out more about the NHS pays off.”

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Providing resources and opportunities to study and participate in employment through coaching and training (PROSPECT)

South Tees NHS Foundation Trust

Project Aims

Reducing the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) in order to fulfil a commitment to corporate social responsibility

South Tees NHS Foundation Trust's PROSPECT programme is aimed at the local NEET population, specifically those young people defined as not in employment, education or training. It is a key component of the trust's corporate social responsibility commitment and workforce planning agenda. South Tees NHS Foundation Trust believes strongly that as an organisation, it should and can impact positively on the NEET agenda and in so doing increase the pool of talent on which the trust may draw for recruitment needs.

South Tees NHS Foundation Trust specifically identified the experience, skills and professionalism of NHS staff as a key resource to help reduce the number of young people experiencing unemployment and marginalisation in society and in fighting the NEET issue more generally. In a joint venture, the trust's vocational training department and the local Jobcentre Plus (JCP) introduced a fourteen week training programme to provide unemployed young people with the skills and training to support them into paid work and in turn support the trust's recruitment activities.

Who is the main target audience?

Those affected by worklessness and those stakeholders able to support successful transitions into education and employment

The PROSPECT programme takes a two pronged approach, working in partnership with various agencies to help identify NEETS and by encouraging those individuals, agencies and departments who can add value to the agenda to create opportunity and support progression. These stakeholders include recruiting managers within the trust as well as administrative staff, healthcare assistants and a wide range of support staff working in clinical and non-clinical arenas like catering and portering.

What is the practice?

An intensive and extensive work experience programme

The PROSPECT programme provides fourteen weeks work experience in real working environments for unemployed 19-24 year olds (and in many cases 25+). The initiative has placed participants in more than forty different wards and departments since January 2013.

An initial two weeks intensive induction training programme with the vocational training team includes: manual handling, dementia awareness, learning disabilities, customer focus, infection prevention and control; as well as job application and interview techniques.

To date the programme has supported five cohorts, ninety-two clients, of which 75% have successfully acquired permanent jobs through both the trust's apprenticeship and vocational trainee schemes. These placement figures are significantly higher than both regional and national averages for equivalent schemes.

In addition to acquiring qualifications, participants are supported to develop softer skills including confidence, motivation, communication and time keeping. Many participants have found it difficult to get into routines and team working. The PROSPECT programme is increasing employment rates in the immediate geographical area, fitting in within the trust's corporate social responsibilities and its wider community agenda.

What has been the impact?

Developing the right staff with the right values

The South Tees NHS Foundation Trust PROSPECT programme has directly helped to:

- train potential NHS members of staff in the right values
- increase the confidence and morale of participants potentially changing their lives for the better
- increase the potential recruitment pool for the trust
- provide extra support to contribute to the work of teams (departments and divisions)
- combat the local NEET crisis
- share values, skills and professionalism
- develop the future NHS workforce
- provide support and encouragement to people that want to be able to better themselves.

What is the best lesson learned?

Talent is often hidden

“PROSPECT has demonstrated that the NEET population have a lot of skills and qualities that they can offer to the NHS if given the right opportunities and support. The distance travelled by the individuals into employment is longer than we could have envisaged.”

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Recruitment and selection events for adult and mental health nursing degree programmes

University of Lincoln

Project Aims

Developing effective, efficient and equitable nursing degree admissions systems

This university initiative has sought to review and change admissions systems and procedures for the University of Lincoln BSc (Hons) Adult Nursing programme. It introduced new selection and admission processes which included the integration of practitioners, service users and carers in to the selection process.

This project includes a two stage screening process for nursing degree applicants which commences with specialist admissions staff looking at academic filters whilst establishing the suitability of candidates in terms of supportive personal references. Applications are then subject to further 'professional' screening. This involves scrutiny by an academic nursing admissions team which includes adult and mental health nursing specialists.

Successful candidates attend nursing selection events which involve candidate participation in a group work activity based around a current and topical values based discussion. This group activity is observed by a specialist panel which typically consists of a nurse academic, service user, clinician and student nurse. This group activity is assessed and measured.

The candidates also undertake short literacy and numeracy tests. All members of the panel are involved in scoring candidates and they contribute to the final decision making process.

Who is the main target audience?

Nursing degree applicants and university admissions teams

This project incorporates expertise from specialist academic staff, service users, student nurses and clinicians. The benefit of this process is experienced by all those involved in student recruitment through increased internal dialogue and understanding. The process highlights the range of individual and shared roles which when brought together contribute to effective recruitment, as well as underlining the challenges, successes and strengths of each person's respective role. This process ultimately also supports feedback from applicants about their personal experiences and knowledge of how the recruitment process works for applicants.

Nursing applicants directly benefit from selection panels with a wider understanding of recruitment processes and the selection panels are in turn better able to identify nurses 'of the future' who have been screened and selected through a robust and measurable screening process.

These nurses 'of the future' are assessed through a recruitment process which looks at the applicant's personal values and communication skills as well as their academic ability. The selection panels recognise that nurses need to have many qualities including the desire to care, compassion, commitment, competence, courage and leadership ability as well as excellent communication skills. This project recognises that nurses must be all-rounders in terms of ability and be able to use their intelligence to ensure the best care for their patients.

What is the practice?

Developing effective and equitable screening to support appropriate recruitment

This initiative highlights a 'best practice' approach in university nursing degree admissions which incorporates both an understanding of the essential nature of the selection panel member mix and the kinds of representation needed to create balance; as well as the creation of directly measurable screening processes which reflect the applicant's different skill sets and experiences.

This work has enhanced the University of Lincoln's widening participation activity by measuring applicants through a screening tool, as equal. This works by ensuring all those who meet the entry criteria, have their UCAS application forms screened and measured on a weighting scale. The score from this is then carried over to a selection event. The component scores from these events are all weighted equally and include the screening score. All candidates must pass all the elements of the selection event, but some applicants may score more highly at group work, others at numeracy and so forth.

What has been the impact?

Highly positive so far....but early days...

The impact of this initiative has been positive from both the perspective of practice environments and the university. It is hoped that the students recruited through this selection process will have lower levels of attrition rates, represent the wider community, and be committed to undertaking and successfully completing their nurse education programme.

Practice colleagues have reported positively on the calibre of student nurses they have on placement and practice colleagues have appreciated and enjoyed being involved in the recruitment process. This has given all participants a clearer understanding of the intricacies of recruiting students to degree programmes in the 21st century.

The university believes better partnership working has arisen out of the kind of alliances forged through joint working to support selection; and between nurses operating in higher education and clinical settings. The inclusion of service users in admission processes has contributed greatly, adding benefit to all those involved by bringing a new and informative narrative and a different range of experiences into the selection process. Service users have therefore been able to inform and influence admission processes where appropriate.

What is the best lesson learned?

Effective widening participation enhances the workforce of the future

"Widening participation in recruitment and selection of the nurses of the future enhances recruitment of a diverse, highly skilled and knowledgeable workforce."

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Sector skills academy

Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Project Aims

Cross sector partnership working to support employability agendas

This Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust initiative was designed to engage with Jobcentre Plus, Gloucestershire College and local unemployed young people to increase their employability and chances of shortlisting for apprenticeship opportunities at Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

Who is the main target audience?

Young people

The project targets young local unemployed on Job Seekers Allowance.

What is the practice?

An employer led two week intensive programme of blended learning

The project involved close liaison between the local college and Jobcentre Plus to support the delivery of a joint skills sector academy course over a two week period. This work included agreed programme content, including specific information about Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and other specific employer input during the course.

What has been the impact?

Supporting movement from welfare to work

This project has directly supported a transition from benefits to work for participants. Young people who were unemployed and on Job Seekers Allowance have successfully applied to Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust for healthcare apprenticeship positions and they are currently enrolled on the programme. In addition, the project team believe that they have noticed an improvement in application forms overall and that participants have applied for other positions in care organisations.

What is the best lesson learned?

Effective communications between all partners is crucial

“Effective communications between all partners is crucial”

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Somerset health and social care network project

Taunton and Somerset NHS Trust

Project Aims

Developing a structured traineeship which provides experience of real life scenarios

Taunton and Somerset NHS Trust believe it is important to:

- create career opportunities for young people in the health and social care sector by providing a structured traineeship programme where participants can experience in real terms what it is like to work in both an acute health setting and a domestic care setting
- provide placements in specific settings which are underpinned by skills and knowledge delivered through a college and employer partnership which delivers an integrated curriculum.

Who is the main target audience?

Young people aged 16-24 years

What is the practice?

Creating the opportunity for hands on practical experience in a supportive environment

This initiative provides:

- work placements across the health and social care sector
- training delivered by employers
- placements supported by a basic training programme to enable participants to undertake, under supervision basic care tasks in a range of settings.

What has been the impact?

Increased awareness of opportunities in the health and social care sector amongst 16-24 year olds

This activity directly promotes the sector to younger people at the same time as supporting young people to make informed decisions about the type of job or career they may wish to pursue in the future. It also provides an opportunity for young people to fully understand what care is all about.

What is the best lesson learned?

Working together reduces duplication and creates opportunity to pool resources

“A lot of duplication takes place in terms of training on similar if not the same topics even across a health and social care settings and the trust can help minimise this by pooling resources.”

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Using simulation based activities with year 12 students

University of West London

Project Aims

This University of West London project is focused on encouraging pupils from local schools to come into the university and spend an introductory day in the College of Nursing, Midwifery and Healthcare. The aim of the day is to stimulate interest in higher education and health care courses in particular.

Part of the day includes the introduction to courses on offer, meeting current students, and advice regarding personal statements and selection days. The participants spend an hour in small groups in the university's state of the art simulation centre engaging in activities and simulated scenarios related to health care. The university believes this is both innovative and interesting for the pupils attending.

Who is the main target audience?

Year 12 pupils

The main audience is Year 12 students from local schools and colleges who have shown an interest in healthcare.

What is the practice?

Immersive experience based on real life scenarios

Dedicated academic and technical staff who are based in the university simulation centre run simple health care scenarios using interactive mannequins in which the pupils can engage. This intention is to provide a snapshot of a realistic healthcare situation and the role of healthcare workers within this. In addition pupils, who might be considering applying to the University of West London, get first-hand experience of the state of the art facilities and expertise on offer to support their learning.

What has been the impact?

Watch this space

The university has run similar projects in the past as taster days for Year 10 and 11 pupils undertaking health and social care courses and they have been evaluated enthusiastically by those who have attended. They have planned feedback at the end of the taster day and over the longer term the university will collect data at selection days regarding attendance at events such as these and whether they stimulate the interest to apply.

What is the best lesson learned?

Make it hands on

"From similar previous projects; involve them in something interesting and active."

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Widening participation in clinical psychology and the Lancaster doctorate in clinical psychology (DClinPsy)

Lancaster University

Project Aims

The widening participation outreach group at Lancaster University is passionate about inclusivity and as such they were interested in recruiting clinical psychology applicants from people who identify with a minority group. The main aim of this project was to diversify the clinical psychology profession by disseminating information about how to become a clinical psychologist to sixth form schools and colleges that have large minority populations. The university outreach focuses on recruiting applicants from minority groups who are currently underrepresented in the clinical psychology profession - this is not limited to ethnic minorities.

There is a national issue affecting all training courses in clinical psychology. In 2012, 81% of total applicants were white, with 3% of mixed ethnic group, 8% of Asian origin and 3% black. 82% of applicants were female, 76% under 30 years of age, 92% heterosexual and 90% identified themselves as non-disabled.

Who is the main target audience?

Identifiable underrepresented groups

This project focused on:

- young people studying at identified widening participation schools and colleges in Lancashire and Cumbria, in the first instance
- influencing young people from a variety of minority backgrounds who may not have heard of clinical psychology, or may not have considered a career in the field, to find out more and
- making young people aware that Lancaster DClinPsy values diversity across its selection procedures and during training.

As such the initiative was keen to attract and engage young people from minority groups who are currently underrepresented in the clinical psychology profession. Ultimately, the audience benefiting from the initiative will be clients accessing mental health services in the future, as widening participation in clinical psychology will go some way to make the profession itself more representative of the populations it serves.

What is the practice?

Clear careers and course information

In collaboration with Lancaster University's UK Student Recruitment and Outreach Officer, the project team sent a specially developed information leaflet and covering letter to careers leads in schools and colleges identified as widening participation institutions (in Lancashire and Cumbria, in the first instance). It is hoped to expand this nationally.

The leaflet includes information about clinical psychology as a career, including possible routes to professional training, and gives more information specifically about the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology at Lancaster University, where trainees are employees of Lancashire Care NHS Trust. The information leaflet and covering letter are available on request.

What has been the impact?

Watch this space

To date, Lancaster University has no outcome data or measures of impact as the initiative is still in its early stages of development. They will however be collecting details of those schools who express an interest in hearing more about the profession and the DClinPsy at Lancaster University.

What is the best lesson learned?

Too early to say

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Widening participation symposium November 2013

University of East Anglia

Project Aims

Sharing practice and exploring better partnership working

This symposium sought to bring people together in order to share best practice, exchange ideas and explore ways of working together in the future, in order to maximize impact and to draw resources together. Participants were able to share current practice around apprenticeship, work experience opportunities and other pilot activity to support non-traditional students.

Who is the main target audience?

NHS employers, staff engaged in Bands 1-4, college and university staff

The symposium engaged key parties from NHS trusts, local further education colleges, the university's outreach department and academic staff; and members of the Bands 1-4 team from Health Education East of England. The symposium will be repeated to support a review of progress.

What is the practice?

Developing collaborations to support information sharing and the development of expertise

The symposium aim was to share activities and ideas around supporting non-traditional students into NHS careers. One of the outcomes of this has been that all parties have developed a better understanding of a wider range of options open to students. A specific knowledge base has been developed across the symposium partnership which allows for clear signposting for students to opportunities around work experience and apprenticeship schemes within their local trusts, with trust partners and colleges. Partners are able to provide advice regarding entry onto university health programmes and advise students regarding non-traditional qualifications, such as BTEC courses and which further education colleges to contact. The symposium also directly supported the development of a joint health day with a local trust.

What has been the impact?

Coming together has increased both understanding and impact

This symposium provided an opportunity to generate discussion which cut across traditional organisational boundaries and drew in key parties who were responsible for different projects and initiatives. The drawing together of stakeholders was invaluable. Many trusts, colleges and university departments engage with local schools and mature students often attending the same events and targeting the same audience, thereby often overlapping with each other and invariably giving slightly different advice. Coming together through the symposium opened up communication and generated opportunities for partnership working as well as generating a better understanding of the different organisations by each other.

What is the best lesson learned?

Working together increases impact and reach

"The symposium demonstrated that lots of groups are frequently trying to achieve the same things and working together will have the biggest impact."

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Work experience

Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust

Project Aims

Raising awareness of healthcare careers for young people and adults through structured work experience

Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust has a commitment to supporting greater access to healthcare careers from a diverse range of groups.

This commitment includes:

- partnering with a university technical college - working alongside students who are interested in progressing into careers within a healthcare setting
- offering work experience and “master talks” from specialist areas of the trust for 14-18 year olds
- providing placements and supervision for cadets within an acute trust setting for 16-19 year olds
- promoting sixth form work experience and providing taster activity around medical training
- supporting students on relevant university courses during elective placements (nursing, allied health, scientists and medics)
- enabling volunteers to gain experience within various areas of the trust from the Royal Voluntary Service (WRVS) to healthcare assistant shadowing
- engagement with the Social Mobility Foundation, a charity set up in London to provide medical placements for bright under-privileged young people
- running careers day events for Year 9/10 pupils to provide an insight into job opportunities within the NHS
- delivering an eight week pre-employment programme to enable individuals to gain experience and seek employment through progression into the trust’s staff bank.

Who is the main target audience?

Anyone over the age of 14

What is the practice?

Developing a coordinated approach to the set up and delivery of work experience

The trust has developed a new coordinating role to support an increased number of widening participation initiatives across the trust. This commitment has included the development of two new work experience policies to ensure best practice is being followed in all areas. The trust’s work experience co-ordinator has linked in across all work experience projects and has streamlined these, and encouraged the promotion of valuable knowledge exchange to support successful work experience programmes.

What has been the impact?

An increasing recognition of the value of encouraging a more diverse workforce

The Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust believes:

- by recognising the need for a co-ordinating role around work experience there will be a smooth process which all programmes can follow
- the impact then will be to grow a future work force, encouraging and recognising underprivileged individuals
- providing careers advice and opportunities to local schools is crucial to widen access to healthcare careers.

Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust is located in a priority council ward where unemployment is at its worst and has a commitment to supporting opportunities for the unemployed to obtain work experience and prepare for a permanent position in the trust.

What is the best lesson learned?

A coordinated approach to work experience supports success

“Streamlining the work experience processes across the trust has generated efficiencies across the board”

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Work experience for students on foundation studies programmes

Gloucestershire Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Project Aims

[Providing supported work experiences for students with learning differences](#)

To enable students with learning differences to have supported work experience in selected NHS departments.

Who is the main target audience?

[Students with learning differences](#)

This project targets Gloucestershire College's Foundation Studies students with learning differences, who may find it difficult to access work experience or employment through traditional routes.

What is the practice?

[Developing an effective communications framework which recognises individual needs and supports intra and inter organisational communications](#)

This initiative has promoted more effective communication between partner organisations. This was essential to ensure positive and productive placement experiences for individuals with specific needs. This work included close liaison with the Gloucestershire College's Foundation Studies course leads and regular meetings. Email communication plans were also prepared for each individual student.

Each student experienced a tailored intervention which included supported visits, supported work experience (duration depending on ability of student) and the opportunity to progress to independent work experience for an agreed number of hours / days and weeks depending on individual needs. An emphasis was placed on developing close communication with the receiving NHS departments and the sharing of individual learner packs, so the receiving department was fully aware of specific individual needs and preferences early on in proceedings.

What has been the impact?

[Increasing the number of work experience placements whilst maximising the opportunity to make a positive impact on both students and host departments](#)

The Gloucestershire Hospital NHS Foundation Trust work experience initiative for students on a foundation studies course has:

- increased the ability of the foundation studies students to gain work experience
- supported reflection on learning when back in classroom
- promoted the development of core skills - which include independent travel and time keeping and the effective completion of key tasks
- encouraged a growth in student confidence
- generated references for applications for employment
- promoted relationships with the foundation studies department at the local college
- increased willingness from internal departments and external partners to further develop and increase the number of students applying for placements at the hospital.

What is the best lesson learned?

[Developing a young person's capacity for future employment through experiential learning](#)

'Tailoring the programme to the individual is key'

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Work experience programme

Wirral Community NHS Trust

Project Aims

Providing high quality work experience placements for more people

This Wirral Community NHS Trust project sought to increase the numbers of work experience placements offered by the trust in order to introduce more young people to the range of careers available in the NHS, whilst supporting and informing their career decisions. It was concerned to provide really good work experience placements based on best practice with regard to quality control and risk management.

Who is the main target audience?

Typically candidates are Wirral residents aged 16-18

What is the practice?

Building an infrastructure and resources to support effective placement practice

This Wirral Community NHS Trust initiative focused on:

- supporting supervisors to identify placement opportunities in November/December through the provision of clear work experience templates
- a central repository for key placement information including risk assessments
- accessible resources for supervisors available with guidance on the trust intranet
- a planning cycle to support placement availability for early summer when most students are available
- promotion of placements to young people via four partner sixth form colleges during February and March
- one central application and review process to support shortlisting, using established trust application forms
- proactive support for placement development including the provision of detailed guidance and templates for timetables, local induction and evaluation activity
- supporting placement supervisors to develop confidence about what constitutes a good placement
- ensuring the Wirral Community NHS Trust is able to say with confidence that placements are being well managed and are of good quality
- using central placement resources to support the accommodation of ad hoc placement requests, using the same systems as for our planned placements.

What has been the impact?

Increased placement activity for a wider range of students

The Wirral Community NHS Trust has been able to offer more placements to a wider range of students by working with local schools and colleges and their own staff membership. Organisationally, the trust has developed greater confidence in the quality and number of the placements they provide (as information about placements was not previously recorded centrally anywhere). Centralising support systems has also increased flexibility and improved responses to ad hoc placement requests.

What is the best lesson learned?

Careful planning can reduce workload but good work placements require time. This time is a very real investment in the NHS and the community

“Doing work placements properly takes a surprising amount of time... (But staff do get more from providing placements than you might expect!)”

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Assistant clinical technologist apprenticeship scheme

Health Education South London and King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Project Aims

Spread best practice in relation to apprenticeships

This Health Education South London project aims to spread the learning from the King's College Hospital Assistant Clinical Technologist Apprenticeship scheme and seeks to:

- establish the King's Healthcare Science Apprenticeship as a career route of choice for local school leavers, by linking with local schools and establishing open days or 'taster' sessions
- establish a progression route from the current apprenticeship pilot, enabling entry to the Modernising Scientific Careers Practitioner Training Programme (MSCPTP)
- investigate possible links into the community, for example: supporting equipment management or carrying out basic physiological measurement and point of care testing in primary care.

Who is the main target audience?

The project will target school leavers and those without degrees who have difficulty accessing healthcare science careers.

What is the practice?

Preparing candidates for a range of scientific settings

The apprentices are trained to assist with the management, maintenance and use of medical equipment in diverse clinical environments, including the Medical Engineering and Physics (MEP) Department, renal technology, theatres and the accident and emergency (A&E) departments. The transferable skills they learn on this scheme constitute a first step onto a career path in a variety of healthcare and healthcare science related careers.

What has been the impact?

An expansion of apprenticeships in new health care arenas

Health Education South London has seen the expansion of apprenticeships into different areas.

"More people now see them as an exciting and viable career route, offering greater flexibility in training the workforce of the future."

What is the best lesson learned?

Widening participation directly contributes to an increased talent pool

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Clinical and non-clinical pre-employment programme

Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Project Aims

To increase opportunities for disadvantaged groups to obtain placement and employment opportunities across the NHS

Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust supports two pre-employment programmes (PEPs) that deliver employment opportunities to local young people and those who have been previously unemployed, in various clinical and non-clinical roles in areas such as nursing, clinical support work, psychology, pharmacy and administration.

Through the pre-employment programmes the Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust seeks to:

- become an exemplar employer of local NEET / young people.
- use the CSR related KPI to increase the number of young people (under 25 years), who reside in in deprived areas who obtain employment with the trust and who are retained
- source and retain excellent staff
- be a good corporate citizen that supports regeneration in Manchester and in the five local wards that score highly on deprivation indices and indicators.

This commitment is demonstrated through Key Performance Indicators (KPI) at a board Level. This is the first Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) related KPI to be reported at board level at the trust.

Who is the main target audience?

Those not in employment education and training (NEETs) and specific groups who are marginalised and disadvantaged in the labour market

The programme participants are all previously NEET, 70% BME. Some areas of Central Manchester are 40% BME (May 2010 Census) and 20% have a disability or mental health issues. The trust supports lone parents, refugees, carers and care leavers accessing the programme. The programme is thus indirectly acting as a positive action intervention to marginalised, underrepresented groups currently disadvantaged in the labour market.

All programme participants are 'local' - living in the Manchester local authority boundary and in particular, living in wards surrounding the main hospital site in Central Manchester. The five wards adjacent to the trust feature in highest 5% most deprived in deprivation indices.

Recruiting managers are also beneficiaries of this scheme and they enjoy service performance improvements in areas of recruitment as indicated by the time to fill vacancies (significantly reduced) and increased retention. The retention rate for the clinical PEP (15%) is significantly lower than for recruits to the role via 'open employment' (approx. 30%)

What is the practice?

Live work placements with specific training and a guaranteed interview

The principle components of this programme are live work placements, accredited learning, sector specific training and a guaranteed interview. Participants are thus automatically shortlisted, bypassing the short listing stage. The trust receives approximately one-hundred applicants per vacancy.

The clinical PEP includes three weeks (accredited) classroom learning covering healthcare knowledge/skills including infection control and safeguarding. The non-clinical PEP includes NHS specific training including IT programmes relevant to the job. This learning makes the participants a valuable asset to the team and when coupled with on the job experiences, a more desirable candidate at interview.

Vacancies through the PEP are mainly permanent, part or full time and are at various levels, (not just entry). All clinical posts involve an intensive apprenticeship (NVQ 2) on commencement.

What has been the impact?

An increase in the number of individuals from disadvantaged groups obtaining employment and a reduction in staff turnover

Clinical PEP Outcomes for Young People (NEET) from Nov 2012 – May 2014

The number of young local people:

- offered a PEP place 99
- joining PEP 90
- completing PEP 78
- offered job 69 (70% of those who successfully complete PEP)
- starting job 67
- retaining job 24 months 61 (Approx. 10 - 15% turnover*)

(*Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust average for this kind of role is approx. 30%)

PEP participants get an opportunity to demonstrate their skills and potential with no experience or references and thus obtain these for the future.

Outcomes are also qualitative. Programme feedback is monitored and is positive about the learning acquired, placement experience and increased confidence.

Non-Clinical PEP Outcomes for Participants (NEET) from Aug 2013 – May 2014

The number of young local people:

- offered a PEP place 16
- joining PEP 14
- completing PEP 13
- offered a job 11 (85% of those who successfully complete PEP)
- starting the job 10
- retaining job 12 months 10 (turnover not yet calculable)

Recruitment & Retention

This programme demonstrates:

- the trust is sourcing staff via PEP that meet organisational needs. Crucially, the retention rate for the clinical programme (see above) is significantly lower than for recruits to the same role via open employment
- participants and recruits develop extensive knowledge about NHS roles and live within close proximity to the site (no travel costs/time)
- managers and participants have an opportunity to practically assess suitability to the role, which has a much higher reliability and validity rate to standard interview
- staff retention impacts positively on the quality of service and care received by patients and visitors
- lower turnover of staff saves money and time on recruitment for the trust.

Delivery of KPI and Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust Aims

Of the total workforce working at the trust and living in the Manchester Local Authority:

- the number of young people (16-25) with a Manchester postcode employed at the trust increased year on year from 6% (2011 / 12) to 6.5% (2012/13) to 7.7% (2013/14).

Of the total workforce living in the five target wards:

- the number of young people (16-25) living in the five target wards employed at the trust increased year on year from 6% (2011/12) to 6.5 (2012/13) to 12.5%. (2013/14)
- the number of new starters aged 16-24 years in entry level roles (Bands 1 and 2) has increased from 12% to 16% in the three years from March 2011.

This shows that the programmes have significant impact on the workforce profile and on widening opportunities to previously disadvantaged groups and communities.

What is the best lesson learned?

More inclusive organisations are stronger

“The trust believes that providing opportunity, no matter how small, is the key to an inclusive and stronger learning organisation.”

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Employability Hub

South Devon NHS Foundation Trust

Project Aims

Developing a flexible and highly skilled workforce

This South Devon NHS Foundation Trust initiative aims to develop a flexible, highly-skilled and responsive workforce that is reflective of the local community demographic. The recruitment and retention of a diverse talent base is seen as critical to ensure the provision of personal, fair and diverse services; as well as promoting the value of inclusion. This strategy builds on the values of the trust and links to the trust's wider organisational development (OD) plan.

The South Devon NHS Foundation Trust focuses on supporting 'disadvantaged groups' to improve their employability. It aims to provide access to work placements to develop people's knowledge, skills and experience. These placements may pave the way for further training in the form of traineeships or apprenticeships.

Who is the main target audience?

Disadvantaged groups

Including but not limited to:

- people that are homeless
- people who are long-term unemployed
- people in stigmatised occupations (such as women and men involved in prostitution)
- people who misuse drugs
- people with limited family or social networks
- people who are geographically isolated
- protected characteristics that are underrepresented, for example: people with learning disabilities, people from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds.

What is the practice?

Referral from partner organisations who act as intermediaries

People are referred into a virtual 'Hub' by partner organisations from the community and voluntary sector. These partners include Plus (a social enterprise supporting people with disabilities into employment) and the Shekinah Mission which provides holistic support to a range of disadvantaged groups. These organisations have a lot of experience of supporting people into employment.

The eligibility criteria for the Hub are used to assess the level of disadvantage. The determined level of disadvantage is used to prioritise people for placements. People that are high priority on the waiting list will be skills-matched to opportunities that are appropriate. If there are opportunities which require particular skill sets or experience which don't match candidates that are high priority, the opportunity will be matched to others on the waiting list.

The Hub co-ordinator liaises with managers and partner organisations to facilitate work placements for people. The Hub facilitates partnerships with local stakeholder organisations that will be able to refer individuals into the Hub.

What has been the impact?

Life changing

The Employability Hub has already changed the lives of several individuals, for example: one man who was homeless and is now in paid employment. There has also been a large impact on departments who are much more aware of the benefits of traineeships, apprenticeships and work placements as well as challenging assumptions about the capabilities, skills and experience of some of the candidates.

Although established prior to the development of the vision of the Employability Hub, the trust has also had successful outcomes for people on the Project SEARCH programme. The aim of this programme is to secure paid and sustainable employment for young people (18-24) with learning disabilities.

Project SEARCH is one of the Hub's key stakeholders and we aim to build on the success of the programme by extending opportunities to other groups within our local community that are furthest from the labour market

What is the best lesson learned?

Well-designed systems support opportunity

"Systems and processes need to be carefully considered and designed in order not to inadvertently exclude some disadvantaged groups which we are actively targeting."

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Getting into the NHS

Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust

Project Aims

First steps in to care work

The Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust has worked collaboratively with Princes Trust GET INTO programme to deliver Getting Into the NHS to nine young unemployed people. The short term aim of this programme was to enhance the CVs of the participating individuals by providing them with care work experience and a Level 1 Qualifications and Curriculum Framework (QCF) Progression Award (APT). The programme consisted of a two week study block which incorporated fundamental aspects of patient care and personal development opportunities. This was then followed by a two week clinical placement within an acute general hospital. The longer term aim was to assist the individuals in obtaining a career in care.

Who is the main target audience?

Young unemployed people and potential employers

This project focused on:

- young unemployed people who had a desire to explore the possibility of obtaining a career in care
- potential employers for these individuals would have gained experience and knowledge.

What is the practice?

Providing participants with new skills and career resources to move forward

The Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust's programme built on standard NHS safe recruitment checks which were performed to enable the participating individuals to access patient care areas. The individuals received a two week study programme which focused on fundamental aspects of patient care using a blended learning approach. Transferable life skills in basic life support and manual handling were also included. Careers advice and guidance was also given to the group to develop their CVs and increase their skills in completing application forms and interviews. Ward sisters volunteered to offer supportive two week clinical placements for each individual and they ensured they were assigned a mentor during this experience.

What has been the impact?

Participants have been equipped to make informed career choices and get jobs

The trust programme has provided:

- clear evidence of an increase in self-esteem of the individuals participating
- clear insight into the role of a healthcare assistant to enable an informed career choice
- three participants have obtained substantive employment within the trust with two more awaiting interviews.

What is the best lesson learned?

It is important to put in place the building blocks which support career decision making

"A half day visit to a clinical area prior to commencing the programme would have ensured individuals had more realistic expectations of care work from the onset."

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Health and employment positive action initiative

The Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust

Project Aims

Developing a health workforce that reflects the community it serves

This Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust intervention seeks to directly address concerns about the disproportionality identified in workforce equality monitoring reports and support the appointment of more candidates that hold protected characteristics, for example: black and minority ethnic (BME) groups and older and disabled people.

Furthermore this initiative has sought to:

- act as a precursor to NHS pre-employment programmes and direct employment for diverse groups
- aid changing national NHS recruitment statistics that evidence discrimination in recruitment for black and minority ethnic staff (Middlesex University)
- improve equality performance outcomes for Equality Delivery System goal 3.1 (Fair NHS Recruitment and selection processes lead to a more representative workforce at all levels)
- improve the reputation of the NHS as an employer committed to tackling inequalities in recruitment and selection
- advance equality through supporting unemployed people into accessing employment, training and volunteering opportunities in the NHS
- provide next steps for participants through the provision of personal action plans and the registration on NHS Jobs and Universal Job Match
- support progression to further training, voluntary work or employment.

Who is the main target audience?

Those people who are not currently represented in the workforce and those individuals and agencies which can support change

This project specifically targets those defined as unemployed black minority ethnics (BME), disabled and older people. It also seeks to engage with key stakeholders across The Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust, Mersey Care NHS trust, Liverpool Community Health NHS trust and local communities.

What is the practice?

Positive Action

This pilot positive action initiative was developed in the summer of 2013 by Skills for Health Academy North West with the Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust and in partnership with Mersey Care NHS Trust, Liverpool Community Health NHS Trust and Jobcentre Plus. This initiative was tailor made and targeted at unemployed groups where disproportionality in recruitment outcomes has been identified.

This project provides 'identified applicants' with NHS specific job application support. This support includes:

- building communication and team work skills
- understanding job descriptions and person specifications
- how to use NHS Jobs, complete an application form and write a supporting statement
- confidence building and interview skills with the aim of improving applicant recruitment outcomes in short-listing and appointments for these groups.

All participants completing the programme have to complete a personal action plan to map out their next steps and they are tracked and supported post-completion of the course for three months.

What has been the impact?

This pilot programme was developed and delivered to address disproportionality identified in both shortlisting and the appointment of candidates from particular groups in comparison to the number of applications received for employment.

Participants completing the programme progressed into employment, volunteering and further training/support. Feedback from participants was extremely positive. There were twenty candidates who commenced the initial programme and only one early leaver.

The programme resulted in a number of successes including:

- nineteen participants completed action plans
- nineteen participants registered for NHS Jobs
- nineteen participants completed CVs
- three participants progressed to further training
- two participants applied for ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages)
- two participants progressed to voluntary work
- six learners progressed into employment
- Knowsley Council has commissioned and funded an additional programme and delivery for forty residents with local trusts supporting the initiative.

Both external referral organisations/stakeholders and trusts have expressed a desire to roll out this initiative across the North West.

What is the best lesson learned?

[This intervention made a difference](#)

“That putting in place this intervention has resulted in delegates being successful in recruitment and being appointed.”

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New approach to volunteer recruitment

Wirral Community NHS Trust

Project Aims

Increasing volunteer opportunities

This Wirral Community NHS Trust project has sought:

- to increase the numbers of people able to participate as volunteers by proactively developing volunteer opportunities with teams across the trust and then advertising these on the trust website and via local partners
- to speed up the recruitment process and reduce the drop-out rate of potential volunteers between enquiry and placement, and increase retention
- to increase ownership of volunteers by the host teams.

Who is the main target audience?

Potential volunteers include almost anyone aged 16 years and over

What is the practice?

Developing meaningful volunteer opportunity

This Wirral Community NHS Trust initiative has created opportunity to:

- develop volunteer role descriptions with teams, focusing on those things that will add value to the teams as well as the volunteers
- advertise role descriptions, which include information about expectations and the times and days volunteers are needed on the project website See: www.wirralct.nhs.uk
- develop volunteer agreements which provide clarity at an early stage of the process meaning that volunteers are fully aware of the placement they are applying for
- email and text those people in the trust's membership to let them know that new opportunities are available
- have placement supervisors review applications and short list those people they want to interview
- have introduced a volunteer handbook and information pack for volunteers when they accept a placement offer so they have information to refer back to
- evaluate volunteer placements, to help the trust understand what works well and what may be improved.

What has been the impact?

A more systematic approach and greater efficiency

This Wirral Community NHS Trust initiative has created a more systematic approach to generating and filling volunteer placements which has in turn led to quicker placement and more involvement with placement supervisors at an earlier stage.

The main changes have been that, rather than waiting for potential volunteers to make contact, the trust has proactively developed placements based on the needs of trust teams and then promoted these, so that a) potential volunteers know what they are applying for and b) the trust can place people more quickly, thus reducing the dropout rate between enquiry and placement.

Although this new system was introduced in January 2014 (and so still early days) the trust has seen greater numbers of young people applying for placements and has been able to place people more efficiently. Another benefit is that, by involving supervisors at an earlier stage in the process, they have had a better understanding of what their volunteers can do and what they need.

What is the best lesson learned?

Have confidence to make change

“Have confidence! When changing some processes it’s better to implement things that are 85% complete and then refine them than try and anticipate every possibility (and then have to change it anyway).”

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Pre-employment programme

Wrightington Wigan and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust

Project Aims

Demonstrating commitment to the trust's public health and citizenship agenda

Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh (WWL) NHS Foundation Trust have been working in close partnership with Skills for Health Academy North West, Jobcentre Plus Wigan and Wigan and Leigh College to launch a pilot pre-employment programme within the borough which demonstrates a commitment to the public health and citizenship agenda.

This programme is designed to help unemployed adults to move into employment by giving them the opportunity to get back into learning and offering them a valuable work based learning experience within the health sector, which will provide them with an excellent work reference for the future.

After attending an open day and recruitment event in October 2013, coordinated by Skills for Health Academy North West, successful participants were invited to attend a bespoke programme of study at Wigan and Leigh College designed for the healthcare sector, followed by a ten week work placement in a clinical or administration support role within the Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust.

Who is the main target audience?

Local people who are long term unemployed

This pre-employment programme is described as a 'win-win' project for both the candidates and for the employer. The target audience is local people who have been long term unemployed. Unemployed candidates are required to undertake a full time programme of study for four weeks which brings them back into a learning environment at no cost to themselves. The programme gives them accredited qualifications in NHS core skills and the knowledge and skills required before they start their ten week placement in the trust.

Candidates are given an opportunity to undertake a valuable work placement within the trust which, in many instances, opens the door to a career within the NHS. Candidates can 'try out' these jobs and assess their suitability before making any firm commitment. Getting back into the workplace environment promotes self-esteem and gives candidates the motivation, confidence and employability to move forward.

The pre-employment programme is also of great benefit to the Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust and its managers. The programme is free of charge and candidates are supported throughout by Skills for Health Academy North West. There are no salary or recruitment or Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) costs to the trust. The programme helps the trust to meet its public health and citizenship agenda and the trust can 'try and test' recruits before considering them for employment. It also benefits the economy by getting local people back into local jobs.

What is the practice?

Bespoke training programme linked to a health care environment

Candidates attended a bespoke four week full time training programme to equip them with the knowledge and skills to work in a hospital environment. This includes:

- functional skills assessments in maths and English which are carried out by Wigan and Leigh College
- references, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and health screening checks
- the creation of individual job descriptions by host managers
- attendance by candidates at the trust Induction prior to their placement
- Skills for Health Academy North West briefings for managers to give them an overview
- allocation of buddies
- regular reviews for candidates by Skills for Health Academy North West and the trust to monitor progress and ensure NHS values are being displayed.

The programme was publicised in Focus, the Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust's in house magazine, and in the local press.

What has been the impact?

High conversion rates into paid employment

Out of the sixteen candidates who completed the programme fifteen have moved back into employment and eight people have been employed by the trust. The host managers in the trust have been commended for the outstanding support and encouragement they have given to the candidates throughout the programme. This has enhanced the candidates self-esteem, motivation and confidence. It has ensured that the candidates are properly equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to move back into employment. Moving back into work not only benefits the individual but relieves both financial and emotional family pressures improving health and wellbeing in the community.

Comments from trust managers have been extremely positive,

"She has fitted in really well with the team. She has been very enthusiastic from the beginning, willing to help in all situations and has developed excellent relationships with staff and patients".

"He has been an asset to the ward during his time spent here. He has interacted with patients and has a very good understanding of patient needs. I wouldn't hesitate to offer him employment if a position became available".

At the end of the programme candidates are invited to attend a presentation where they received course certificates from Skills for Health Academy North West and the trust. It is the Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust's intention to build on this 'resounding success' and they have agreed to host a further programme in October 2014.

What is the best lesson learned?

Partnership working is a 'win win'

"Successful partnership working creates a win win outcome for employers and candidates enabling local people to get back into local jobs."

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Pre-employment and employment progression pathway (EPP) programmes

Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust *and* Skills for Health Academy North West

Project Aims

Improving patient care

This Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust and Skills for Health Academy North West initiative sought to improve patient care by:

- developing an employer demand led approach to programmes of learning and progression of learners
- widening access to employment opportunities within the trust and the wider sector for local disadvantaged people
- providing a quality learning experience for participants to maximise their potential and meet their aspirations
- improving recruitment, retention and progression of Bands 1 to 4 staff to support recruitment efficiencies.
- contributing to the health and well-being of local people by employing them
- developing robust working partnerships to build capacity and capability of the trust in order to engage in widening access
- supporting the Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) agenda and strategy
- providing an alternative recruitment pathway to meet workforce requirements in the short, medium and long term.

Who is the main target audience?

Unemployed residents in Salford and Greater Manchester

This initiative targets unemployed Salford and Greater Manchester residents including lone parents, those under threat/recently made redundant, the long term unemployed, BME, over 50s, people with disabilities and returners to the labour market.

Key stakeholders include Jobcentre Plus, local community groups and referral partners, senior trust managers, Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust staff at all levels, local Salford residents, training providers and welfare to work providers, NHS Professional (NHSP), recruitment agencies and other Greater Manchester health/NHS organisations.

What is the practice?

Partnership working to support a sector based training programme

The Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust has developed a partnership with the Skills for Health Academy and Salford College. They jointly developed and deliver a bespoke fourteen week pre-employment programme providing participants with four weeks sector based training in college, ten weeks placement within the trust and up to six months post programme support via the Skills for Health Academy Employment Partnership Programme team to maximise the benefits of the programme.

Programme development has recognised the need to identify Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust demand; agree timelines, curriculum and placement options. Recruitment activity has supported:

- promotion of opportunity via Jobcentre Plus
- open days for applicants, applications sifts, diagnostic assessment and interview
- the provision of clear placement details for successful candidates
- the provision of feedback for unsuccessful candidates and information advice and guidance (IAG).

Delivery infrastructure includes:

- disclosure and barring services and occupational health assessments (OHA)
- two references requests
- fourteen week programme delivery.
- interventions at week nine and fourteen by the Employment Partnership Programme (EPP) which provides application and interview workshops and one to one support.

EPP support features include an agreed process to access internal trust and NHSP vacancies for suitable learners, job search, matching and support to apply for both sector and other vacancies and IAG.

What has been the impact?

Fit for purpose systems and candidates are identified and recruited efficiently

This initiative has:

- maximised the Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust's return on investment and supports learners to meet their aspirations
- through the delivery of sector focussed programmes, job search workshops and one to one support for applicants enabled "fit for purpose" candidates to be identified and recruited efficiently
- meant programme completions can be timed to meet recruitment requirements, for example: winter pressures, expansion of services
- provided local people with access to opportunities in the trust with sustainable progression
- generated data for pre-employment programme completers which illustrates the success of EPP working alongside the trust and SFHA colleagues delivering programmes from January 2013 to March 2014
- led to twenty four people gaining employment with Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust and seven people have secured posts with NHS Professional (NHSP), working in Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust.

Statistically:

- seven people have gained employment with other health and social care providers
- seven people have been offered jobs in Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust and are awaiting a start date
- a total of forty one people have moved into employment - with seven more waiting.

Due to the project success the demand from Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust directorates to engage in Skills for Health Academy programmes has significantly increased with new placement areas being offered and from a workforce requirement perspective the model is welcomed by senior trust managers and executives. The trust currently supports over sixty pre-employment placements per annum with agreement to increase this to seventy-five in 2014/15. However, the trust anticipated requirements may well exceed one hundred and twenty per annum.

What is the best lesson learned?

Challenges can be overcome through partnership working

The Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust believes with excellent partnership working it is possible to overcome initial challenges in order to maximise investment and performance. The agreed process to ensure vacancy access is embedded and working well.

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Pre-employment programme for healthcare assistant roles

Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust

Project Aims

Developing a blended approach to work experience and education which creates opportunity for disadvantaged groups

This Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust initiative has sought to engage with its local communities, to support those who have struggled to find employment and who have a passion for working within a healthcare setting. The Pennine Acute Hospitals Trust serves the communities of North Manchester, Bury, Rochdale and Oldham, along with the surrounding towns and villages. This area is collectively known as the North-East sector of Greater Manchester and has a population of around 820,000. The geographical area in which the trust is situated has high rates of unemployment across all ages. The trust is a large employer within the area and through pre-employment programmes it has had the opportunity to engage with those in a locality who may find the usual routes into healthcare employment more difficult, for a variety of reasons. The overall aim of this initiative is to support individuals into employment through offering work experience and educational opportunities in the form of a blended approach and a structured pre-employment programme.

Who is the main target audience?

Disadvantaged groups across the age spectrum located in the North East of Greater Manchester

This project has targeted:

- long-term unemployed people of all ages
- younger people struggling to access the job market in the current economic climate.

What is the practice?

Collaborative working with a range of stakeholders to extend reach and impact

The Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust has worked collaboratively with Skills for Health, the Manchester College and Jobcentre Plus to coordinate the programme, consisting of work placements and college based learning where a Level 1 qualification in health and social care is achieved. The overall aim is to support learners into employment and so learners are then guaranteed an interview for healthcare assistant vacancies at the trust on completion of the fourteen week programme. Due to the geographically dispersed nature of the communities the trust serves, it has been a challenge to ensure engagement across the whole locality. The Skills for Health team engaged with regional coordinators from Jobcentre Plus and delivered a brief to all Jobcentre Plus advisors from across the whole locality. In addition, working collaboratively with trust programme leads the initiative was able to look at the ratio of placements sourced across each patch and attributed these placements to the jobcentres accordingly.

What has been the impact?

A productive start to a first collaborative venture

This is the Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust's first collaborative venture into pre-employment programmes and activity is still developing. However, the trust has noticed that they have been able to engage with clinical areas across the trust, to support this initiative and that both managers and other staff have been very supportive of this as a way of recruiting to the healthcare assistant role.

The trust has been able to offer twenty placements in total, and initially over eighty people attended an open day, following which, sixty applications were then received. The trust appointed twenty individuals in April 2013 and these interns commenced work placements in June after a month in college. The trust believes that this pre-employment programme and approach has been welcomed across the whole trust patch.

On completion of this first PEP programme, of the twelve individuals who completed the course, eight were substantively employed within the trust and four joined the trust bank facility whilst still applying for substantive posts.

What is the best lesson learned?

Innovation is important

“Programmes like this are needed - conventional approaches to recruitment don't work for everyone!”

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Project choice

Northumberland Tyne and Wear Foundation NHS Trust

Project Aims

Providing work based opportunity for young people with learning difficulties or autism

This Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust initiative is designed to encourage and support young people with learning difficulties or autism to get into training or employment through placements supported by the Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust Pharmacy Department.

Project Choice is delivered in partnership with Gateshead College, City Hospitals Sunderland Foundation Trust, Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Newcastle City Council and Sunderland City Council. It offers young people the opportunity to learn new skills in a real work environment.

Who is the main target audience?

This project targets local young people with learning difficulties and/or autism.

What is the practice?

Extensive partnership working with key public sector partners and colleges to support responsive placement opportunity

As part of this initiative the Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust has recruited within its own pharmacy department at St Nicholas Hospital. An intern works at the pharmacy for three days a week on placement and typically assists staff in managing stocks, arranging prescriptions for service users and general administrative duties. The project runs throughout the academic year from September until July and involves interns working at their placements and attending college for one day. The intern is supported by two workplace mentors and a project choice coordinator. Although the internship is unpaid students can apply for a college bursary.

The aim of the internship is to develop a young person's work based skills, improve their ability to work independently. It also gives young people the chance to get experience of being an employee, and develop appropriate attitudes and behaviours for the working environment. Importantly it offers an opportunity for interns to develop an understanding of their skills and strengths and how to do a job properly.

What has been the impact?

It makes interns feel valued and it provides an enabling infrastructure

The Deputy Chief Pharmacist at Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust, said: "The new member of staff has been a real asset to our team. The individual has shown real enthusiasm and has used their experience with us to develop skills and shows interest in the role." And, "We have been so delighted with the individual's progress with us we have extended the placement at St Nicholas Hospital and they now work alongside our staff for three days a week."

What is the best lesson learned?

The Deputy Chief Pharmacist added, "Project Choice has not only helped in developing the individual's confidence in the workplace, it has given us the opportunity to support their goals and future success in training and long term employment."

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Project SEARCH

North Devon NHS Trust

Project Aims

Supporting young people with learning disabilities into the health sector

Project SEARCH is a one year supported internship programme for 18-24 year old students delivered in partnership with Petroc and PLUSS. This specific North Devon NHS Trust project was established in September 2013. Students complete three ten-week placements in the hospital which is described as the 'host business'. Three weeks are allocated at the start of the programme for induction training and there are additional training weeks at the beginning and the end of each rotation.

Who is the main target audience?

Young people who qualify for Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

What is the practice?

A partnership based approach to tackling labour market inequalities through tailored internships

Project SEARCH is an employment focused education programme for young people with a learning disability which originated in the United States at the Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Centre, where it has been running since the mid-1990s, achieving high employment outcomes for disabled people. This model has expanded successfully to a wide range of public and private sector employers, including banks, hospitals, and the 'US Department of Labor' in the USA. There are twenty-four English Project SEARCH sites in the UK.

The Project SEARCH initiative delivered by the North Devon Trust had an average outcome in 2013 of candidates achieving 60% in full time employment (16 hours or more) after one year. The trust is currently recruiting for a second round of internships and any current Interns who are not offered employment will be offered Work Choice (DWP) after completion of the programme See: <http://www.pluss.org.uk/what-work-choice>.

This initiative is delivered in partnership and it is based on open communications with receiving placements and interns. The programme itself has directly supported discussion with placement providers and through ongoing dialogue with the interns it has been possible to develop job roles to ensure interns realise their full potential and are thus able to complete tasks to the standard of a regular employee.

What has been the impact?

The programme has had a tremendous impact on both internal and external communications which supports the achievement of programme and wider trust objectives

"Everything! The communication across the programme teams which make up Project SEARCH which includes Petroc and PLUSS has and is enabling the interns to develop their skills incrementally. The trust is currently looking for job opportunities for the first cohort of students. The trust has seen an improvement with all the participating students."

What is the best lesson learned?

Investing in people makes sense

"Everyone deserves to have a chance to work and these students have all overcome personal barriers to prove they have the ability to work."

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Project SEARCH

Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust

Project Aims

Total workplace immersion with a seamless combination of classroom instruction and career exploration

Project SEARCH originated in the USA where it successfully employed individuals with disabilities in hospitals and clinics throughout the Cincinnati metropolitan area. The Plymouth Project SEARCH programme is a nine month long college to work internship for students with disabilities that takes place entirely within the Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust.

Total workplace immersion facilitates a seamless combination of classroom instruction, career exploration, and on-the-job training and support. The goal for each student is competitive employment somewhere in the community using the skills they have acquired at the trust. The internship provides real-life work experience combined with training in employability and independent living skills, to help young people with disabilities make successful transitions from school to a productive adult life.

Who is the main target audience?

Young people aged 18-24 years

The programme targets:

- individuals between the ages of 18 and 24 years who have a learning disability
- organisations in the community who support individuals with a learning disability
- local schools and colleges
- carers in the local community who support individuals with a learning disability.

What is the practice?

Promoting equality of opportunity in order to provide good patient care

The Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust has strong corporate values and strategic equality aims. The trust believes, "Diversity embodies the principle of fair treatment for all whilst understanding and respecting differences." The trust aims to ensure that the principles of equality and diversity are central to patient care and service delivery. The trust believes that promoting diversity will create an environment in which everyone feels valued and able to give of their best. It will improve recruitment and retention, and employee relations. It should enable every member of the workforce to perform to his/her potential.

It is because of these values that the Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust felt very strongly that by hosting the project the benefits became many and varied and included:

- an enhanced community image
- reduced recruitment costs and improved retention rates in high turnover positions
- workforce diversity
- national recognition for an innovative and progressive approach.

Throughout the programme students build communication and problem solving skills, as well as job specific skills, through worksite rotations. These are unpaid student internships. Potential student worksites are identified through a continuous collaborative process involving the Project SEARCH teacher and a job coach from PLUSS/City College Plymouth, the trust business liaison team and specific worksite supervisors.

What has been the impact?

An overwhelming success in finding employment for interns

The impact of the project has been positive in many ways. The Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust has had an

overwhelming success rate of interns gaining employment both in and out of the organisation, during and following their time on the programme.

Employment success

- 2010/2011: four out of eight interns gained employment (three of these were with the trust and SERCO the trust's contract provider of catering, cleaning and housekeeping)
- 2011/2012: five out of nine interns gained employment (four of these were with the trust and SERCO the trust's contract provider of catering, cleaning and housekeeping)
- 2012/2013: two out of eight interns two gained employment (two of these were with the trust and SERCO the trust's contract provider of catering, cleaning and housekeeping)
- 2013/2014: although this cohort is not at the end of the nine month programme two out of nine interns have already secured substantive employment in Band 1 admin and clerical posts in the trust. These appointments are a direct result of internships and the managers creating posts having realised the benefit.

What is the best lesson learned?

Inclusivity supports organisational learning

"The organisation has become more inclusive of people with all different abilities; many staff have learnt new ways of working through this project."

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Providing resources and opportunities to study and participate in employment through coaching and training (PROSPECT)

South Tees NHS Foundation Trust

Project Aims

Reducing the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) in order to fulfil a commitment to corporate social responsibility

South Tees NHS Foundation Trust's PROSPECT programme is aimed at the local NEET population, specifically those young people defined as not in employment, education or training. It is a key component of the trust's corporate social responsibility commitment and workforce planning agenda. South Tees NHS Foundation Trust believes strongly that as an organisation, it should and can impact positively on the NEET agenda and in so doing increase the pool of talent on which the trust may draw for recruitment needs.

South Tees NHS Foundation Trust specifically identified the experience, skills and professionalism of NHS staff as a key resource to help reduce the number of young people experiencing unemployment and marginalisation in society and in fighting the NEET issue more generally. In a joint venture, the trust's vocational training department and the local Jobcentre Plus (JCP) introduced a fourteen week training programme to provide unemployed young people with the skills and training to support them into paid work and in turn support the trust's recruitment activities.

Who is the main target audience?

Those affected by worklessness and those stakeholders able to support successful transitions into education and employment

The PROSPECT programme takes a two pronged approach, working in partnership with various agencies to help identify NEETS and by encouraging those individuals, agencies and departments who can add value to the agenda to create opportunity and support progression. These stakeholders include recruiting managers within the trust as well as administrative staff, healthcare assistants and a wide range of support staff working in clinical and non-clinical arenas like catering and portage.

What is the practice?

An intensive and extensive work experience programme

The PROSPECT programme provides fourteen weeks work experience in real working environments for unemployed 19-24 year olds (and in many cases 25+). The initiative has placed participants in more than forty different wards and departments since January 2013.

An initial two weeks intensive induction training programme with the vocational training team includes: manual handling, dementia awareness, learning disabilities, customer focus, infection prevention and control; as well as job application and interview techniques.

To date the programme has supported five cohorts, ninety-two clients, of which 75% have successfully acquired permanent jobs through both the trust's apprenticeship and vocational trainee schemes. These placement figures are significantly higher than both regional and national averages for equivalent schemes.

In addition to acquiring qualifications, participants are supported to develop softer skills including confidence, motivation, communication and time keeping. Many participants have found it difficult to get into routines and team working. The PROSPECT programme is increasing employment rates in the immediate geographical area, fitting in within the trust's corporate social responsibilities and its wider community agenda.

What has been the impact?

Developing the right staff with the right values

The South Tees NHS Foundation Trust PROSPECT programme has directly helped to:

- train potential NHS members of staff in the right values
- increase the confidence and morale of participants potentially changing their lives for the better
- increase the potential recruitment pool for the trust
- provide extra support to contribute to the work of teams (departments and divisions)
- combat the local NEET crisis
- share values, skills and professionalism
- develop the future NHS workforce
- provide support and encouragement to people that want to be able to better themselves.

What is the best lesson learned?

Talent is often hidden

“PROSPECT has demonstrated that the NEET population have a lot of skills and qualities that they can offer to the NHS if given the right opportunities and support. The distance travelled by the individuals into employment is longer than we could have envisaged.”

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Recruiting local people as healthcare assistants

Communities into Training and Employment (CITE)

Project Aims

Building a workforce that reflects the communities the trust serves through the design of more effective and efficient recruitment processes

The North West London Hospitals NHS Trust is working with Communities into Training and Employment (CITE) to recruit suitable people from the local community as Band 2 healthcare assistants.

This initiative was developed in order to:

- help the trust workforce to reflect the diverse community it serves
- recruit local people within a short commute, so positively impacting on attendance and punctuality rates as well as flexibility with shift patterns
- help new job entrants to understand their role, the NHS and the trust values so as to be quickly effective once they start work
- save hospital time and resources allocated to recruitment.

CITE designed a bespoke pre-recruitment training programme that brings suitable applicants up to the job entry standards defined by the North West London Hospitals NHS Trust. They then promote this programme and screen candidates for suitability in line with trust requirements. Only those individuals who successfully complete this pre-recruitment course are put forward to North West London Hospitals for interview.

Who is the main target audience?

Unemployed people in North West London suitable for entry into Band 2 vacancies

The project targets suitable unemployed individuals from communities across North West London for entry into Band 2 healthcare assistant vacancies. The profile of the individuals engaging with the project so far is as follows:

- 75% are female
- 57% are aged 25-49
- 25% are under 25 and 18% are 50 years or above
- 57% came from non-white communities.

What is the practice?

Proactive outreach through a network of partners engaged in welfare to work activity who are able to signpost to a single gateway to the North West London Hospitals NHS Trust

CITE reached out to different communities in North West London through a range of networks. These networks included the Jobcentre Plus and other welfare-to-work providers and they provided:

- a single 'gateway' for local people to access the trust
- a screening process for candidates delivered by CITE to ensure they met essential maths and English standards set for the job.

The CITE pre-recruitment course was designed with jointly with the North West London Hospitals NHS Trust and included:

- direct delivery from hospital staff
- core content that would otherwise have been included in staff inductions, visits and an agreed list of qualifications

- agreed criteria for successful completion of the course which had to be met before candidates were put forward to the trust for interview
- a commitment to on-going training for individuals who received a job offer to increase their knowledge of the NHS and how it works and to prepare them for their job start.

This programme was supported by Health Education North West London and utilised government funding for the training which minimised the cost to the trust.

What has been the impact?

A very high conversion rate from job application to job offer

Three cohorts of interviewees have completed the training programme and undergone interviews, resulting in thirty-five candidates attending interviews with the trust and thirty-three candidates received job offers. All candidates have achieved one of the following qualifications either a *BTEC Level 1 Preparing to Work in Adult Social Care* or *BTEC Level 2 Working in the Health Sector*. In addition over three quarters of candidates had a public transport commute to work time of forty-five minutes or less and one third of the candidates live less than half an hour away.

The trust has also established an on-going programme of one course per month for an agreed period to feed into further healthcare assistant vacancies.

What is the best lesson learned?

Local communities, no matter how disadvantaged, provide a rich seam of motivated and high calibre job candidates

“This programme has shown how joint working between the North West London Hospitals NHS Trust and a training organisation such as Communities into Training and Employment makes it possible to identify relatively large numbers of motivated and high calibre people from the local community, who have all the makings of good healthcare assistants.”

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Sector based work academy and traineeships

North Bristol NHS Trust

Project Aims

Supporting young unemployed people to access to employment

This North Bristol NHS Trust initiative's aim is to support unemployed young people to gain work experience and appropriate training in order to access employment opportunities in the health sector. The initiative is currently run with the support of the local Jobcentre Plus.

Who is the main target audience?

Unemployed people

The North Bristol NHS Trust has adopted a sector based work academy approach which targets unemployed people aged 19 years + who will be work ready within six weeks. They have also established traineeships which target 16-18 year olds and 19-23 year olds who will be work ready in five weeks to five months.

What is the practice?

Partnership working with Jobcentre Plus supporting access to opportunity

This initiative involves information sessions at the local Jobcentre where potential candidates are invited to apply for a place on one of the programmes. Candidates attend an interview and undertake a literacy and numeracy assessment to identify support needs and appropriate work experience placements.

Successful applicants complete the North Bristol NHS Trust's corporate induction programme including manual handling and resuscitation training before commencing their placement. Placements can be clinical or non-clinical and are aimed at supporting people to develop hands on experience in a role. To support an individual's on-going development additional training is provided in making applications, team working and dealing with challenges so that participants achieve a Level 1 qualification. Trainees are also given the opportunity to improve their maths and English abilities.

What has been the impact?

By building on existing work experience infrastructure the trust has increased opportunity for young people

The North Bristol NHS Trust believes that by developing existing work experience programmes they have been able to start to bridge the gap between school and employment increasing the options available to young people.

The programme has meant that:

- the majority of the candidates who have completed the programmes in the last year have gained employment in both clinical and non-clinical posts including apprenticeships
- the trust has appointed the first ever payroll apprentice
- as well as obtaining employment, learners have improved in confidence and skills levels and have all enjoyed the experience
- managers have reported good experiences and have found it an excellent way of recruiting into jobs young people who may not otherwise have met the recruitment criteria
- it has increased managers' confidence in considering younger applicants for recruitment
- it has strengthened the partnership with our local Jobcentre and has led to other recruitment work being done in partnership with them
- these programmes formed part of the evidence which supported the organisation in winning the South West National Apprenticeship Award for Macro-Employer 2013 and also the South West Health Apprenticeship Awards for Employer and Training Provider 2014

- the North Bristol NHS Trust has been recognised by achieving Bronze for the Fair Train work experience quality standard.

What is the best lesson learned?

Talent is equally distributed but opportunity isn't

“Young people have a lot to offer and to be given the opportunity to demonstrate this is often all they need.”

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Sector skills academy

Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Project Aims

Cross sector partnership working to support employability agendas

This Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust initiative was designed to engage with Jobcentre Plus, Gloucestershire College and local unemployed young people to increase their employability and chances of shortlisting for apprenticeship opportunities at Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

Who is the main target audience?

Young people

The project targets young local unemployed on Job Seekers Allowance.

What is the practice?

An employer led two week intensive programme of blended learning

The project involved close liaison between the local college and Jobcentre Plus to support the delivery of a joint skills sector academy course over a two week period. This work included agreed programme content, including specific information about Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and other specific employer input during the course.

What has been the impact?

Supporting movement from welfare to work

This project has directly supported a transition from benefits to work for participants. Young people who were unemployed and on Job Seekers Allowance have successfully applied to Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust for healthcare apprenticeship positions and they are currently enrolled on the programme. In addition, the project team believe that they have noticed an improvement in application forms overall and that participants have applied for other positions in care organisations.

What is the best lesson learned?

Effective communications between all partners is crucial

“Effective communications between all partners is crucial”

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Supported internships

Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Project Aims

Developing a more diverse workforce whilst establishing the trust as an employer of choice

This Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust initiative has sought to:

- attract, recruit and retain the best staff
- deliver the strategic aim of developing a diverse workforce
- promote the trust as an employer of choice
- support regeneration in Manchester
- develop the trust as an exemplar employer of disabled talent
- actively deliver on the trust's commitment to employing a representative workforce which impacts positively on patient care
- create a mechanism to support young people to gain diverse skills and experience and achieve a qualification that then equips them for paid employment
- improve staff engagement and morale
- to improve patient experience and attain positive patient and visitor feedback
- to raise the level of expectation and aspiration for disabled young people in all aspects of society.

Who is the main target audience?

Individuals with a range of disabilities and needs aged 18-24 years

Trainees come from a variety of backgrounds with a range of disabilities - moderate and severe learning difficulties alongside physical, sensory and mental health needs. The trainees are either from specialist colleges or are classed as NEET (Not in Education Employment or Training).

What is the practice?

A twelve month employment focused education programme delivered with key partners with paid employment as an objective

The Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust Supported Internship scheme is a twelve month employment focused education programme that enables young, local people aged 18-24 years with disabilities to develop employability skills in a real work place situation, surrounded by other working people. The programme launched in September 2010 and it is now in its fourth year of operation. The Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust acts as the host employer for the programme and provides classroom facilities on-site for the ten trainees who enrol each year. The programme represents a strong partnership and is delivered in conjunction with the Manchester College and Pure Innovations.

Trainees undertake three vocational work placements, lasting ten weeks, across a range of areas. At the beginning and end of each day, trainees attend a classroom session where they work towards an entry Level 3 qualification and discuss their experiences. The placements provide an amazing opportunity to develop and demonstrate talents.

The ultimate aim of the programme is to provide paid employment at the trust or with an external employer for all trainees. The Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust believes that this is what makes the programme 'special' and 'graduates' have gone on to work in a range of jobs including clerical officers, catering and retail assistants, pharmacy technicians and decontamination services assistants.

The Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust has been committed to making this programme a mainstream part of trust business. This has involved fundamental changes to trust policies, procedures and practices. In turn this has enabled the trust to become ever more inclusive and diverse as an employer and public service provider.

Programme sustainability has been a key concern from 2010 and programme development has been focused on supporting this ambition. A programme website was established, [See: www.traineeships.cmft.nhs.uk](http://www.traineeships.cmft.nhs.uk) and this has been a key feature of sustainability activity.

This website has created focus and provided a central platform to provide:

- information to trust staff and external stakeholders
- a hub for information on employer engagement events
- opportunity for working with strategic partners, its supply chain, contractors, local employers and SMEs maximum profile raising opportunity for the programme
- to raise awareness of exit strategies for all current and future trainees.

The Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust Supported Internship project team believe that the most significant action of this programme is the recruitment of trainees by trust managers into paid positions. The programme has resulted in wider changes to trust organisational processes such as induction, training, development and appraisal which illustrate how the programme has promoted wider organisational change. Increased actions have been taken to adapt to a more diverse workforce. The other key component of this programme has been the focus on creating an evidence base which has generated opportunity to mainstream the programme.

What has been the impact?

A high percentage of trainees have gained qualifications and jobs

Cohort Outcomes

- 2010/11: nine out of ten trainees completed their qualification, six out of these nine gained paid employment
- 2011/12: ten out of ten trainees completed qualifications, five out of the ten-gained paid employment
- 2012/13: ten out of ten completed their qualifications. five out of ten gained paid employment
- 2013/14: outcomes on track to hit target of 50% (10 people) into paid employment at both Manchester and Trafford, central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation sites.

Significantly, retention rates are excellent at around 10%, lower than the Trust average.

Workforce

As an organisation employing over 10,000 people there has been a welcome improvement in those declaring a disability. Although the programme is not large enough to impact significantly, the trust believes a correlation may be drawn:

Staff declaring a disability

- April 2011 1.1%
- April 2012 1.3%
- April 2013 1.9%
- April 2013 2.1%.

The trust has noted wider organisational benefits, such as increased staff morale and engagement. A number of trust managers have been recruited acting as 'peer mentors' to other managers and also ambassadors of the programme more generally.

The Supported Traineeship website, launched April 2012 has had over 2000 unique hits illustrating the growing interest in the programme and its outcomes. This development also assists the trust in becoming an employer of choice.

Positive patient experience and visitor feedback has also been a significant outcome. Many emails of support and quotes have been collected to evidence this outcome.

Successful trainees also act as mentors and they have become more independent travellers with improved

confidence. They have enjoyed new social opportunities and relationships. Trainees have become a key programme asset and they have presented at several large conferences and employer engagement events. The dissemination of key programme findings, including strategic communications and the website launch has led to three other large employers developing programmes. The programme has been extended to Trafford General Hospital with Trafford College and Trafford Council as new partners. This has meant there will be an opportunity to support fifty, rather than ten trainees in the in Greater Manchester labour market. Over one hundred people have accessed the scheme and the programme has been recognised by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) as Highly Commended in its People Management Awards 2013.

What is the best lesson learned?

[A commitment to equality and diversity makes ethical and business sense](#)

The Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust believes, "Opening the door to disabled talent makes our organisation stronger".

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The autism project

St George's Healthcare NHS Trust

Project Aims

Preparing students with autism for secure employment

This St George's NHS Trust Education and Development Team initiative is focused on supporting people with autism to gain qualifications and skills to find work. The aim of the project is to provide students with employment skills and to prepare the students to secure, independent, paid employment.

Who is the main target audience?

Those who are disadvantaged in the labour market

This project targets social groups that have difficulties entering employment and specifically those with disabilities.

What is the practice?

Creating life-long learning opportunities

This project is concerned to create opportunities for life-long learning, and support for school engagement in Hands up for Health. Hands up for Health, is aimed at giving young people practical and experiential understanding of their health and safety through the Guys and St Thomas Simulation Team (GSTT) and simulation center. The St Georges NHS Trust Education and Development Team have been working in partnership with a local school, to provide a year's work experience placement for five students with learning disabilities.

What has been the impact?

Creation of real employment opportunity

The project has proved an outstanding success for both the students and the trust, with one of the students gaining employment and another on a long time work trial. Two students have been able to access college courses as a direct result of their experience and one student has attended a number of job interviews using skills and experience gained during his work placements on the project.

What is the best lesson learned?

Everyone has potential

This project demonstrates that everyone has a lot of potential to fulfil and can make a healthy and valuable contribution to society.

"The key to unlocking this potential is inclusion and understanding through these initiatives."

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Work experience scheme

St George's University of London and St George's Healthcare NHS Trust

Project Aims

Tackling placement barriers for disadvantaged students

St George's Healthcare NHS Trust, Education and Development Department, piloted a new scheme in 2014, offering Year 11-12, widening participation spring and summer school alumni the opportunity of a healthcare work experience placement. The St George's Education and Development Department is responsible for liaising with trust teams to find the placements. The St Georges University of London widening participation team are responsible for responsible for participant recruitment, student induction and behaviour standards.

Securing relevant work experience is often a barrier to some students and this is particularly problematic in healthcare arenas as it is a prerequisite for all medical, and the majority of allied healthcare subjects.

The unequal access to work experience opportunities for students from lower socio-economic backgrounds was highlighted in the Milburn report in 2012, University Challenge: How Higher Education Can Advance Social Mobility. In addition, the Medical Schools Council, Selecting for Excellence, End of Year Report 2013, encouraged all NHS trusts to sign up to the PRACTISE scheme, through which health service providers make a commitment to prioritise work experience opportunities for pupils claiming free school meals (FSM) and/or pupils who attend a school with a high proportion of FSM eligibility; and have no family experience of higher education.

Being co-located on a single campus, university and hospital side by side, St George's is in a strong position to utilise and combine their knowledge and expertise of higher education outreach and healthcare provision, enabling both organisations to meet shared objectives regarding community engagement, widening participation to higher education, and access to work experience for students from under-represented groups.

Who is the main target audience?

Summer school alumni

This project targets St George's University of London Widening Participation Spring and Summer School alumni. St George's Widening Participation Spring and Summer Schools are an aspiration, attainment raising and information, advice and guidance (IAG) activity for Year 7-12 pupils.

Students are contacted in Year 11 or 12 and in line with St George's Healthcare NHS Trust aims and objectives, students from Wandsworth and Merton are prioritised.

What is the practice?

Mixed menu of flexible placements

Students are offered a three to five day work experience placement during late July or August (outside of school term time). To ensure participants are fully supported throughout their work experience placement, the St George's University of London Widening Participation Team provide the following:

- financial assistance to ensure students can attend their work experience placement
- a named contact in the widening participation team to support the participant and healthcare professional overseeing them, as/when required, before, during or after the placement
- a work experience induction session to ensure students are fully prepared and aware of their personal expectations and those of the NHS staff/department they will be working with, so they can maximise the opportunity and know how to reflect on their experiences
- a post work experience session to discuss and reflect on their experiences, recognise the skills gained, development that has taken place, and how they can present this when applying for a university course or at interview
- a certificate/transcript of completion.

What has been the impact?

Increased insight into the real world of the NHS

The pilot scheme is being evaluated using feedback from the participants, placement supervisors; and the trust and university programme co-ordinators. Themes are emerging relating to the positive impact of the programme on the students showing that the scheme increased insight into the real world of the NHS, the importance of team work; the value of patient centred communication as well as giving participants an opportunity to reflect on their career aspirations and plans. Discussions are underway to develop the scheme in 2015 adding it to the menu of multiple intervention activities on offer to the university's widening participation spring / summer school students. This will also strengthen the collaboration between St George's University of London, and St George's Healthcare NHS Trust, a key NHS employer.

What is the best lesson learned?

Know your partners

"Shared aims and objectives drive collaboration."

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Apprenticeship drive

Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust

Project Aims

Supporting employability agendas in Rotherham

This project was built on partnership working with Rotherham College of Arts and Technology and the Prince's Trust.

This project set out to:

- recruit a cohort of twenty apprentices onto the Diploma in Clinical Health Care Level 2
- support employability by partnering with the Prince's Trust and accessing a group of - work 'ready' young people
- embed the fifteen standards of fundamental care in the programme.

Who is the main target audience?

Anyone interested in working in the NHS

The project did not tightly define a specific target group but includes:

- school leavers
- college leavers
- hard to employ inhabitants of Rotherham
- anyone wanting a career change.

What is the practice?

Recruitment against 'values and behaviours' using as assessment centre approach

This project focused on:

- running assessment centres, setting up simulation teams, developing resource (NHS quiz and interview format) to recruit on to the programme
- working closely with Rotherham College to design a programme fit for purpose that aligned with the Certificate of Fundamental Care
- a cohort supported by a practice learning facilitator (who looks after students).

What has been the impact?

Very promising early results

The assessment centre process was well received by both candidates and assessors. Seventeen candidates were successfully recruited out of twenty who were offered posts. Positive feedback has been received from both the college and the wards.

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Assistant clinical technologist apprenticeship scheme

Health Education South London *and* King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Project Aims

Spread best practice in relation to apprenticeships

This Health Education South London project aims to spread the learning from the King's College Hospital Assistant Clinical Technologist Apprenticeship scheme and seeks to:

- establish the King's Healthcare Science Apprenticeship as a career route of choice for local school leavers, by linking with local schools and establishing open days or 'taster' sessions
- establish a progression route from the current apprenticeship pilot, enabling entry to the Modernising Scientific Careers Practitioner Training Programme (MSCPTP)
- investigate possible links into the community, for example: supporting equipment management or carrying out basic physiological measurement and point of care testing in primary care.

Who is the main target audience?

Those individuals who traditionally have difficulty accessing science careers

The project will target school leavers and those without degrees who have difficulty accessing healthcare science careers. Engagement includes:

- 14-18 year olds in local schools for apprenticeships
- local 18-25 year old non-graduates (many of whom have fallen out of traditional education routes due to personal circumstances, for example: chronic health conditions, teenage pregnancy, adolescent convictions, caring for family members)
- NHS trusts - ensuring the future clinical technical workforce.

What is the practice?

Preparing candidates for a range of scientific settings

The apprentices are trained to assist with the management, maintenance and use of medical equipment in diverse clinical environments, including the Medical Engineering and Physics (MEP) Department, renal technology, theatres and the accident and emergency (A&E) departments. The transferable skills they learn on this scheme constitute a first step onto a career path in a variety of healthcare and healthcare science related careers.

What has been the impact?

An expansion of apprenticeships in new health care arenas

Health Education South London has seen the expansion of apprenticeships into different areas.

"More people now see them as an exciting and viable career route, offering greater flexibility in training the workforce of the future."

What is the best lesson learned?

Widening participation directly contributes to an increased talent pool

The King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust believes there is a large population of young non-graduates who have fallen out of traditional education routes for personal reasons, who struggle to get back; and on paper would be overlooked, but given the chance they make excellent, loyal members of staff.

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Cadetship programme 2014

Cumbria Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

Project Aims

Creating opportunity to access pre-registration nursing programmes

The main purpose of this Cumbria Partnership Foundation Trust cadetship programme is to provide on the job training in a range of community nursing placements for students who are studying for a Level 3 Extended Diploma in Health and Social Care, provided by the Lakes College West Cumbria at Lillyhall. Upon successful completion of the diploma cadets meet the entry requirements for pre-registration nursing.

The scheme includes a range of placements within West Cumbria where cadets will gain practical experience in a variety of settings and work with a range of health care professionals.

Who is the main target audience?

All age entry

As the Cumbria Partnership Foundation Trust is funding the cadetships there is no age restriction. This opens up entry to older applicants who may have not previously been able to access an entry level jobs/training. There may be a cost associated with the academic qualification but these can be claimed back should the cadets proceed to study higher education.

This project is in development but interest has been high. Enquiries from press releases have exceeded a hundred and fifty and have ranged from pupils about to leave school in Year 11 to mature individuals who have had families but want to develop a career for their future. There have been requests from volunteers within the organisation in addition to administrators who want to change career.

What is the practice?

Effective joint working with education and North Cumbria Acute Hospitals using a collaborative approach

The concept of introducing cadetships to Cumbria Partnership Foundation Trust has been entirely organic and the processes have had to be developed on the run. The trust attended a careers event in late March 2014 hosted by Lakes College West Cumbria and one of their senior healthcare tutors was asked to discuss their clinical skills classroom development scheduled to open in September 2014 at the trust. The trust saw this as an ideal opportunity to offer cadetships in West Cumbria but realised that they would have to move extremely fast to make it happen in time for the academic year 2014/15. At the Cumbria Partnership Foundation Trust Board 'Question and Answer' session (March 2014) they agreed to support the introduction of cadets who would receive a training bursary whilst on placement.

Assistant practitioners and healthcare assistants will support the cadets on their work placements and training will be given to them to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities with regard to sign off. Ward managers and district nursing sisters have all warmly welcomed the introduction of cadets and there is a legacy in the Cumbria Partnership Foundation Trust of some senior nursing staff who started as cadets themselves.

A ten week induction covering basics of health care in addition to testing the student's attitudes, time-keeping, communication, interaction, willingness to learn and team work is planned. Twenty five cadets were selected through a robust interview process.

The University of Cumbria have also been extremely supportive by guaranteeing an interview for the cadets for September 2016 intake to study pre-registration Adult General Nursing. Further work will take place to ensure that the cadets are prepared for interview and the move from further to higher education.

What has been the impact?

Both NHS trusts are anticipating that there will be some significant benefits as a result of sharing resources

The Cumbria Partnership Foundation Trust believes the programme will:

- raise morale within the trusts for Bands 1-4 opportunities
- improve the reputation of the trusts with regard to training courses
- promote collaborative working with the Lakes College West Cumbria, relocating unused medical equipment to make the Lakes College refurbishment budget go further and ensure the experience would be the same as when students are on placement
- generate a huge interest
- be ready for school leavers
- increase use of social media to advertise the cadetships (Facebook, Linked In and Twitter).

“I haven’t met anyone who has said anything negative about the programme.”

What is the best lesson learned?

There is a huge interest and appetite for entry level employment in the NHS

“Never underestimate the response to the introduction of entry point employment into the NHS via cadetships or apprenticeships.”

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Healthcare assistant academy

Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Project Aims

[Developing safe and competent practitioners committed to compassionate care](#)

Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust's Healthcare Assistant Academy is an initiative that consists of:

- value based interviews, assessing candidates' attitudes and behaviours ensuring they are in line with the organisations expectations
- a clear commitment to train new healthcare assistants to be safe and competent practitioners
- a focus on ensuring that all healthcare assistants have the skills to deliver compassionate care that meets the needs of patients.

The current programme and associated knowledge packs address all areas of the National Minimum Training Standards for Healthcare Support Workers and Adult Social Care in England (2013). In the future the academy will deliver the National Care Certificate. The trust is committed to developing a workforce fit for the future.

Who is the main target audience?

Healthcare assistants

The academy provides:

- new healthcare assistants with training and support to underpin an ethos which underlines that they feel more supported and valued by the trust, and have all the knowledge and skills to carry out their role
- wards and departments across the organisation will benefit from having healthcare assistants, who have undergone training in the expectations of the organisation, clinical skills, codes of conduct for healthcare support workers and the National Minimum Training Standards
- patients who benefit from having care provided by healthcare assistants who have knowledge and skills to underpin their practice.

What is the practice?

Value based interviewing to select staff

The Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust uses value based interviewing to select candidates. This includes using practice scenarios and objective assessment. Healthcare assistants joining the trust attend a two week training programme which addresses all elements of essential nursing care including teamwork, spirituality, clinical supervision, anatomy and physiology, pain management, patient care and bed bathing, infection prevention and control, harm free care, nutrition and hydration, patient observations, end of life care, dementia, diabetes, reflection, equality and diversity. The programme is mapped to the National Minimum Training Standards.

Healthcare assistants are provided with a portfolio during the programme and have three knowledge packs to complete during their probationary period. The ten National Minimum Training Standards are divided between the three packs. Healthcare assistants are supported by their wards/departments and the staff development officers who mark the packs.

What has been the impact?

More confident and better prepared healthcare assistants with wider horizons

Since, the academy began in October 2013 almost one hundred staff have attended a two week programme. The feedback from healthcare assistants is that they feel more confident within their role and better prepared when they begin working in the wards and departments. After the two week programme, wards and departments receive staff who have attended the training and who are able to begin applying their knowledge and skills in the clinical area.

The academy has supported staff to understand the importance of their role within the health care setting. It has also given some the confidence and opportunity to consider other roles or academic study.

What is the best lesson learned?

Working with established frameworks provides infrastructure on which to build

“The value of using the National Minimum Training Standards, which it now appears, will form the basis for the National Care Certificate.”

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Health informatics apprenticeship Level 2

City of Liverpool College

Project Aims

Developing a talent pool to support health data collection and management

This City of Liverpool College project was designed to recruit and develop young local people for a new apprenticeship programme in health informatics across Merseyside NHS trusts. The programme was a direct response to the need to develop the talent pool for the growing area of health data collection and management within the NHS.

Who is the main target audience?

Young people and potential employers

This initiative is focused on both the supply and demand side of the labour market, targeting those young people in the age bracket of 16-24 years looking to obtain employment and career opportunities within the health sector; and local NHS trusts that are developing their ability to record and manage data to support patients and clinicians.

What is the practice?

Developing a new, fit for purpose, apprenticeship which anticipates data management needs

This pilot programme was initiated through Skills for Health Academy North West (SHANW) in partnership with The City of Liverpool College (TCOLC) and local NHS trusts. The apprenticeship content of the programme is unique in that it covers ICT and health to ensure that the apprentices are fully conversant with the importance of IT related to a health care environment.

The programme includes:

- targeted recruitment campaigns which have yielded thirteen apprentices
- an intensive block of tuition at the programme start - to give a good grounding in key topics prior to the apprentices commencing work within trusts
- on-going supportive mechanisms to field and deal with issues and concerns raised by the partnership staff.

What has been the impact?

A springboard from college to work

This project has provided:

- access to employment opportunities
- greater communication skills for the apprentices
- networking opportunities, both between various trusts but also for future staff with a health informatics specialism
- a springboard from college to the workplace.

What is the best lesson learned?

Young people represent a valuable and often untapped talent pool

“This project has demonstrated that the skills, values and care that can be harnessed from young, local people for the future well-being of their communities.”

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In-house cadet programme

Blackpool Fylde and Wyre NHS Foundation Trust

Project Aims

Supporting less academic candidates into employment

This Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre NHS Foundation Trust project is due to commence in September 2014. It is aimed at candidates who are less academic and do not achieve predicted grades. Candidates will be supported by a ward/community placement and they will undertake a Level 2 qualification with Runshaw College which includes functional skills. At the end of the twelve month programme, candidates will be given a fixed term contract for six months and actively supported to gain employment as a healthcare assistant within the trust.

Who is the main target audience?

Young people

This project targets school leavers aged between 16 and 18.

What is the practice?

Opening up new opportunity to access the NHS as an employer

This Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre NHS Foundation Trust project aims to recruit young people who wish to undertake a career within the NHS who may not have had the opportunity previously. Each candidate undertakes a placement for two days per week and they have two days in college learning social skills and employability skills. Each candidate is also supported by the trust's professional and vocational team in learning and development and is assigned a mentor whilst on placement. Each candidate undertakes the Care Certificate during their induction period.

What has been the impact?

It is anticipated that the trust will be better able to recruit and retain young people

The Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre NHS Foundation Trust will seek to recruit and retain young people within the organisation and provide a clear pathway for career progression.

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Level 2 apprenticeship programme in care

St Helens College

Project Aims

Widen participation and promote career progression

This St Helens College project is designed to work in partnership with the Skills for Health Academy North West and local employers, to widen participation and allow future progression for those that need it. The close working relationship with all partners ensures that learners get outstanding experiences both in the classroom and with well-trained highly motivated supervisors that support learner needs. The aim is to assess learners to be occupationally competent in the sector and drive ambition to ensure progression is supported whether onto Level 3, employment or higher education. Young people aged 16-18 years old are encouraged to apply if they wish to pursue a career in care. The programme offers highly valuable experiences that support future application to employment or further/higher education.

Who is the main target audience?

Students aged 16-18 years old in Merseyside

This project targets:

- students aged from 16-18 years old in the Merseyside region who have a desire to embark of their career in care
- local care establishments who host these learners on placement and who benefit from these learners being placed
- the Skills for Health Academy North West in terms of training for the future and partnership
- St Helens College in terms of quality placements for learners and collaboration to ensure success for learners.

What is the practice?

Blended educational and work based experience and learning

Key features of this project include:

- the learners are jointly interviewed (where lower entry criteria has been agreed on to widen the participation rates of students)
- learners are taught both in the classroom by lecturers and supported by link personnel from the Skills for Health Academy
- placements are carefully selected to ensure learners who wish to progress into certain career pathways are supported, and regardless of entry level are stretched and challenged
- placements are carefully selected to ensure learners who wish to progress into certain career pathways are supported, and regardless of entry level stretch and challenge
- activities are given to widen opportunity and to enhance the skills of learners on the programme, ensuring learners appreciate the vast responsibilities in their role; exposure to national events such as Dignity Day are built into the programme to enhance best practice whilst in care settings.

What has been the impact?

Strengthened partnership working and enhanced project outcomes

The project has:

- strengthened partnership working with Skills Academy for Health North West as well as with college and employer representatives
- generated three solid years of successful outcomes
- increased the number of males studying and applying for courses

- increased the number of learners holding Level 3 qualifications applying to gain the required experience to strengthen UCAS applications in a competitive field
- added value by increasing the number of learners who enter Level 3 study from Level 2 ,which adds experience, and that adds depth to Level 3 work with the intent to increase grade profiles at Level 3.

What is the best lesson learned?

Communications between partners are key to success

“Working collaboratively and effectively communicating supports young people to success.”

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Pre-apprenticeship programme

Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital Foundation Trust

Project Aims

Supported routes to interview for prospective apprentices

Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital Foundation Trust are working in partnership with two local sixth form colleges to run a pre-apprenticeship programme. The aim is to keep the young person in education and equip them with work ready skills. The programme for Year 12 students enables them to: retake GCSEs (such as maths and English); undertake two AS courses; a BTEC employability skills course, and have one day per week work-placement in the trust. On course completion students are guaranteed an interview for any apprenticeship post in the trust and they are supported through the application process.

Who is the main target audience?

Young people in the local area

This Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital Foundation Trust project targets:

- local students, schools and colleges
- the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust as an employer, plus other NHS organisations who benefit from students having a wider understanding of careers within the NHS and applying via NHS Jobs.

What is the practice?

Developing a blended learning programme and creating a bridge between education and work

The Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital Foundation Trust Pre-Apprenticeship Programme allows schools and colleges to keep the young person in education while giving them invaluable work experience. The student is supported in the workplace by a mentor, within the team they are working for, all of whom have undertaken a mentor training course. The career development facilitator at the trust meets with the students each month and is the main link between the school and trust which enables a good working relationship to be established.

What has been the impact?

Creating new and valuable opportunity for young people and the trust and its partners

One project partner said,

“The programme works and that is evident even at this early stage of its existence. It gives students who, at sixteen, may not cope with a full A level academic curriculum the chance to stay in school and develop their learning, while gaining a real and motivating insight to the world of work. We have seen a choice of routes at the end of the year. One student choosing to return to full A level study, now wanting to go to university. Another, holding more qualifications, is now actively seeking the full apprenticeship route.

It was a brave decision of the hospital trust to enter this partnership and a brave decision of the school governors to run a course that would downgrade some of the data used to judge the school's success. However, both partners agree it was right for the students who entered the programme.

The Government has just announced a new post 16 qualification of a technical baccalaureate. While not identical to our programme, it clearly mirrors much of the philosophy and practice our programme had already set out.”

- Ian Clayton, Principal, Thorpe St Andrew School

What is the best lesson learned?

Education and employment should go hand in hand

“Education and employment for young people goes hand in hand - as a major employer we need to work in partnership with schools and colleges to raise aspirations with local young people.”

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Providing resources and opportunities to study and participate in employment through coaching and training (PROSPECT)

South Tees NHS Foundation Trust

Project Aims

Reducing the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) in order to fulfil a commitment to corporate social responsibility

South Tees NHS Foundation Trust's PROSPECT programme is aimed at the local NEET population, specifically those young people defined as not in employment, education or training. It is a key component of the trust's corporate social responsibility commitment and workforce planning agenda. South Tees NHS Foundation Trust believes strongly that as an organisation, it should and can impact positively on the NEET agenda and in so doing increase the pool of talent on which the trust may draw for recruitment needs.

South Tees NHS Foundation Trust specifically identified the experience, skills and professionalism of NHS staff as a key resource to help reduce the number of young people experiencing unemployment and marginalisation in society and in fighting the NEET issue more generally. In a joint venture, the trust's vocational training department and the local Jobcentre Plus (JCP) introduced a fourteen week training programme to provide unemployed young people with the skills and training to support them into paid work and in turn support the trust's recruitment activities.

Who is the main target audience?

Those affected by worklessness and those stakeholders able to support successful transitions into education and employment

The PROSPECT programme takes a two pronged approach, working in partnership with various agencies to help identify NEETS and by encouraging those individuals, agencies and departments who can add value to the agenda to create opportunity and support progression. These stakeholders include recruiting managers within the trust as well as administrative staff, healthcare assistants and a wide range of support staff working in clinical and non-clinical arenas like catering and portage.

What is the practice?

An intensive and extensive work experience programme

The PROSPECT programme provides fourteen weeks work experience in real working environments for unemployed 19-24 year olds (and in many cases 25+). The initiative has placed participants in more than forty different wards and departments since January 2013.

An initial two weeks intensive induction training programme with the vocational training team includes: manual handling, dementia awareness, learning disabilities, customer focus, infection prevention and control; as well as job application and interview techniques.

To date the programme has supported five cohorts, ninety-two clients, of which 75% have successfully acquired permanent jobs through both the trust's apprenticeship and vocational trainee schemes. These placement figures are significantly higher than both regional and national averages for equivalent schemes.

In addition to acquiring qualifications, participants are supported to develop softer skills including confidence, motivation, communication and time keeping. Many participants have found it difficult to get into routines and team working. The PROSPECT programme is increasing employment rates in the immediate geographical area, fitting in within the trust's corporate social responsibilities and its wider community agenda.

What has been the impact?

Developing the right staff with the right values

The South Tees NHS Foundation Trust PROSPECT programme has directly helped to:

- train potential NHS members of staff in the right values
- increase the confidence and morale of participants potentially changing their lives for the better
- increase the potential recruitment pool for the trust
- provide extra support to contribute to the work of teams (departments and divisions)
- combat the local NEET crisis
- share values, skills and professionalism
- develop the future NHS workforce
- provide support and encouragement to people that want to be able to better themselves.

What is the best lesson learned?

Talent is often hidden

“PROSPECT has demonstrated that the NEET population have a lot of skills and qualities that they can offer to the NHS if given the right opportunities and support. The distance travelled by the individuals into employment is longer than we could have envisaged.”

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Sector skills academy

Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Project Aims

Cross sector partnership working to support employability agendas

This Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust initiative was designed to engage with Jobcentre Plus, Gloucestershire College and local unemployed young people to increase their employability and chances of shortlisting for apprenticeship opportunities at Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

Who is the main target audience?

Young people

The project targets young local unemployed on Job Seekers Allowance.

What is the practice?

An employer led two week intensive programme of blended learning

The project involved close liaison between the local college and Jobcentre Plus to support the delivery of a joint skills sector academy course over a two week period. This work included agreed programme content, including specific information about Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and other specific employer input during the course.

What has been the impact?

Supporting movement from welfare to work

This project has directly supported a transition from benefits to work for participants. Young people who were unemployed and on Job Seekers Allowance have successfully applied to Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust for healthcare apprenticeship positions and they are currently enrolled on the programme. In addition, the project team believe that they have noticed an improvement in application forms overall and that participants have applied for other positions in care organisations.

What is the best lesson learned?

Effective communications between all partners is crucial

“Effective communications between all partners is crucial”

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Access programme for healthcare assistants

Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Trust

Project Aims

Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Trust is working in partnership with University of West of England (UWE) and Weston College to develop an Access to Higher Education course for new and existing healthcare assistants, who undertake a Band 2 development programme.

Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Trust wants to develop a progression programme for staff who do not currently meet the academic entry requirements, to directly enter a pre-registration programme.

Who is the main target audience?

Healthcare assistants

The project will target existing and new healthcare assistants.

What is the practice?

Currently, all new healthcare assistants undertake a twelve month development programme as part of their induction into the Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Trust. This development programme is also available to existing healthcare assistants within the organisation. The main focus of the programme is to improve patient care and the patient experience, clinical skills and values/ behaviour of staff.

The trust is currently working with University of West of England and Weston College to develop bolt on modules to bring the standard of the programme up to an equivalent to an Access to Higher Education qualification. University of West of England have agreed to ring-fence undergraduate places specifically, for Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Trust graduates on this programme in 2015 / 2016 and onwards. The trust is hoping to launch the programme in September 2015.

What has been the impact?

Well attended and successful Band 2 development has improved care delivery

A Band 2 development programme has been running for two years and this has been extremely successful, 'well attended and a well evaluated programme.'

The Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Trust has seen a marked improvement in the standard of care being delivered by this workforce. This new opportunity will allow some of the exceptional healthcare assistants to progress on and become exceptional registered nurses.

What is the best lesson learned?

Partnership challenges are surmountable

"Partnership working can be challenging at times, however when we are all trying to achieve the same goals, these challenges can be easily overcome."

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Access to higher education course

Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust

Project Aims

Providing access to access

The Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust began running a health access course in September 2012. The purpose of the course was to enable support staff in the Western Sussex Hospitals Foundation NHS Trust to complete an Access to Higher Education course at the local college that would provide a Level 3, sixty credit access qualification. This qualification would then enable students to apply for professional courses within the health sector. This project recognised courses, such as nursing, that are degree led are frequently inaccessible for staff who may have the knowledge and experience required but do not have the relevant qualifications to allow them to apply for a professional training course.

Prior to the development of this course the trust supported the Open University K101 course but it was felt that this did not adequately prepare staff for the academic requirements of a degree course. The trust's Access to Higher Education course was developed with the local further education college and was designed to meet the unit requirements of courses such as nursing.

Before planning the course the trust consulted local universities about course content. The course units included: study skills, an independent project, biology, anatomy, introduction to physiology, sociology and mental health. The course consisted of a mixture of assessments, exams, laboratory assessments and presentations.

This access course opens up progression routes and the Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust also offers sponsorship to some individuals to complete nursing, occupational therapy and physiotherapy degrees. The impact of the course has been huge. It has given people who thought they would never have a chance of completing a degree the opportunity to see their ambitions come true.

As nursing, and other professions, became degree courses the trust realised that some staff wouldn't be able to progress in their careers and complete professional training. This course allows this progression to happen. As well as supporting individuals the trust is also considering the future workforce and skill mix. Staff who train locally, who have families nearby and children in local schools, are more likely to remain in the trust for the rest of their careers. This project has demonstrated to the local community and staff in the trust that the trust is an organisation that cares about its staff.

Who is the main target audience?

Any member of staff

This course is open to any members of staff, working in any department across the trust. Participants have included members of sterile services departments, porters, laboratory administrators and a paediatric secretary. The course is not just available to healthcare assistants.

The ethos of the Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust is to always encourage staff to complete relevant courses and qualifications. The trust believes that this demonstrates that they care about all staff and their personal development and also that they want patients to be looked after by staff who have a high level of knowledge and skills.

What is the practice?

Evaluative through formative, process and summative assessment

This initiative includes a joint evaluation midway through the first course, and again at the end of the course, with the college to measure the students' progress. This evaluation process looks at key milestones, levels of achievement and the number of passes, merits and distinctions etc.

Changes were made in response to this evaluation throughout the course and some assignments were replaced with exams and oral assessments to take some pressure off workload. All students are working whilst completing this course. The first course was delivered twice a month and the subjects were taught. Following an initial evaluation it was decided due to the workload that the lessons should be increased to weekly. This was supported by the college and the trust managers.

From a review of the student feedback, the 2013 course, was adapted but kept at the same academic level. Staff are interviewed before they can start a course and their maths and English is tested. If they fail to achieve Level 2 they are not accepted onto the course and are advised and supported to complete Level 2 maths and English, so they can re-apply again for a future course.

As part of the application process the trust ask applicants to complete a sociology assignment and a piece of work entitled, 'Defence Against Pathogens', as well as assessing their suitability and capability to complete the course; this assignment also allows the potential students to see what level the expected assignments are pitched at. All students are interviewed. Part of the interview focuses on how applicants intend to manage study and juggle work and home life, as most of the applicants care for their families. Giving accurate information about the course demands is essential for a fair evaluation of the commitment required.

The Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust has already considered how the September 2014 course will be run. As the biology and science aspect of the course is the area that most of the students struggle with it has been arranged to run a pre-science course over the summer. So when the students start they will have the basics in place and will hopefully be able to cope with the assignments and assessments well. The trust will also complete evaluations mid-course with all of the current students to consider if there are other things that should be delivered differently next year. The trust is committed to giving students the best possible support to complete the course and progress.

What has been the impact?

Clear student academic and professional development

Seven out of the thirteen students that completed the first access course in June 2013 have started professional courses including nursing, operational department practice and occupational therapy. For those that haven't started their professional courses this project has given them the confidence to apply in the future. As well as providing qualifications this programme has also given greater knowledge to staff, dealing directly with patient care.

Ten new members of staff who have just completed the second access course and have been accepted onto further professional qualifications.

What is the best lesson learned?

Evaluation pays

"This project underlines the value of ongoing evaluation. It allows organisations to evaluate and adapt in order to prepare staff in the best possible way to achieve their ambitions."

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Clinical re-enablement

Wakefield College and Harrogate Foundation Trust

Project Aims

Better integrated working to free up acute beds

This Harrogate Foundation Trust project was developed in two pilot phases, initially over a six month and nine month period in partnership with Wakefield College. The pilot activity was designed to provide a programme to train an identifiable group of people, both clinical support staff and carers, who could facilitate and support discharge from primary to secondary care, working with a range of healthcare professionals to ensure that the individuals needs are assessed and managed during the process.

The project was also concerned to ensure that staff would also work with carers and families to support their knowledge of condition management. The overall return on investment was to free up acute beds more effectively.

Who is the main target audience?

Healthcare assistants and carers

The project primarily targeted healthcare assistants but was designed to impact on other care providers in a wider family or community setting

What is the practice?

The pilot activity took place in two blocks –initially over six months but then extended to nine months to support on the job assessment. Wakefield College undertook course assessments in partnership with trust staff. The trust is planning to deliver a new programme late in 2014 to build on project learning.

What has been the impact?

A new accredited role at Level 3

The project has resulted in a new role being created using an accredited Level 3 framework. This was delivered in a tight timeline as requested by the Harrogate Foundation Trust. Wakefield College worked in conjunction with trust specialist nurses to ensure that training integrated trust practices and procedures. The candidates were then able to secure a Band 3 role.

What is the best lesson learned?

You learn more working together

"I have been moving and handling for years now and until the healthcare assistant worked with me I never understood why it is done this way." Carer involved in the project

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Development of a dietetic assistant in eating disorders

Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust

Project Aims

[Job re-evaluation to support job development and increased clinical contact time for patients](#)

This Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust project involved:

- a job planning exercise for specialist dietitians that revealed a number of tasks that did not require direct input from a registered clinician. These tasks were reducing the amount of clinical contact time available for patients
- an assessment of the dietitian's role within a specialist service which is fully integrated into a multidisciplinary team.

Specialist dietitians are responsible for the safe restoration of patient body weight, and this also includes nutritional psycho-education and delivering food services.

This project culminated in the development of a dietetic assistant post (Band 3) which took responsibility for many of the non-patient contact tasks and supported more quality interventions with patients.

Who is the main target audience?

[Healthcare support staff](#)

There is an established history of assistant posts within the allied health professions workforce but for dietetics this is still relatively new.

What is the practice?

[Support and supervision from specialist dietitians within a national training framework](#)

Throughout this programme the dietetic assistant post was closely supervised by a specialised dietitian. Due to the service user profile, it was also necessary to limit patient contact. The dietetic assistant post has a close alliance with nursing and ward staff to enable good communication and joint working.

This programme accesses the British Dietetic Association tailored training for assistant/ support workers. As well as clinical skills, for example: communication, group work these courses provide an opportunity for dietetic assistants to learn from each other and develop professional skills.

What has been the impact?

[Developing staff and the patient experience](#)

The main programme outcome has been a significant increase in completed projects, for example: production of a new menu without a negative impact on clinical contact time with patients. This project has improved the overall patient experience and contributed to individual recovery. Until recently there has been a real scepticism over whether unregistered, non-specialised staff can operate within a highly specialised integrated model. So far, the project has demonstrated this can work well, following appropriate guidelines and professional boundaries.

What is the best lesson learned?

"This project demonstrates inclusion of non-registered staff increases the quality of patient care within a highly specialised service."

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Health and social care foundation degree

Oxford Brookes University

Project Aims

[Meeting the demands for a future health and social care workforce](#)

This Oxford Brookes University Foundation Degree (FD) was designed with local NHS and social care partners. It meets the needs of local providers for their Band 4 workforce development and commitment to improvements in patient care.

Who is the main target audience?

[Healthcare assistants](#)

This initiative targets:

- healthcare assistant staff at Band 3
- local employees in social care
- patients receiving cross professional care from assistant practitioner experts.

Competencies have been designed to meet the needs of each individual practice area.

What is the practice?

[Course structure is mapped against existing qualification frameworks to support progression](#)

The first two years of the foundation degree have been mapped against the NMC nursing year one outcomes. A graduate of the foundation degree can apply to enter year two of the nursing degree.

What has been the impact?

[Real progression opportunity for staff who may never have contemplated degree level study](#)

This initiative has been really positive and:

- most graduates have been retained as Band 4 assistant practitioners, however a number have moved into a nursing degree having never thought they could study at this level
- for applicants to the nursing degree, who do not have A levels or an Access to Higher Education course, it gives them a good route into higher education
- the programme has enabled students to study in a structured, supported way and gives them a slower four year route through a nursing degree
- for some, it gives access to the start a three year degree, if they are not ready to step right into the year two of the degree
- flexibility has been key.

What is the best lesson learned?

[Collaborative working provides real rewards for partners and is great benefit to patients](#)

“This project has demonstrated working with local partners to achieve what is best for the local workforce is of great benefit to patients.”

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Healthcare assistant academy

Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Project Aims

[Developing safe and competent practitioners committed to compassionate care](#)

Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust's Healthcare Assistant Academy is an initiative that consists of:

- value based interviews, assessing candidates' attitudes and behaviours ensuring they are in line with the organisations expectations
- a clear commitment to train new healthcare assistants to be safe and competent practitioners
- a focus on ensuring that all healthcare assistants have the skills to deliver compassionate care that meets the needs of patients.

The current programme and associated knowledge packs address all areas of the National Minimum Training Standards for Healthcare Support Workers and Adult Social Care in England (2013). In the future the academy will deliver the National Care Certificate (when it is available). The trust is committed to developing a workforce fit for the future.

Who is the main target audience?

[Healthcare assistants](#)

The academy provides:

- new healthcare assistants with training and support to underpin an ethos which underlines that they feel more supported and valued by the trust, and have all the knowledge and skills to carry out their role
- wards and departments across the organisation will benefit from having healthcare assistants, who have undergone training in the expectations of the organisation, clinical skills, code of conduct for healthcare support workers and the National Minimum Training Standards
- patients who benefit from having care provided by healthcare assistants who have knowledge and skills to underpin their practice.

What is the practice?

[Value based interviewing to select staff](#)

The Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust uses value based interviewing to select candidates. This includes using practice scenarios and objective assessment. Healthcare assistants joining the trust attend a two week training programme which addresses all elements of essential nursing care including teamwork, spirituality, clinical supervision, anatomy and physiology, pain management, patient care and bed bathing, infection prevention and control, harm free care, nutrition and hydration, patient observations, end of life care, dementia, diabetes, reflection, equality and diversity. The programme is mapped to the National Minimum Training Standards.

Healthcare assistants are provided with a portfolio during the programme and have three knowledge packs to complete during their probationary period. The ten National Minimum Training Standards are divided between

What has been the impact?

More confident and better prepared healthcare assistants with wider horizons

Since, the academy began in October 2013 almost one hundred staff have attended a two week programme. The feedback from healthcare assistants is that they feel more confident within their role and better prepared when they begin working in the wards and departments. After the two week programme, wards and departments receive staff who have attended the training and who are able to begin applying their knowledge and skills in the clinical area.

The academy has supported staff to understand the importance of their role within the health care setting. It has also given some the confidence and opportunity to consider other roles or academic study.

What is the best lesson learned?

Working with established frameworks provides infrastructure on which to build

“The value of using the National Minimum Training Standards, which it now appears, will form the basis for the National Care Certificate.”

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Healthcare assistant training

Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust

Project Aims

[A blended mixture of on the job training and education to support the development of high quality care](#)

This Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust project involves healthcare assistant applicants who successfully complete a values based recruitment process, being offered employment in Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust. It is not essential for applicants to have healthcare related experience or qualifications as the trust provides this as soon as the new entrant commences employment. All new healthcare assistants without a vocational qualification in care are required to complete a healthcare assistants Level 1 programme which must be completed within three months. This programme aims to provide new staff with the knowledge and skills to enable them to deliver fundamental nursing care with privacy and respect, whilst achieving a Qualifications and Curriculum Framework (QCF) Level 1 Progression Award.

Who is the main target audience?

Healthcare assistants

Healthcare assistants Level 1 training is delivered to all newly appointed healthcare assistants without vocational qualifications. Progression opportunities are then provided to enable healthcare assistants to progress onto a Qualifications and Curriculum Framework (QCF) Level 2 qualification. The trust also provides the opportunity for progression to Level 3 Diploma in Clinical Healthcare in partnership with a local college utilising the South West Learning 4 Health Platform.

What is the practice?

Developing minimum standards through benchmarking nationally

The healthcare assistant Level 1 programme has been mapped to the National Minimum Training Standards released by DOH and Skills for Health in 2013. The Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust therefore, has assurance that all healthcare assistants meet these standards as a minimum.

The training programmes at all levels provide clear evidence of competence of staff.

What has been the impact?

Enhanced care and career prospects

The Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust reports that healthcare assistants feel supported in developing the knowledge and skills required to perform their role efficiently and effectively to ensure patient safety. Healthcare assistants are provided with career progression opportunities, which enhance the care they are able to deliver. This training also enables staff them to recognise a deteriorating patient promptly and initiate alerts to more senior staff. The training is well evaluated by hospital sisters, charge nurses and the healthcare assistants themselves. It is recognised by the trust that this training improves patient care and increase the confidence of healthcare assistants.

What is the best lesson learned?

Values underpin training and create an appetite for learning

“Existing qualifications are not required if staff have the appropriate values and training support is available.”

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Increasing and widening participation into the health and social care workforce

City College Plymouth

Project Aims

Creating fair access to education and training to improve the quality of care

City College Plymouth is committed to widening access to education and training for minority groups with a view to further increasing the diversity of those staff employed throughout the health and social care sector; and in so doing helping to ensure the workforce better reflects the community it serves.

Through a series of general and informal observations in the local community and workplace, it became apparent to City College Plymouth that many of the adults with English as a second or subsequent language were in fact, engaged in low paid care work - having little or no previous experience and no formal qualifications. Many of these workers had had no real opportunity to progress and/or learn specific skills which could contribute to raising the quality of standards in care.

Who is the main target audience?

Minority groups with English as a second language

This project targeted care workers who were typically employed on casual contracts lasting only a very short period of time and who had had little or no access to education and training. City College Plymouth recruitment events and open days highlighted the fact that many of the adults, who hoped to apply for initial entry onto introductory level vocational training programmes were often at a disadvantage because of their lack of English speaking skills. They were therefore, less likely to secure a voluntary work placement, due to the fact that they were unable to communicate effectively. A high proportion of these adults demonstrated a keen interest in gaining employment in the care sector but realistically they were at significant risk of being exploited and or confined to menial jobs.

What is the practice?

First step care qualifications with embedded English language support

City College Plymouth recognised that growing numbers of health and care service users across the city had cultural origins from throughout Europe and/or internationally. It was therefore decided to pilot an introductory programme for adult health and social care with integrated English language support. From the outset of this programme students were able to motivate each other, improve their language skills, practice basic care skills via voluntary placements across the health and social care community and finally achieve their first nationally recognised qualification.

What has been the impact?

New learning and increased understanding

The initial pilot results have been positive. The project most importantly attracted:

- adults who previously applied for any casual care work because it was available
- unqualified adults who were attractive to employers because they were 'cheap' to employ
- adults seeking to improve their English and achieve their first paid position with a real opportunity for gaining nationally recognised quality training with long term career prospects within the care industry.

There has also been a cross-cultural dimension to this pilot work. City College Plymouth has been able to consider the value of the skills and expertise of those students who have already been introduced to the basic skills and training, underpinning care in their own country of origin, and who wish to share these skills with others while continuing their own educational and professional development, here in the UK.

City College Plymouth has therefore, proposed two unique strategies to take this pilot activity forward:

- existing 16-18 year old learners in Devon were given the opportunity to communicate and collaborate with students in France who were enrolled upon comparable health and social care programmes, which reflected their own learning in terms of curriculum, placement and practical skills training
- the UK based learners were given the opportunity to learn French and to attend a two week residential care placement in order for them to identify good practice, learn and develop new skills and extend language/vocabulary
- all participants were supported to recognise that innovative practice can be observed and re-applied elsewhere for the benefit of service users for example: dementia care and reminiscence. In tandem the French students also had the same opportunity.

City College Plymouth then considered extending this experience to those who wished to continue their learning journey and professional skills development here in the UK. As a result of this activity a new top-up programme (subject to funding) has been initiated to provide successful French students with Level 3 Diploma equivalencies, with a unique opportunity to achieve a further UK nationally recognised qualification, while attending a specialist clinical/care placement and improving their English language.

The advantages of this are that it helps:

- to provide an opportunity for understanding vocational language and terminology development in the context of real working life within the confines of the UK Health and Social Care Sector
- to prepare those who are intent on seeking work in the UK, within the industry, a real life working/study experience
- to gain practical experience of working within UK Care Quality Guidelines, legislation and safeguarding parameters
- to provide evidence to support individual CPD in country of origin
- to facilitate HE entry via UCAS profile or other progression routes.

City College Plymouth reviewed progression onto external higher education programmes in health and social care as part of this pilot work. They again identified a pattern i.e. that those who typically progress onto some form of higher education study are usually 18-19 years of age, independent, able to secure a full loan, but more likely to move away from the city in the longer term thus taking their knowledge and skills with them. City College Plymouth realised that students needed opportunities to gain employment in the city and wider community but also recognised that there was a potential barrier, as it was likely that this profile of learner would be unlikely to apply for higher education at the expense of gaining employment. It was also acknowledged that many adults attending part time vocational courses were also unlikely to access higher education study for similar reasons.

What is the best lesson learned?

Fairer access can extend the local labour pool

City College Plymouth is currently proposing a new foundation degree which recognises that many of the existing higher education courses are arguably 'too narrow' in focus and therefore, those who apply are somewhat restricted by the modules and/or options presented to them, as they tend to be 'engineered' to support a specific special field or organisation in the health sector. City College Plymouth wanted to encourage learners who have historically fitted the widening participation profile. In order to do this they recognised the need to review course structure and content.

To address this, City College Plymouth decided to construct a new foundation degree (*pending) which would offer a more generic and significantly broader curriculum to appeal and increase the diversity of those students applying. City College Plymouth are particularly concerned to attract those working in smaller independent care settings and to develop a more holistic approach to dedicated research in the field - which should be driven by autonomous interest in that area of health as opposed to being driven solely by health and social care directorates needing to fulfil set staffing objectives.

City College Plymouth is passionate about providing health and social care provision which not only meets the demands of local employers in terms of a skilled workforce, but in supporting the development of a qualified and skilled workforce, with people who are truly representative of the community they serve.

City College Plymouth is committed to the philosophy and principles of a Gazelle College which aims to provide students with opportunities to gain and develop general employability skills through volunteering, enterprise and opportunity. City College Plymouth believes employers are reassured that students demonstrate fundamental skills that contribute to a positive profiled employee. These attributes fully endorse the ethos of widening participation and equally ensures that opportunities in the vocational field of employment are indeed possible to all learners who demonstrate commitment.

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Introduction of further education health and social care students for work shadowing

The Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust

Project Aims

[Encouraging access to health care careers through engaging work shadowing opportunity](#)

This Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust project supports students from a health and social care course at a local further education college to work shadow in clinical areas; to observe care delivery and to be exposed to the clinical environment.

Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust is working with a local college to provide placements for local students. This project is in its infancy and it has just completed the first cohort of three students. Their experience will be evaluated and this will be the subject of a joint meeting with the college to improve the experience for both the student and to benefit the clinical areas.

Who is the main target audience?

[Students in further education](#)

This Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust project targets local further education providers and students on health and social care courses.

What is the practice?

[Blended learning in clinical settings with exposure to nursing students](#)

The students are inducted to the Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust and then the clinical areas. They are invited to participate in clinical teaching sessions provided for undergraduate nursing students. This means that the work experience students will benefit from interactions with students already undertaking nurse education.

This is the first time that the trust has entered into work shadowing agreements with the local college and they will be working on feedback from the clinical areas and students themselves to improve the experience and provide a more structured approach to the placement. In the future the trust wants to rotate the students and provide specific education experiences for them in different clinical areas. This project will have a wide impact as the trust has recently identified a specific trainer for staff Bands 1-4 who will also manage this work shadowing project and move this work forward for the future.

What has been the impact?

[Positive relationship building](#)

The project has supported:

- closer relationships with local community
- exposure of students to the real NHS environment
- positive patient experience as students had time to talk with patients.

What is the best lesson learned?

[Build strong partnerships they are the foundations for joint working](#)

“Partnership needs to be strong between the colleges and the trust to ensure a safe and worthwhile learning experience.”

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Investing in our healthcare assistants

Nottingham University NHS Trust

Project Aims

Better prepared healthcare assistants better care

This Nottingham University NHS Trust initiative is concerned to better prepare healthcare assistants for their role. This investment is also designed to have a positive impact on the care, compassion and patient safety agenda.

The project includes:

- values based recruitment
- the raising of standards in relation to recruitment of this staff group, particularly in relation to the compassion agenda which will help ensure the trust recruits the right people to the right jobs
- the raising of educational standards for entry due to the demanding nature of the healthcare assistant role and an increasing responsibility in relation to recording keeping, fluid balance etc
- a commitment to educate healthcare assistants to a high standard preparing them for their role using a modular three week programme at the Nottingham University Hospitals (NUH) Healthcare Assistant Clinical Skills Academy
- the Essence of Care Benchmarks (2010) for module content, plus extra appropriate training, for example: Alzheimer's training, human factors, accountability and record keeping, role of the coroner etc. which are classroom based
- identifying a clear career pathway for healthcare assistants
- providing formal support networks for healthcare assistants, including preceptorship and clinical supervision.

Who is the main target audience?

Health care assistants and clinical support workers

The project targets all healthcare assistants/clinical support workers new to the trust as well as a rolling programme for existing staff to access the skills academy and preceptor training.

What is the practice?

A centralised recruitment system and common training programme

This programme includes:

- the provision of the NUH Healthcare Assistant Clinical Skills Academy, a three week training programme for all new healthcare assistants/clinical support workers (which has to be completed prior to starting in the clinical area); with a rolling programme to ensure existing staff also complete the programme
- a centralised recruitment process for healthcare assistants which ensures consistency, by using values based recruitment and which aims to identify candidates with compassion, and the values and behaviours expected for working with patients
- the introduction of a formal preceptorship for all healthcare assistant and clinical support workers which is aimed at increasing support for new healthcare assistants
- the training of experienced healthcare assistants to be preceptors, which presents them with a valuable development opportunity
- the promotion of clinical supervision for all healthcare assistants, as this is currently a support mechanism which is not widely used for this staff group
- identifying a clear career pathway for healthcare assistants, starting at apprenticeship level to support national initiatives to widen access to healthcare professions and offer development opportunities.

What has been the impact?

Positive feedback on a number of fronts

Managers have reported a high calibre of new staff, particularly in relation to values and behaviours, ability and motivation. Managers also feel that the three week skills academy provides healthcare assistants with excellent grounding, and they have commented how better prepared staff are when they start in the clinical areas. The values and behaviours training underpins all modules and staff are clear on the Nottingham University NHS Trusts 'zero tolerance' to poor attitudes.

This initiative has impacted on many other trust initiatives, for example 'Mealtimes Matter' where staff receive a full day's training on nutrition, the 'Take the Pressure Off' campaign relating to tissue viability. Participants also receive a high level of training and fully understand the importance of regular pressure area care, skin checks etc. Training relating to End of Life Care is also high on the national agenda and the trust ensures all healthcare assistants receive a high level of education relating to this, delivered by experts in this area. The Nottingham University NHS Trust ensures that all staff are fully aware of the Francis Report to enable them to understand how this has impacted on care standards and national initiatives.

What is the best lesson learned?

Invest to save

"The investment in our healthcare assistants is reaping huge rewards!"

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Language and cultural awareness

South Devon Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

Project Aims

Providing an enabling infrastructure to support intercultural understanding and the acquisition of key vocabulary

This South Devon Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust project provides support for healthcare staff in the form of special induction days as well as more in-depth workshops which cover aspects of the cultural differences international staff may encounter from patients and colleagues, pronunciation difficulties, functional NHS English and coping with the phone. One to one support is provided where necessary and signposting to other sources of support.

Who is the main target audience?

Patients and international staff

This project targets:

- patients
- international staff - both established and new to the organisation
- colleagues of international staff.

What is the practice?

Active listening and engagement to promote understanding and problem resolution

South Devon Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust believes it is crucially important to actively listen to the challenges overseas healthcare staff face, taking into account patient/relatives complaints to PALs and/or line managers concerns, or those expressed by other colleagues or international staff themselves. The General Medical Council, Nursing Midwifery Council and human resources departments have expressed concern at the increasing numbers of overseas staff being referred to panels or being removed from registers.

This project focuses on:

- acknowledging the problem in context
- acting by researching the best local providers of the functional English skills required
- working with colleges to ensure delivery of a flexible programme that is entirely suited to the demands of working in the NHS in the Devon area
- clinical staff overseeing workshops to ensure relevance to the workplace
- developing a needs analysis at the beginning of activity and progress reports given for guidance at the end of the course
- elements of appraisals and revalidation
- brief signposting and raising awareness at corporate inductions.

What has been the impact?

More effective and safer working practice

This project has provided:

- feedback from attendees has been 100% positive, citing increased confidence at work and in dealing with patients/relatives/colleagues, more understanding of cultural expectations, behaviours and responses
- positive feedback from line managers confirming improved interaction with patients/relatives and colleagues

- more effective, safer working practice as communication takes place more clearly.
- all colleagues becoming more aware that it is not only acceptable to check, or repeat, but should be encouraged for clarity and safety
- momentum to encourage staff to engage
- staff attended the workshops on their days off, which highlights their commitment to the programme.

What is the best lesson learned?

Recognising and understanding a problem provides a pathway for resolution

“International staff deserve to have their challenges recognised when integrating into the NHS, and a specific programme of support can be easily embedded, resulting in more confident staff who can communicate safely and effectively.”

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Maximising talent and developing routes into nursing

The Open University

Project Aims

Creating opportunity to harvest talent

This Open University initiative is concerned to maximise talent in the workplace by creating new career development pathways from partnerships between employers and higher education.

Who is the main target audience?

Support staff working in health and social care settings

The primary audience for this initiative is healthcare assistants and healthcare support workers who are working in a range of settings across health and social care and who have the support and organisational commitment of their employer.

The Open University's pre-registration nursing programme / BSc (Hons) in Nursing is delivered in line with formal commissioning contracts with five Local Education and Training Boards in England (LETBs):

- Health Education East Midlands
- Health Education Thames Valley
- Health Education Wessex
- Health Education Yorkshire and the Humber
- Health Education North East (new contract for 2014/15).

As well as formal commissions with LETBs, the OU is working with a number of NHS trusts in the East of England and in Kent, Surrey and Sussex (with support from their LETB) and with some national independent sector service providers to deliver the pre-registration nursing programmes in England.

The OU also have long-standing contracts and commissions from:

- the Scottish Government (since 2003)
- the Department for Health Social Security and Public safety in Northern Ireland (since 2004).

In addition, the Open University work with Health Education Yorkshire and the Humber and Health Education Wessex, includes the provision of a wide range of modules, undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications and some non-accredited, online short courses for learning beyond registration and wider workforce development; including the Certificate of Higher Education and a Foundation Degree in Healthcare Practice for Bands 1–4 staff.

“The OU's pre-registration nursing programme has meant we can tap into the talent of our healthcare support workers and develop them. This is a life-changing opportunity that maximises people's potential by helping them develop personally and progress professionally”

Partner employer

What is the practice?

Invest in and grow your own workforce

The Open University's tried-and-tested model of work based learning enables employers to invest in and 'grow their own' workforce while retaining their support staff as employees for part of each week, thereby minimising the challenges of releasing staff from the workplace.

Open University courses recognise that all healthcare support staff have fundamental development needs but not all will wish to become nurses – so learning opportunities range from short, transforming care course in key areas such as dementia care and end-of-life care through to Certificate of Higher Education and Foundation Degree in Healthcare Practice – and a purposefully developed, part-time, work-based pre-registration nursing programme in adult nursing and mental health.

“...students have to fulfil rigorous admission criteria to ensure they are fully prepared to go to this level of study. If accepted they study for twenty-six hours per week – sometimes it will be studying theory at home, or sometimes in clinical practice – and they do their ‘day job’ the rest of the time. A tutor who is employed by the Open University helps the students complete the portfolios of evidence they need...Our mentors and senior charge nurses have been very supportive in making the programme a success...This is a life-changing opportunity that maximizes people’s potential by helping them develop personally and progress professionally.”
Partner employer

Students learning in practice is supported by a practice tutor and local mentors who meet the NMC’s standards for supporting learning and assessment in practice. Students learn alongside their mentors for at least 40% of their supernumerary practice time. Supervision is provided at a level appropriate to the student’s competence, and confidence profile.

What has been the impact?

A huge return on investment for everyone and better care

Investing in learning and development for Bands 1–4 staff brings benefits to individual staff but, much more importantly, it make a significant contribution to the delivery of care within organisations – care which is safe, compassionate and meets the high standards to which we all aspire. Above all it makes a real difference to the experience of the patients and service users.

The Open University believes this kind of programmes enables organisations to develop talent and capability in the local workforce by motivating staff; supporting their development and improving staff retention. Employers who work in partnership with the Open University are able to promote values and behaviours which improve the experience of patients/service users.

The Open University believes providing appropriate and timely student support is paramount, especially when adult learners are new to higher education and this is evidenced by the fact that 90% of their pre-registration nursing students successfully complete their programmes. Since the first formal intake in 2002, 1,065 students have graduated from the programme – for many the Open University programme represented a dream come true.

The Open University route and trust support programme provide answers to the current career blocks which include:

- financial - sponsorship in addition to part time study allows staff to access this development and remain working part time
- academic - NMC minimum access requirements allow experienced staff to access the programme without having to complete an access course/ A levels
- flexible-the OU placement cycle can ‘avoid’ traditional capacity challenges presented by current higher education commissioned courses.

“This programme contributes to a drive to reduce nurse shortages and recruitment challenges. The programme builds on staff motivation and enthusiasm, proven experiences and proven positive values and behaviour in a way ensuring there is career progression available.”

Partner trust

What is the best lesson learned?

Staff need support mechanisms to be in place to be successful

“There is a lot of talent in the Band 1- 4 workforce but they do want something ‘real’ and nationally recognised as a qualification, something that will open doors and change their lives potentially.”

“Because of the nature of the programme, our students need very supportive families. They are learning nursing skills but there is also an enormous amount of reflection and personal development. This course encourages you to challenge, to question practices and to realise that there are other ways to do things. It changes the way they think. Our students are aged from their 20s to their 40s and as you can imagine, for some people this is like opening a door to a whole new world and they can change – which obviously can put a lot of

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Student healthcare support worker programme

Addenbrookes NHS Trust Cambridge University Hospitals

Project Aims

Developing and expanding the number of work placements in clinical settings

Addenbrookes NHS Trust Cambridge University Hospitals (CUH) incorporates the Deakin Learning Centre on the CUH campus. This is a self-financing enterprise operating as part of the Cambridge Regional College Academy of Care, Health and Early Years. This building also houses the CUH Clinical Skills Unit and the trust's Pemberton Learning Centre which is used for the training and development of trust staff.

This innovative building has supported a partnership with Cambridge Regional College to develop and extend an already extensive work experience and volunteers service. This facility has provided an opportunity for health and social care students to undertake their studies in a hospital environment and have a more tailored work experience programme that will support their learning, coupled with an opportunity to experience volunteering, and a year two experience in a clinic.

Who is the main target audience?

A wide range of stakeholders

This project targets:

- students undertaking health and social care through the Cambridge Regional College
- tutors delivering the programme and the students who have benefited from a chance to see theory put into practice and can experience what is required to be a good healthcare worker
- tutors who visit the students in the work placement areas
- clinical staff benefit from supervising and mentoring the students
- the trust itself and managers who benefit from the development of future talent and possible future recruits.

What is the practice?

Graduated immersion in the workplace

During year one of the health and social care course the students are invited to apply to join the volunteer programme giving them the opportunity to help out on wards doing a variety of tasks such as help with feeding, running errands and talking to patients.

Year two students can apply for a placement within a clinic to undertake weighing, chaperoning, communicating and sitting in on consultations with patients. Students spend three days in training with the Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust Care Team before their placement and they attend a trust corporate Induction. The students then complete a competency workbook in placement with support of clinic supervisor/tutors.

What has been the impact?

Seeing theory translate into practice

The project has provided an opportunity for which clinical staff report a positive experience, specifically in having a new young person who is enthusiastic to do hands on work. Students have discovered how they can put theory into practice and experience how staff and teams work together to the benefit of patients. Students have shown a real understanding of what the work involves through reflection and completion of the work books.

What is the best lesson learned?

Clarity of purpose and clear communications are core to effective placement

This project has demonstrated a need for:

- clarity of purpose
- for responsibility and communication of the expectations of students
- for support from tutors and clinical staff
- celebrating results in a worthwhile programme that will equip young people to become healthcare professionals in the future.

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Support worker learning and development strategy

North Bristol NHS Trust

Project Aims

Creating development and progression opportunity in the workplace for support staff

North Bristol NHS Trust aims to ensure a trust wide standard of training and development for their support staff, primarily in Bands 1-4, to support development of all the skills required for the job. This strategy is wider than just the practical skills to be able to do the job and so it also covers the underpinning knowledge for those skills including maths, English and ICT.

The initial project has progressed from the introduction of apprenticeships in healthcare to a new look at wider education pathways and other staff groups, and thus a commitment to widening participation in all areas. This activity also links with the sector based work academies and traineeship programmes to support young people, new into the organisation. It is planned to incorporate the Care Certificate Framework and identify career pathways into undergraduate training.

Who is the main target audience?

Staff in Bands 1-4

This North Bristol NHS Trust project will target and impact on:

- all staff in Bands 1-4 and those being recruited into these roles
- recruiting managers
- the trust as a whole
- patients.

What is the practice?

Review of job roles and the associated knowledge and skills to create clear career pathways

Job descriptions and person specifications have been standardised to ensure that staff are developed to the skills/knowledge levels required and are appropriate for the job. This also allows for development to support career progression along a clear pathway, so that all staff gain the training and underpinning knowledge at the right time. Contracts of employment have been designed to support this and give clear expectations from all parties. There is a clear link between learning and assessment in both the classroom and the workplace, so that competency can be demonstrated and maintained over time. Maths, English and ICT are covered through functional skills to Level 2, so that individuals can gain transferable skills beneficial for everyday life, as well as achieving a qualification. All learning is tailored to the individual so that prior learning and achievements can be recognised where possible.

What has been the impact?

Clearer career pathways and new progression opportunity

This project has impacted in a number of ways by providing:

- clearer education pathways from recruitment, to support individual development and career progression.
- positive impact on the literacy and numeracy skills of the Bands 1-4 workforce, especially for health, business administration and customer service
- further development of higher level apprenticeships for health and business administration, as well as increased number of apprenticeships across all levels
- improved patient care as a direct result of increased knowledge and understanding and the assessed competencies of the Band 1-4 staff completing their apprenticeship or vocational training in a timely manner.

What is the best lesson learned?

Progress feeds progress

“We have made significant strides in getting clear career progression routes for these staff groups and look forward to tackling routes into undergraduate training.”

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Team up

Health Education South London

Project Aims

Promoting community wellbeing

This project was set up to promote and improve health and wellbeing in local communities.

Who is the main target audience?

Medics, including trainee doctors and dentists and students

Team Up provides opportunities for doctors and dentists during their training and a wide range of other students.

What is the practice?

Putting trainee doctors and dentist into community settings

This project supports partnering trainee doctors and dentists with voluntary organisations to broaden their teaching and leadership skills and so they can gain experience in community development, whilst voluntary organisations gain a diverse and skilled range of volunteers.

Health Education South London re-launched Team Up in 2014 and extended the focus to include multi-professional teams. This includes student nurses, physiotherapists and occupational therapists along with doctors and dentists in training.

Health Education South London are working with over seventy voluntary organisations to confirm placement projects which will be available to match against the health teams, with the aim of starting the projects in September/October 2014. The projects will last between three to six months with an award ceremony at the end where each team will present a poster presentation on their specific project.

What has been the impact?

The pilot programme ran during 2012 as an Olympic Legacy project and continues to develop

During the pilot activity fifty-three 'matches' were originally made between organisations and trainee teams. Thirty-one of these went on to form a formal partnership and twenty-two projects completed. Eighty-four trainees, working with twenty community organisations, formed teams to complete these twenty-two health improvement projects. The majority of projects involved the design and delivery of health education sessions for a wide range of vulnerable target groups. Trainees participated across all stages of training and a wide range of specialities (most commonly foundation trainees, psychiatry, public health, general practice and dental) and were motivated by the opportunity to gain a better understanding of working with 'non-traditional' partners and to develop health improvement and leadership skills. Most teams and organisations stated that their project had achieved its original objectives.

Team Up was judged by the vast majority of participating trainees to have offered a valuable learning experience that may not otherwise be available to them. Particular benefits were reported in terms of helping trainees improve their knowledge and skills in the areas of health promotion/public health, leadership and multi-professional working.

Most trainee teams and the majority of organisations also believed that Team Up had created lasting benefits for local communities, through the creation of new partnerships and knowledge sharing between the NHS and the third sector. Health benefits were also expected for the disadvantaged communities targeted by many Team Up projects.

Watch this space for the impact of the 2014 Team Up programme.

What is the best lesson learned?

Make sure you build in the time to develop the project infrastructure and any underpinning relationships

In the main, participants (both trainees and organisations) judged that their expectations about taking part in Team Up had been met. And the vast majority of both organisations and teams said they would recommend Team Up to colleagues.

Not all working relationships were straightforward, however, and some partnerships experienced difficulties getting their projects started and maintaining momentum. In particular, busy trainee schedules and shift working patterns were blamed on both sides for delays in progressing projects (although most completed either on or ahead of schedule). Flexibility was highlighted as key to success when working with new partners.

The best lesson learned was to allocate sufficient time for organisations to develop project ideas (six-eight weeks), for teams to form and apply (six-eight weeks), and for partnerships to reach a working agreement (four-five weeks).

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Foundation degree in healthcare practice

Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Project Aims

Widening access to university for healthcare staff

Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust works in partnership with the University of the West of England and Gloucestershire College to improve access for healthcare assistants who do not have traditional entry requirements to pre-registration nursing programmes.

The foundation degree has been designed to provide a transitional opportunity for individuals to undertake this programme as a route for progression into the BSc in Nursing Studies (Adult Branch) at the University of the West of England. The programme was also aimed at supporting healthcare assistants, who could not afford to give up work to undertake a three year undergraduate programme. Successful candidates only have to support themselves on the last eighteen months of the programme.

The foundation degree was also open to applicants from the local student community who did not possess the direct entry requirements for the University of the West of England Pre-Registration Nursing Programme.

Who is the main target audience?

Support staff in Gloucestershire hospitals and school leavers

The project targeted:

- healthcare support workers within Gloucestershire hospitals
- school leavers within the local community.

What is the practice?

Blended and flexible learning programmes

A Nursing and Midwifery Council approved programme was developed that consisted of a two year foundation degree with direct progression onto the final eighteen months pre-registration nursing graduate programme, for adult nursing. This consisted of one day classroom teaching and two work-based learning days over the course of two academic years. This opportunity was offered to healthcare assistants employed by the trust. The student was required to complete a specified number of clinical practice hours and academic learning outcomes. The practice hours were provided by Gloucestershire hospitals who also supported the delivery of some of the academic based learning.

What has been the impact?

High completion rates for participants

This programme was very successful with over forty healthcare assistants and local candidates progressing onto and completing, or in the process of completing, their nurse training. The trust is currently in the process of re-employing these individuals as Band 5 staff nurses. This partnership programme has successfully addressed aspects of the shortfalls for registered nurses entering the workforce

What is the best lesson learned?

Give people opportunity and they will take it

“The dedication and enthusiasm of individuals to learn is amazing once they are given the opportunity.”

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Foundation degree in healthcare practice

The Open University

Project Aims

Supporting staff working in healthcare settings to develop the confidence and skills to deliver better care in any given context

This Open University initiative is designed to enhance the knowledge, skills and confidence of healthcare support staff to meet thresholds for more challenging roles.

Who is the main target audience?

Support staff working in health and social care settings

The primary target audience for this Foundation Degree in Healthcare Practice is healthcare assistants/ healthcare support workers who may be working in a range of settings across health and social care.

What is the practice?

Flexible, modular learning packages with the opportunity to 'bank accreditation as you go'

This Open University Foundation Degree in Healthcare Practice includes some core modules from the Open University pre-registration nursing programme with step-on/step-off points offering recognised qualifications. The range of optional modules at Stage 2 include: topics from long-term conditions, adult health and wellbeing, children and families, mental health and dementia care.

Students who successfully complete the first two modules – An Introduction to Health and Social Care (60 credits at Level 4 on the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications [FHEQ]) and Enhancing Healthcare Practice (60 credits of practice-based learning at FHEQ Level 4) are eligible for the award of a Certificate of Higher Education in Healthcare Practice. This certificate is a qualification in its own right, designed for healthcare assistants who are keen to develop their practice, but do not necessarily wish to proceed to train as a registered nurse.

The Certificate of Higher Education in Healthcare Practice is also the first year (Stage 1) of the BSc (Hons) in Nursing (Adult) programme and the first year of the Foundation Degree in Healthcare Practice, which prepares support workers for an assistant practitioner (Band 4) role. Stage 2 of the Foundation Degree in Healthcare Practice includes a core work based module and options which best suit students' and employers practice priorities from a range which includes: dementia care, end-of-life care mental health; adult health and wellbeing; children and families.

This flexibility offers employers a number of advantages: those healthcare assistants who may not be as confident in their academic skills can register for the Certificate of HE in Healthcare Practice and engage in higher education, perhaps for the first time, in order to test their commitment and ability to study via a supported open learning route. The credits awarded can subsequently be transferred into the Foundation Degree or pre-registration nursing programmes (no fee is charged for credit transfer) and, subject to a successful joint selection process, can enter the BSc (Hons) in Nursing (Adult or Mental Health) programme directly at Stage 2. This flexible entry route involves no duplication of studies.

Healthcare assistants who have successfully completed equivalent studies at Levels 4/5 on the FHEQ elsewhere may also be eligible to join Stage 2 of the Open University's pre-registration nursing degree subject to successful credit transfer and evidence of achievement of the pre-registration nursing programme entry requirements.

What has been the impact?

Second chance learning is life changing and enriching

The Open University cite the student experience itself as a meaningful way to explore impact of study. Sharon, a Band 3 healthcare assistant working in the Imaging Department in a local hospital, is a good example. She studied the two level 4 core modules that comprise the Certificate of Higher Education in Healthcare Practice. Her background and experience are captured below.

“Sharon did not enjoy school very much and although she always wanted to be a nurse, she left school at the age of fifteen with disappointing CSE grades. She married at the age of nineteen and was employed as a receptionist in a TV rental company until she had her first child. She now has three daughters and for the first eleven years of motherhood worked from home as a registered child-minder. When her eldest daughter was eleven, Sharon took a part-time job as a domestic assistant in a local hospital. After two years, she applied for a job as a healthcare assistant on a male surgical ward, where she carried out a range of nursing care, including washing patients, toileting and basic wound care. Sharon was keen to learn and within a year, she had completed her NVQ Level 2 and then her NVQ Level 3 in acute and terminal care (in January 1996). She loved working as a healthcare assistant and discovered for the first time in her life that she also enjoyed learning – on-the-job training really suited her.

What is the best lesson learned?

Fear of failure and low aspirations are a huge but surmountable barrier to personal and career development for many

After completing her NVQ Level 3, Sharon applied for and got a Band 3 healthcare assistant role in the Imaging Department where she has worked ever since. She took every opportunity to attend relevant in-house training sessions but was ‘terrified of failure’ (Sharon’s own words), so this held her back from progressing to a university course ‘because it would be really hard’, she was ‘scared of computers’ and ‘convinced she would break it’.

It was the persistent encouragement and support of her husband, her three grown-up daughters and her manager that eventually persuaded her to consider studying an Open University course. It was the matron who finally managed to convince Sharon that she could do it and that she deserved the opportunity to continue learning. She became Sharon’s mentor and has been wonderfully supportive throughout.

One of the hardest aspects of Sharon’s first course was learning how to write an essay. She had many ideas but initially found it hard to get them organised. However, having learned how to do it, Sharon is now enjoying the writing element of her studies. She sets herself very high standards and is thrilled when she gets good marks – most have been over 80%! Her IT skills have also developed rapidly and it has been quite a revelation to discover how much she can now do using a computer.

Sharon works in a close-knit team of doctors and nurses. Her colleagues have noticed how her confidence has grown: she is now prepared to share ideas when she sees things that they could change to enhance the patient experience. She is now far more aware of patients’ needs and has a better understanding of the entire patient journey, even though they only spend a few hours in the Imaging Department.

Once Sharon successfully completed her first course, she progressed to the work-based course which helped to build on her confidence and skills. Sharon prepared a huge portfolio of evidence demonstrating the competences she achieved, including airways management, an extended skill acquired by spending a week in the theatre recovery suite and by demonstrating the relevant knowledge and skill needed to recover a patient after an interventional procedure. She also extended her knowledge and skill base by learning to scrub for minor procedures carried out in radiology.

Sharon is justifiably proud of her achievements. These include the development of a flowchart to request a rocket drain for palliative care, which she prepared while on a short secondment to the Macmillan Unit. She asked patients and nurses what they needed and used this information to design the flowchart which has now been approved by the chest consultant, and is being further refined for use across the trust. While studying, Sharon also became aware of the effectiveness of Entonox as a method of pain relief. When one of the consultant radiologists, specialising in head and neck, used Entonox she noticed how it helped patients to relax.

She discussed with other members of the healthcare team how other patients might benefit. Entonox is now used for prostate biopsies, with further ongoing discussions about its use in other areas of practice.

Sharon acknowledges that working full-time and studying isn't easy. Her tips for survival include finding a buddy in the study group – someone with whom you can share the highs and lows. She and her study buddy have become really good friends, having laughed and sometimes cried together, and celebrated their achievements along the way.

Sharon's advice is simple, "Don't spend time worrying about whether you can do something, just do it. If I can do it, then others definitely can". Other useful tips include the importance of being well organised, disciplined and drawing on all available support: family (Sharon's daughters really helped her with IT issues initially), work and, above all, your module tutor. "They can really help to make it do-able, especially at the outset when you're feeling a bit unsure about everything."

Once she started studying with the Open University, Sharon began to recognise just how much she already knew, based on her life and work experience, which helped her to believe that she could cope with university-level study. This made her feel good about herself.

Sharon said, "At last I feel that I am achieving more of my potential. My newly found confidence is helping me to make a difference to patient care and I'm really looking forward to taking on new responsibilities..." From a manager's perspective, Sharon has gained in confidence and knowledge from her studies. This adds versatility and flexibility within the department, particularly with Sharon's additional competences in her new role as an assistant practitioner.

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Health and social care foundation degree

Oxford Brookes University

Project Aims

[Meeting the demands for a future health and social care workforce](#)

This Oxford Brookes University Foundation Degree (FD) was designed with local NHS and social care partners. It meets the needs of local providers for their Band 4 workforce development and commitment to improvements in patient care.

Who is the main target audience?

[Healthcare assistants](#)

This initiative targets:

- healthcare assistant staff at Band 3
- local employees in social care
- patients receiving cross professional care from assistant practitioner experts.

Competencies have been designed to meet the needs of each individual practice area.

What is the practice?

[Course structure is mapped against existing qualification frameworks to support progression](#)

The first two years of the Foundation Degree have been mapped against the NMC nursing year 1 outcomes. A graduate of the Foundation Degree can apply to enter year two of the nursing degree.

What has been the impact?

[Real progression opportunity for staff who may never have contemplated degree level study](#)

It is worth noting:

- most graduates have been retained as Band 4 assistant practitioners, however a number have moved into a nursing degree having never thought they could study at this level
- for applicants to the nursing degree, who do not have A levels or an Access to Higher Education course, it gives them a good route into higher education
- the programme has enabled students to study in a structured, supported way and gives them a slower four year route through a nursing degree
- for some, it gives access to the start a three year degree, if they are not ready to step right into the year two of the degree
- flexibility has been key.

What is the best lesson learned?

[Collaborative working provides real rewards for partners and is great benefit to patients](#)

“This project has demonstrated working with local partners to achieve what is best for the local workforce is of great benefit to patients.”

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Increasing and widening participation into the health and social care workforce

City College Plymouth

Project Aims

Creating fair access to education and training to improve the quality of care

City College Plymouth is committed to widening access to education and training for minority groups with a view to further increasing the diversity of those staff employed throughout the health and social care sector; and in so doing helping to ensure the workforce better reflects the community it serves.

Through a series of general and informal observations in the local community and workplace, it became apparent to City College Plymouth that many of the adults with English as a second or subsequent language were in fact, engaged in low paid care work - having little or no previous experience and no formal qualifications. Many of these workers had had no real opportunity to progress and/or learn specific skills which could contribute to raising the quality of standards in care.

Who is the main target audience?

Minority groups with English as a second language

This project targeted care workers who were typically employed on casual contracts lasting only a very short period of time and who had had little or no access to education and training. City College Plymouth recruitment events and open days highlighted the fact that many of the adults, who hoped to apply for initial entry onto introductory level vocational training programmes were often at a disadvantage because of their lack of English speaking skills. They were therefore, less likely to secure a voluntary work placement, due to the fact that they were unable to communicate effectively. A high proportion of these adults demonstrated a keen interest in gaining employment in the care sector but realistically they were at significant risk of being exploited and or confined to menial jobs.

What is the practice?

First step care qualifications with embedded English language support

City College Plymouth recognised that growing numbers of health and care service users across the city had cultural origins from throughout Europe and/or internationally. It was therefore decided to pilot an introductory programme for adult health and social care with integrated English language support. From the outset of this programme students were able to motivate each other, improve their language skills, practice basic care skills via voluntary placements across the health and social care community and finally achieve their first nationally recognised qualification.

What has been the impact?

New learning and increased understanding

The initial pilot results have been positive. The project most importantly attracted:

- adults who previously applied for any casual care work because it was available
- unqualified adults who were attractive to employers because they were 'cheap' to employ
- adults seeking to improve their English and achieve their first paid position with a real opportunity for gaining nationally recognised quality training with long term career prospects within the care industry.

There has also been a cross-cultural dimension to this pilot work. City College Plymouth has been able to consider the value of the skills and expertise of those students who have already been introduced to the basic skills and training, underpinning care in their own country of origin, and who wish to share these skills with others while continuing their own educational and professional development, here in the UK.

City College Plymouth has therefore, proposed two unique strategies to take this pilot activity forward:

- existing 16-18 year old learners in Devon were given the opportunity to communicate and collaborate with students in France who were enrolled upon comparable health and social care programmes, which reflected their own learning in terms of curriculum, placement and practical skills training
- the UK based learners were given the opportunity to learn French and to attend a two week residential care placement in order for them to identify good practice, learn and develop new skills and extend language/vocabulary
- all participants were supported to recognise that innovative practice can be observed and re-applied elsewhere for the benefit of service users for example: dementia care and reminiscence. In tandem the French students also had the same opportunity.

City College Plymouth then considered extending this experience to those who wished to continue their learning journey and professional skills development here in the UK. As a result of this activity a new top-up programme (subject to funding) has been initiated to provide successful French students with Level 3 Diploma equivalencies, with a unique opportunity to achieve a further UK nationally recognised qualification, while attending a specialist clinical/care placement and improving their English language.

The advantages of this are that it helps:

- to provide an opportunity for understanding vocational language and terminology development in the context of real working life within the confines of the UK Health and Social Care Sector
- to prepare those who are intent on seeking work in the UK, within the industry, a real life working/study experience
- to gain practical experience of working within UK Care Quality Guidelines, legislation and safeguarding parameters
- to provide evidence to support individual CPD in country of origin
- to facilitate HE entry via UCAS profile or other progression routes.

City College Plymouth reviewed progression onto external higher education programmes in health and social care as part of this pilot work. They again identified a pattern i.e. that those who typically progress onto some form of higher education study are usually 18-19 years of age, independent, able to secure a full loan, but more likely to move away from the city in the longer term thus taking their knowledge and skills with them. City College Plymouth realised that students needed opportunities to gain employment in the city and wider community but also recognised that there was a potential barrier, as it was likely that this profile of learner would be unlikely to apply for higher education at the expense of gaining employment. It was also acknowledged that many adults attending part time vocational courses were also unlikely to access higher education study for similar reasons.

What is the best lesson learned?

Fairer access can extend the local labour pool

City College Plymouth is currently proposing a new Foundation Degree which recognises that many of the existing higher education courses are arguably 'too narrow' in focus and therefore, those who apply are somewhat restricted by the modules and/or options presented to them, as they tend to be 'engineered' to support a specific special field or organisation in the health sector. City College Plymouth wanted to encourage learners who have historically fitted the widening participation profile. In order to do this they recognised the need to review course structure and content.

To address this, City College Plymouth decided to construct a new Foundation Degree (*pending) which would offer a more generic and significantly broader curriculum to appeal and increase the diversity of those students applying. City College Plymouth are particularly concerned to attract those working in smaller independent care settings and to develop a more holistic approach to dedicated research in the field - which should be driven

by autonomous interest in that area of health as opposed to being driven solely by health and social care directorates needing to fulfil set staffing objectives.

City College Plymouth is passionate about providing health and social care provision which not only meets the demands of local employers in terms of a skilled workforce, but in supporting the development of a qualified and skilled workforce, with people who are truly representative of the community they serve.

City College Plymouth is committed to the philosophy and principles of a Gazelle College which aims to provide students with opportunities to gain and develop general employability skills through volunteering, enterprise and opportunity. City College Plymouth believes employers are reassured that students demonstrate fundamental skills that contribute to a positive profiled employee. These attributes fully endorse the ethos of widening participation and equally ensures that opportunities in the vocational field of employment are indeed possible to all learners who demonstrate commitment.

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Maximising talent and developing routes into nursing

The Open University

Project Aims

Creating opportunity to harvest talent

This Open University initiative is concerned to maximise talent in the workplace by creating new career development pathways from partnerships between employers and higher education.

Who is the main target audience?

Support staff working in health and social care settings

The primary audience for this initiative is healthcare assistants and healthcare support workers who are working in a range of settings across health and social care and who have the support and organisational commitment of their employer.

The Open University's pre-registration nursing programme / BSc (Hons) in Nursing is delivered in line with formal commissioning contracts with five Local Education and Training Boards in England (LETBs):

- Health Education East Midlands
- Health Education Thames Valley
- Health Education Wessex
- Health Education Yorkshire and the Humber
- Health Education North East (new contract for 2014/15).

As well as formal commissions with LETBs, the OU is working with a number of NHS trusts in the East of England and in Kent, Surrey and Sussex (with support from their LETB) and with some national independent sector service providers to deliver the pre-registration nursing programmes in England.

The OU also have long-standing contracts and commissions from:

- the Scottish Government (since 2003)
- the Department for Health Social Security and Public safety in Northern Ireland (since 2004).

In addition, the Open University work with Health Education Yorkshire and the Humber and Health Education Wessex, includes the provision of a wide range of modules, undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications and some non-accredited, online short courses for learning beyond registration and wider workforce development; including the Certificate of Higher Education and a Foundation Degree in Healthcare Practice for Bands 1–4 staff.

"The OU's pre-registration nursing programme has meant we can tap into the talent of our healthcare support workers and develop them. This is a life-changing opportunity that maximises people's potential by helping them develop personally and progress professionally"

Partner employer

What is the practice?

Invest in and grow your own workforce

The Open University's tried-and-tested model of work based learning enables employers to invest in and 'grow their own' workforce while retaining their support staff as employees for part of each week, thereby minimising the challenges of releasing staff from the workplace.

Open University courses recognise that all healthcare support staff have fundamental development needs but not all will wish to become nurses – so learning opportunities range from short, transforming care course in key

areas such as dementia care and end-of-life care through to Certificate of Higher Education and Foundation Degree in Healthcare Practice – and a purposefully developed, part-time, work-based pre-registration nursing programme in adult nursing and mental health.

“...students have to fulfil rigorous admission criteria to ensure they are fully prepared to go to this level of study. If accepted they study for twenty-six hours per week – sometimes it will be studying theory at home, or sometimes in clinical practice – and they do their ‘day job’ the rest of the time. A tutor who is employed by the Open University helps the students complete the portfolios of evidence they need...Our mentors and senior charge nurses have been very supportive in making the programme a success...This is a life-changing opportunity that maximizes people’s potential by helping them develop personally and progress professionally.”
Partner employer

Students learning in practice is supported by a practice tutor and local mentors who meet the NMC’s standards for supporting learning and assessment in practice. Students learn alongside their mentors for at least 40% of their supernumerary practice time. Supervision is provided at a level appropriate to the student’s competence, and confidence profile.

What has been the impact?

A huge return on investment for everyone and better care

Investing in learning and development for Bands 1–4 staff brings benefits to individual staff but, much more importantly, it make a significant contribution to the delivery of care within organisations – care which is safe, compassionate and meets the high standards to which we all aspire. Above all it makes a real difference to the experience of the patients and service users.

The Open University believes this kind of programmes enables organisations to develop talent and capability in the local workforce by motivating staff; supporting their development and improving staff retention. Employers who work in partnership with the Open University are able to promote values and behaviours which improve the experience of patients/service users.

The Open University believes providing appropriate and timely student support is paramount, especially when adult learners are new to higher education and this is evidenced by the fact that 90% of their pre-registration nursing students successfully complete their programmes. Since the first formal intake in 2002, 1,065 students have graduated from the programme – for many the Open University programme represented a dream come true.

The Open University route and trust support programme provide answers to the current career blocks which include:

- financial - sponsorship in addition to part time study allows staff to access this development and remain working part time
- academic - NMC minimum access requirements allow experienced staff to access the programme without having to complete an access course/ A levels
- flexible-the OU placement cycle can ‘avoid’ traditional capacity challenges presented by current higher education commissioned courses.

“This programme contributes to a drive to reduce nurse shortages and recruitment challenges. The programme builds on staff motivation and enthusiasm, proven experiences and proven positive values and behaviour in a way ensuring there is career progression available.”

Partner trust

What is the best lesson learned?

Staff need support mechanisms to be in place to be successful

“There is a lot of talent in the Band 1- 4 workforce but they do want something ‘real’ and nationally recognised as a qualification, something that will open doors and change their lives potentially.”

“Because of the nature of the programme, our students need very supportive families. They are learning nursing skills but there is also an enormous amount of reflection and personal development. This course encourages you to challenge, to question practices and to realise that there are other ways to do things. It changes the way they think. Our students are aged from their 20s to their 40s and as you can imagine, for some people this is like opening a door to a whole new world and they can change – which obviously can put a lot of pressure on families. The students we take on need to be prepared for that change.

However, they get a lot of support from within the partnership, not least from nurses who have already gone through the programme and can help them as they develop.”
Employer feedback

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(Please mention the Health Education England Widening Participation Directory when you contact the Open University)

Pharmacy foundation year

University of Manchester

Project Aims

Providing routes in to pharmacy for disadvantaged groups

The main focus of this project is to provide an opportunity for young learners from socio-economically deprived areas, and in particular from poorly performing high schools, to enter into higher education and register on a pharmacy degree programme.

Selection is based on a combination of academic attainment/potential and contextual data. Without this foundation year programme students would not otherwise be able to register with any other school of pharmacy in the UK. The foundation programme is a one year stand-alone programme based at a local sixth form college and it provides an in depth background for students that are successful, enabling them to study with confidence and ability on the main four year MPharm programme.

Who is the main target audience?

Young people in danger of not reaching their potential

The main audience for this initiative is young learners with academic potential who are studying in poorly performing high schools. Many of these pupils will not have the opportunity of reaching their potential and achieving the high grades required to study pharmacy. If successful on the foundation programme students automatically transfer onto the main MPharm programme if they so wish.

What is the practice?

Selection process providing a pathway into supplementary learning experiences

This initiative uses selection based primarily on contextual data but supplemented with academic potential. Small class size (approximately twenty) which helps distil confidence in the learning environment. Learning experiences take place at the university as well as sixth form college.

What has been the impact?

Creating new pharmacy students (with no attrition) who graduate at the top of their class

Students that would not otherwise have an opportunity to study pharmacy in the UK now have that opportunity through this programme. The programme has been running for five years and of the first cohort of students that entered the Manchester Pharmacy School from the foundation year, all are in the final year of the MPharm programme; of those, there is the distinct possibility that one third will achieve a first class MPharm degree whilst the others an upper second class degree. Hence, not only will they be graduating as pharmacists, but all will be in the top 50% of our student intake.

What is the best lesson learned?

Admission processes need to be balanced and finely tuned

“Undergraduate admissions processes are a fine balance, whereby academic achievements should be viewed holistically in the context of an applicant’s background.”

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Clinical re-enablement

Wakefield College and Harrogate Foundation Trust

Project Aims

Better integrated working to free up acute beds

This pilot project was developed to provide a programme to train an identifiable group of people who could facilitate and support discharge from primary to secondary care, working with a range of healthcare professionals to ensure that the individuals needs are assessed and managed during the process.

The project was also concerned to ensure that staff would also worked with carers and their families to support their knowledge of condition management .The overall return on investment was to free up acute beds more effectively.

Who is the main target audience?

Healthcare assistants and carers

The project primarily targeted healthcare assistants but was designed to impact on other care providers in a wider family or community setting

What is the practice?

Collaboration between education and health providers to support a review of care practice across hospital teams in order to identify areas of joint working that support improvements in care

What has been the impact?

A new accredited role at Level 3

The project has resulted in a new role being created using an accredited Level 3 framework. This was delivered in a tight timeline as requested by the trust. Wakefield College worked in conjunction with trust specialist nurses to ensure that training integrated trust practices and procedures. The candidates were then able to secure a Band 3 role

What is the best lesson learned?

You learn more and better working together

"I have been moving and handling for years now and until the healthcare assistant worked with me I never understood why it is done this way." Carer involved in the project

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Foundation degree in healthcare practice

The Open University

Project Aims

[Supporting staff working in healthcare settings to develop the confidence and skills to deliver better care in any given context](#)

This Open University initiative is designed to enhance the knowledge, skills and confidence of healthcare support staff to meet thresholds for more challenging roles.

Who is the main target audience?

[Support staff working in health and social care settings](#)

The primary target audience for this Foundation Degree in Healthcare Practice is healthcare assistants/ healthcare support workers who may be working in a range of settings across health and social care.

What is the practice?

[Flexible, modular learning packages with the opportunity to 'bank accreditation as you go'](#)

This Open University Foundation Degree in Healthcare Practice includes some core modules from the Open University pre-registration nursing programme with step-on/step-off points offering recognised qualifications. The range of optional modules at Stage 2 include: topics from long-term conditions, adult health and wellbeing, children and families, mental health and dementia care.

Students who successfully complete the first two modules – An Introduction to Health and Social Care (60 credits at Level 4 on the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications [FHEQ]) and Enhancing Healthcare Practice (60 credits of practice-based learning at FHEQ Level 4) are eligible for the award of a Certificate of Higher Education in Healthcare Practice. This certificate is a qualification in its own right, designed for healthcare assistants who are keen to develop their practice, but do not necessarily wish to proceed to train as a registered nurse.

The Certificate of Higher Education in Healthcare Practice is also the first year (Stage 1) of the BSc (Hons) in Nursing (Adult) programme and the first year of the Foundation Degree in Healthcare Practice, which prepares support workers for an assistant practitioner (Band 4) role. Stage 2 of the Foundation Degree in Healthcare Practice includes a core work based module and options which best suit students' and employers practice priorities from a range which includes: dementia care, end-of-life care mental health; adult health and wellbeing; children and families.

This flexibility offers employers a number of advantages: those healthcare assistants who may not be as confident in their academic skills can register for the Certificate of HE in Healthcare Practice and engage in higher education, perhaps for the first time, in order to test their commitment and ability to study via a supported open learning route. The credits awarded can subsequently be transferred into the Foundation Degree or pre-registration nursing programmes (no fee is charged for credit transfer) and, subject to a successful joint selection process, can enter the BSc (Hons) in Nursing (Adult or Mental Health) programme directly at Stage 2. This flexible entry route involves no duplication of studies.

Healthcare assistants who have successfully completed equivalent studies at Levels 4/5 on the FHEQ elsewhere may also be eligible to join Stage 2 of the Open University's pre-registration nursing degree subject to successful credit transfer and evidence of achievement of the pre-registration nursing programme entry requirements.

What has been the impact?

[Second chance learning is life changing and enriching](#)

The Open University cite the student experience itself as a meaningful way to explore impact of study. Sharon, a Band 3 healthcare assistant working in the Imaging Department in a local hospital, is a good example. She studied the two level 4 core modules that comprise the Certificate of Higher Education in Healthcare Practice. Her background and experience are captured below.

“Sharon did not enjoy school very much and although she always wanted to be a nurse, she left school at the age of fifteen with disappointing CSE grades. She married at the age of nineteen and was employed as a receptionist in a TV rental company until she had her first child. She now has three daughters and for the first eleven years of motherhood worked from home as a registered child-minder. When her eldest daughter was eleven, Sharon took a part-time job as a domestic assistant in a local hospital. After two years, she applied for a job as a healthcare assistant on a male surgical ward, where she carried out a range of nursing care, including washing patients, toileting and basic wound care. Sharon was keen to learn and within a year, she had completed her NVQ Level 2 and then her NVQ Level 3 in acute and terminal care (in January 1996). She loved working as a healthcare assistant and discovered for the first time in her life that she also enjoyed learning – on-the-job training really suited her.

Lessons Learned

Fear of failure and low aspirations are a huge but surmountable barrier to personal and career development for many

After completing her NVQ Level 3, Sharon applied for and got a Band 3 healthcare assistant role in the Imaging Department where she has worked ever since. She took every opportunity to attend relevant in-house training sessions but was ‘terrified of failure’ (Sharon’s own words), so this held her back from progressing to a university course ‘because it would be really hard’, she was ‘scared of computers’ and ‘convinced she would break it’.

It was the persistent encouragement and support of her husband, her three grown-up daughters and her manager that eventually persuaded her to consider studying an Open University course. It was the matron who finally managed to convince Sharon that she could do it and that she deserved the opportunity to continue learning. She became Sharon’s mentor and has been wonderfully supportive throughout.

One of the hardest aspects of Sharon’s first course was learning how to write an essay. She had many ideas but initially found it hard to get them organised. However, having learned how to do it, Sharon is now enjoying the writing element of her studies. She sets herself very high standards and is thrilled when she gets good marks – most have been over 80%! Her IT skills have also developed rapidly and it has been quite a revelation to discover how much she can now do using a computer.

Sharon works in a close-knit team of doctors and nurses. Her colleagues have noticed how her confidence has grown: she is now prepared to share ideas when she sees things that they could change to enhance the patient experience. She is now far more aware of patients’ needs and has a better understanding of the entire patient journey, even though they only spend a few hours in the Imaging Department.

Once Sharon successfully completed her first course, she progressed to the work-based course which helped to build on her confidence and skills. Sharon prepared a huge portfolio of evidence demonstrating the competences she achieved, including airways management, an extended skill acquired by spending a week in the theatre recovery suite and by demonstrating the relevant knowledge and skill needed to recover a patient after an interventional procedure. She also extended her knowledge and skill base by learning to scrub for minor procedures carried out in radiology.

Sharon is justifiably proud of her achievements. These include the development of a flowchart to request a rocket drain for palliative care, which she prepared while on a short secondment to the Macmillan Unit. She asked patients and nurses what they needed and used this information to design the flowchart which has now been approved by the chest consultant, and is being further refined for use across the trust. While studying, Sharon also became aware of the effectiveness of Entonox as a method of pain relief. When one of the consultant radiologists, specialising in head and neck, used Entonox she noticed how it helped patients to relax. She discussed with other members of the healthcare team how other patients might benefit. Entonox is now used for prostrate biopsies, with further ongoing discussions about its use in other areas of practice. Sharon acknowledges that working full-time and studying isn’t easy. Her tips for survival include finding

a buddy in the study group – someone with whom you can share the highs and lows. She and her study buddy have become really good friends, having laughed and sometimes cried together, and celebrated their achievements along the way.

Sharon's advice is simple, "Don't spend time worrying about whether you can do something, just do it. If I can do it, then others definitely can". Other useful tips include the importance of being well organised, disciplined and drawing on all available support: family (Sharon's daughters really helped her with IT issues initially), work and, above all, your module tutor. "They can really help to make it do-able, especially at the outset when you're feeling a bit unsure about everything."

Once she started studying with the Open University, Sharon began to recognise just how much she already knew, based on her life and work experience, which helped her to believe that she could cope with university-level study. This made her feel good about herself.

Sharon said, "At last I feel that I am achieving more of my potential. My newly found confidence is helping me to make a difference to patient care and I'm really looking forward to taking on new responsibilities..." From a manager's perspective, Sharon has gained in confidence and knowledge from her studies. This adds versatility and flexibility within the department, particularly with Sharon's additional competences in her new role as an assistant practitioner.

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Introduction of further education health and social care students for work shadowing

The Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust

Project Aims

[Encouraging access to health care careers through engaging work shadowing opportunity](#)

This Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust project supports students from a health and social care course at a local further education college to work shadow in clinical areas; to observe care delivery and to be exposed to the clinical environment.

Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust is working with a local college to provide placements for local students. This project is in its infancy and it has just completed with a first cohort of three students. Their experience will be evaluated and this will be the subject of a joint meeting with the college to improve the experience for both the student and to benefit the clinical areas.

Who is the main target audience?

[Students in further education](#)

This Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust project targets local further education providers and students on health and social care courses.

What is the practice?

[Blended learning in clinical settings with exposure to nursing students](#)

The students are inducted to the Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust and then the clinical areas. They are invited to participate in clinical teaching sessions provided for undergraduate nursing students. This means that the work experience students will benefit from interactions with students already undertaking nurse education.

This is the first time that the trust has entered into work shadowing agreements with the local college and they will be working on feedback from the clinical areas and students themselves to improve the experience and provide a more structured approach to the placement. In the future the trust wants to rotate the students and provide specific education experiences for them in different clinical areas. This project will have a wide impact as the trust has recently identified a specific trainer for staff Bands 1-4 who will also manage this work shadowing project and move this work forward for the future.

What has been the impact?

[Positive relationship building](#)

The project has supported:

- closer relationships with local community
- exposure of students to the real NHS environment
- positive patient experience as students had time to talk with patients.

What is the best lesson learned?

[Build strong partnerships they are the foundations for joint working](#)

“Partnership needs to be strong between the colleges and the trust to ensure a safe and worthwhile learning experience”

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Language and cultural awareness

South Devon Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

Project Aims

[Providing an enabling infrastructure to support intercultural understanding and the acquisition of key vocabulary](#)

This South Devon Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust project provides support for healthcare staff in the form of special induction days as well as more in-depth workshops which cover aspects of the cultural differences international staff may encounter from patients and colleagues, pronunciation difficulties, functional NHS English and coping with the phone. One to one support is provided where necessary and signposting to other sources of support.

Who is the main target audience?

[Patients and international staff](#)

This project targets:

- patients
- international staff - both established and new to the organisation
- colleagues of international staff.

What is the practice?

[Active listening and engagement to promote understanding and problem resolution](#)

South Devon Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust believes it is crucially important to actively listen to the challenges overseas healthcare staff face, taking into account patient/relatives complaints to PALs and/or line managers concerns, or those expressed by other colleagues and by international staff themselves. The General Medical Council, Nursing Midwifery Council and human resources departments have expressed concern at the increasing numbers of overseas staff being referred to panels or being removed from registers.

This project focuses on:

- acknowledging the problem in context
- acting by researching the best local providers of the functional English skills required
- working with colleges to ensure delivery of a flexible programme that is entirely suited to the demands of working in the NHS in the Devon area
- clinical staff overseeing workshops to ensure relevance to the workplace
- developing a needs analysis at the beginning of activity and progress reports given for guidance at the end of the course
- elements of appraisals and revalidation
- brief signposting and raising awareness at corporate inductions.

What has been the impact?

[More effective and safer working practice](#)

This project has provided:

- feedback from attendees has been 100% positive, citing increased confidence at work and in dealing with patients/relatives/colleagues
- more understanding of cultural expectations, behaviours and responses
- positive feedback from line managers confirming improved interaction with patients/relatives and

- colleagues
- more effective, safer working practice as communication takes place more clearly. All colleagues becoming more aware that it is not only acceptable to check, or repeat, but should be encouraged for clarity and safety
- momentum to encourage staff to engage. Staff attended the workshops on their days off, which highlights their commitment to the programme.

What is the best lesson learned?

Recognising and understanding a problem provides a pathway for resolution

“International staff deserve to have their challenges recognised when integrating into the NHS, and a specific programme of support can be easily embedded, resulting in more confident staff who can communicate safely and effectively.”

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Maximising talent and developing routes into nursing

The Open University

Project Aims

Creating opportunity to harvest talent

This Open University initiative is concerned to maximise talent in the workplace by creating new career development pathways from partnerships between employers and higher education.

Who is the main target audience?

Support staff working in health and social care settings

The primary audience for this initiative is healthcare assistants and healthcare support workers who are working in a range of settings across health and social care and who have the support and organisational commitment of their employer.

The Open University's pre-registration nursing programme / BSc (Hons) in Nursing is delivered in line with formal commissioning contracts with five Local Education and Training Boards in England (LETBs):

- Health Education East Midlands
- Health Education Thames Valley
- Health Education Wessex
- Health Education Yorkshire and the Humber
- Health Education North East (new contract for 2014/15).

As well as formal commissions with LETBs, the OU is working with a number of NHS trusts in the East of England and in Kent, Surrey and Sussex (with support from their LETB) and with some national independent sector service providers to deliver the pre-registration nursing programmes in England.

The OU also have long-standing contracts and commissions from:

- the Scottish Government (since 2003)
- the Department for Health Social Security and Public safety in Northern Ireland (since 2004).

In addition, the Open University work with Health Education Yorkshire and the Humber and Health Education Wessex, includes the provision of a wide range of modules, undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications and some non-accredited, online short courses for learning beyond registration and wider workforce development; including the Certificate of Higher Education and a Foundation Degree in Healthcare Practice for Bands 1–4 staff.

"The OU's pre-registration nursing programme has meant we can tap into the talent of our healthcare support workers and develop them. This is a life-changing opportunity that maximises people's potential by helping them develop personally and progress professionally"

Partner employer

What is the practice?

Invest in and grow your own workforce

The Open University's tried-and-tested model of work based learning enables employers to invest in and 'grow their own' workforce while retaining their support staff as employees for part of each week, thereby minimising the challenges of releasing staff from the workplace.

Open University courses recognise that all healthcare support staff have fundamental development needs but not all will wish to become nurses – so learning opportunities range from short, transforming care course in key areas such as dementia care and end-of-life care through to Certificate of Higher Education and Foundation Degree in Healthcare Practice – and a purposefully developed, part-time, work-based pre-registration nursing programme in adult nursing and mental health.

“...students have to fulfil rigorous admission criteria to ensure they are fully prepared to go to this level of study. If accepted they study for twenty-six hours per week – sometimes it will be studying theory at home, or sometimes in clinical practice – and they do their ‘day job’ the rest of the time. A tutor who is employed by the Open University helps the students complete the portfolios of evidence they need...Our mentors and senior charge nurses have been very supportive in making the programme a success...This is a life-changing opportunity that maximizes people’s potential by helping them develop personally and progress professionally.”
Partner employer

Students learning in practice is supported by a practice tutor and local mentors who meet the NMC’s standards for supporting learning and assessment in practice. Students learn alongside their mentors for at least 40% of their supernumerary practice time. Supervision is provided at a level appropriate to the student’s competence, and confidence profile.

What has been the impact?

A huge return on investment for everyone and better care

Investing in learning and development for Bands 1–4 staff brings benefits to individual staff but, much more importantly, it make a significant contribution to the delivery of care within organisations – care which is safe, compassionate and meets the high standards to which we all aspire. Above all it makes a real difference to the experience of the patients and service users.

The Open University believes this kind of programmes enables organisations to develop talent and capability in the local workforce by motivating staff; supporting their development and improving staff retention. Employers who work in partnership with the Open University are able to promote values and behaviours which improve the experience of patients/service users.

The Open University believes providing appropriate and timely student support is paramount, especially when adult learners are new to higher education and this is evidenced by the fact that 90% of their pre-registration nursing students successfully complete their programmes. Since the first formal intake in 2002, 1,065 students have graduated from the programme – for many the Open University programme represented a dream come true.

The Open University route and trust support programme provide answers to the current career blocks which include:

- financial - sponsorship in addition to part time study allows staff to access this development and remain working part time
- academic - NMC minimum access requirements allow experienced staff to access the programme without having to complete an access course/ A levels
- flexible-the OU placement cycle can ‘avoid’ traditional capacity challenges presented by current higher education commissioned courses.

“This programme contributes to a drive to reduce nurse shortages and recruitment challenges. The programme builds on staff motivation and enthusiasm, proven experiences and proven positive values and behaviour in a way ensuring there is career progression available.”

Partner trust

What is the best lesson learned?

Staff need support mechanisms to be in place to be successful

“There is a lot of talent in the Band 1- 4 workforce but they do want something ‘real’ and nationally recognised as a qualification, something that will open doors and change their lives potentially.”

“Because of the nature of the programme, our students need very supportive families. They are learning nursing skills but there is also an enormous amount of reflection and personal development. This course encourages you to challenge, to question practices and to realise that there are other ways to do things. It changes the way they think. Our students are aged from their 20s to their 40s and as you can imagine, for some people this is like opening a door to a whole new world and they can change – which obviously can put a lot of pressure on families. The students we take on need to be prepared for that change.

However, they get a lot of support from within the partnership, not least from nurses who have already gone through the programme and can help them as they develop.”
Employer feedback

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Support worker learning and development strategy

North Bristol NHS Trust

Project Aims

Creating development and progression opportunity in the workplace for support staff

North Bristol NHS Trust aims to ensure a trust wide standard of training and development for their support staff, primarily in Bands 1-4, to support development of all the skills required for the job. This strategy is wider than just the practical skills to be able to do the job and so it also covers the underpinning knowledge for those skills including maths, English and ICT.

The initial project has progressed from the introduction of apprenticeships in healthcare to a new look at wider education pathways and other staff groups, and thus a commitment to widening participation in all areas. This activity also links with the sector based work academies and traineeship programmes to support young people, new into the organisation. It is planned to incorporate the Care Certificate Framework and identify career pathways into undergraduate training.

Who is the main target audience?

Staff in Bands 1-4

This North Bristol NHS Trust project will target and impact on:

- all staff in Bands 1-4 and those being recruited into these roles
- recruiting managers
- the trust as a whole
- patients.

What is the practice?

Review of job roles and the associated knowledge and skills to create clear career pathways

Job descriptions and person specifications have been standardised to ensure that staff are developed to the skills/knowledge levels required and are appropriate for the job. This also allows for development to support career progression along a clear pathway, so that all staff gain the training and underpinning knowledge at the right time. Contracts of employment have been designed to support this and give clear expectations from all parties. There is a clear link between learning and assessment in both the classroom and the workplace, so that competency can be demonstrated and maintained over time. Maths, English and ICT are covered through functional skills to Level 2, so that individuals can gain transferable skills beneficial for everyday life, as well as achieving a qualification. All learning is tailored to the individual so that prior learning and achievements can be recognised where possible.

What has been the impact?

Clearer career pathways and new progression opportunity

This project has impacted in a number of ways by providing:

- clearer education pathways from recruitment, to support individual development and career progression
- positive impact on the literacy and numeracy skills of the Bands 1-4 workforce, especially for health, business administration and customer service
- further development of higher level apprenticeships for health and business administration, as well as increased number of apprenticeships across all levels
- improved patient care as a direct result of increased knowledge and understanding and the assessed competencies of the Band 1-4 staff completing their apprenticeship or vocational training in a timely manner.

What is the best lesson learned?

Progress feeds progress

“We have made significant strides in getting clear career progression routes for these staff groups and look forward to tackling routes into undergraduate training.”

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Team up

Health Education South London

Project Aims

Promoting community wellbeing

This project was set up to promote and improve health and wellbeing in local communities.

Who is the main target audience?

Trainees and students

Team Up provides opportunities for trainee doctors and dentists and student nurses, physiotherapists and occupational therapists.

What is the practice?

Putting healthcare trainees and students into community settings

This project supports partnering trainee doctors and dentists, and student nurses, physiotherapists and occupational therapists with voluntary organisations to broaden their teaching and leadership skills and so they can gain experience in community development, whilst voluntary organisations gain a diverse and skilled range of volunteers.

Health Education South London re-launched Team Up in 2014 and extended the focus to include multi-professional teams. This includes student nurses, physiotherapists and occupational therapists along with doctors and dentists in training.

Health Education South London are working with over seventy voluntary organisations to confirm placement projects which will be available to match against the health teams, with the aim of starting the projects in September/October 2014. The projects will last between three to six months with an award ceremony at the end where each team will present a poster presentation on their specific project.

What has been the impact?

Watch this space for the impact of the 2014 Team Up Programme.

The pilot programme ran during 2012 as an Olympic legacy project. Fifty-three 'matches' were originally made between organisations and trainee teams. Thirty-one of these went on to form a formal partnership and twenty-two projects completed. Eighty-four trainees, working with twenty community organisations, formed teams to complete these twenty-two health improvement projects. The majority of projects involved the design and delivery of health education sessions for a wide range of vulnerable target groups.

Trainees participated across all stages of training and a wide range of specialities (most commonly foundation trainee, psychiatry, public health, general practice and dental) and were motivated by the opportunity to gain a better understanding of working with 'non-traditional' partners and to develop health improvement and leadership skills.

Most teams and organisations stated that their project had achieved its original objectives. Team Up was judged by the vast majority of participating trainees to have offered a valuable learning experience that may not otherwise be available to them. Particular benefits were reported in terms of helping trainees improve their knowledge and skills in the areas of health promotion/public health, leadership and multi-professional working.

Most trainee teams and the majority of organisations also believed that Team Up had created lasting benefits for local communities, through the creation of new partnerships and knowledge sharing between the NHS and the third sector. Health benefits were also expected for the disadvantaged communities targeted by many Team Up projects.

What is the best lesson learned?

[Watch this space for lessons learned from the 2014 Team Up programme](#)

In the main, participants (both trainees and organisations) judged that their expectations about taking part in Team Up had been met. And the vast majority of both organisations and teams said they would recommend Team Up to colleagues.

Not all working relationships were straightforward however and some partnerships experienced difficulties getting their projects started and maintaining momentum. In particular, busy trainee schedules and shift working patterns were blamed on both sides for delays in progressing projects (although most completed either on or ahead of schedule). Flexibility was highlighted as key to success when working with new partners.

The best lesson learned was to allocate sufficient time for for organisations to develop project ideas (six-eight weeks), for teams to form and apply (six-eight weeks), and for partnerships to reach a working agreement (four-five weeks).

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Workplace learning

Doncaster College

Project Aims

Raising levels of attainment and in-work progression

The aim of the Doncaster College and Rotherham Hospital workplace learning programme is to promote the in-work progression of employed individuals with low skills through delivery of work related skills training. This project sought to establish of a level provision that will raise the general level of attainment, enabling individuals to improve their employment status and to move on to undertake higher levels of training.

The principle outcome of this activity will be in-work progression which will be measured by one of more of the following:

- starting an apprenticeship/higher apprenticeship
- starting on Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF)-regulated skills training at a higher level
- moving into secure employment
- promotion or increased responsibility and an increase in wages.

Doncaster College have engaged with Rotherham Hospital and enrolled ten learners who were selected in line with these objectives.

Who is the main target audience?

Employees aged 19 years + with low skill levels

This programme provides an innovative way to raise the levels of achievement in the workplace enabling individuals to improve their employment prospects and undertake further education. The programme, supports employed individuals aged 19+ with low skills and more specifically those who are most vulnerable to future unemployment and those who have barriers to achieving sustained employment.

What is the practice?

Skills audits through personal development reviews to support addressing skill shortages

Rotherham hospital conducted a personal development review for their facilities employees and found that they had very low skill set within their teams. In order to address this skills shortage a training plan was agreed with Doncaster College. From the training plan the most suitable qualifications level and funding was sourced. The workplace learning project was deemed to be the most suitable way to proceed as the majority of employees were identified as having no formal qualifications, yet demonstrated the potential to progress.

An initial assessment was conducted and the level of qualification and subject was selected. The training consists of tutorial and assessment, completing workbooks, work sheets, taught sessions and practical assessments. Learners are visited on a three weekly basis at their workplace. The programme duration is six months.

What has been the impact?

Positively received by employees and employers

Employers and learners have welcomed this opportunity. With a reduced training budget to train employees the programme has provided a welcome funding pot and employees receive qualifications fully funded. The qualifications are still on-going.

What is the best lesson learned?

The value of reintroducing low skilled workers to education

“This project provides an excellent opportunity to introduce low skilled workers back into education allowing a taste of education that starts the learner’s journey and seeks progression opportunities as its reward.”

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Access programme- MAP-medicine, dentistry and pharmacy strands

University of Manchester

Project Aims

Achieving social mobility

This University of Manchester initiative is a structured scheme for local post-sixteen students who meet specific academic and background criteria. The aim of the programme is to support entry to Manchester, or another research-intensive university, through the completion of a portfolio of work demonstrating specific knowledge and skills. All students on this programme attend state schools and colleges and their parent/carers have not attended university. The programme aims to enhance students' chances of achieving social mobility through the Manchester Access Programme.

Details of the benefits and eligibility of the programme can be found at:

www.manchester.ac.uk/connect/teachers/students/post-16/manchester-access-programme/

The programme is split into subject strands and each year one hundred and twenty students join the medicine, dentistry or pharmacy strand. These students engage with additional activities which aid their progression into competitive healthcare courses. Through meeting healthcare professionals and undergraduate ambassadors who are currently studying these courses, students gain a realistic picture of the degree and career options available to them as well as invaluable experience to include in their university application.

Who is the main target audience?

Those from deprived backgrounds

In 2014 there were five hundred and sixty five students on the programme overall, all of whom meet the essential eligibility criteria which you can find at:

www.manchester.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/aspiring-students/map/criteria/

In addition, many students also meet a number of the priority criteria which you can also find at:

www.manchester.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/aspiring-students/map/criteria/

Applications to the medicine, dentistry and pharmacy strands of this programme are highly competitive and these students are most likely to meet more of the additional priority criteria. The university receive over five times as many applications as they have spaces for these subject strands.

What is the practice?

Structured programme designed to provide insight into chosen careers

Students on the healthcare strand of this programme are offered a structured programme of activities designed to provide an insight into their chosen course and benefit their university application.

This includes:

Decision Manchester and Personal Statements

Through the Decision Manchester process students are able to submit a pre-UCAS application to the university before they submit their actual UCAS form. This allows MAP students to find out whether or not they would be invited to interview for the course they are interested in applying to at Manchester. During this process students are given expert advice from admissions tutors, including feedback on their personal statements, enabling them to strengthen their applications to competitive medical related courses.

Mentoring

MAP Students are matched with undergraduate student mentors who are studying the subject they want to pursue. Mentors advise students about the university application process online as well as at face-to-face meetings on campus. Mentors are able to answer course-related queries and offer advice on personal statements and interviews.

Medical Simulation Day

Students on the medicine and dentistry strands are invited to an event in the medical school where they engage with practical hands-on medical activities, such as suturing and intubation. Healthcare professionals talk about current NHS issues. These are experiences which students attending fee-paying schools may take for granted and which allow programme students to include fantastic, relevant experience in their university applications. Seventy five students attended in 2014.

Heart Start First Aid Sessions

MAP students looking to pursue nursing attend an event, where they learn CPR skills at Heart Start First Aid sessions run by undergraduate student nurses.

UKCAT Session

Manchester collaborates with UKCAT in order to host an information session for students. This session provides the information, advice and guidance which students at state schools can often miss out on.

Discover Days

Students have the opportunity to attend the university Discover Days in Nursing and Midwifery where they attend workshops and meet with current nursing and midwifery students.

What has been the impact?

Eight hundred and eighty six successes

Since its development in 2005 eight hundred and eighty six students have been successful in gaining a place at the University of Manchester.

Admissions

- around one third of MAP applicants to medicine at Manchester would not have been invited to interview if they had not made improvements to their application based on the advice and recommendations they receive from university admissions staff
- interview skills workshops are also provided for MAP students which give a general insight into the admissions interview process and also help to enhance their own performance, increasing the likelihood of them being made an offer
- students who complete MAP are over twice as likely to be accepted onto a course at Manchester compared to non-MAP applicants from their colleges
- the university has observed that the conversion rate of students from interview to conditional offer has increased in 2014.

It is difficult to tell how much of this success is to do with mentoring, but the university view is that it has certainly had a positive impact:

- 90% of students in the first mentoring cohort either agreed or strongly agreed that MAP should continue running the mentoring scheme
- 84% of students either agreed or strongly agreed that their mentor helped them understand more about the qualities of the profession that they wish to progress into
- 79% of students either agreed or strongly agreed that having a mentor provided them with a better chance of progressing onto study their chosen course at Manchester
- 75% of students either agreed or strongly agreed that having a mentor made them feel more confident about having an interview for their course

- 72% of students either agreed or strongly agreed that having a mentor allowed them to imagine themselves being at university.

“The way my mentor spoke passionately about medicine and what it entails further encouraged me to pursue a degree in medicine”

“My mentor really helped me understand what a degree in dentistry really does entail and the pros and cons of doing such a degree, so I fully understood what I was letting myself in for prior to applying”

Simulation Day

- 93% of students strongly agreed or agreed that the day made getting into Medicine and Dentistry clearer
- 86% of attendees felt that they walked away from the event with a clearer idea of what being a doctor or dentist involves.

“The day was very beneficial as we were given the opportunity to get an insight of what the Medicine course entails at Manchester. The workshops were very useful and interesting”

What is the best lesson learned?

Involve existing students

“Additional support for post sixteen widening participation students looking to progress into the healthcare professions is most effective when existing undergraduate students are involved and can act as role models and there is a supportive admissions process in place.”

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Access to Birmingham (A2B) scheme and the bachelor of nursing programme

University of Birmingham

Project Aims

Increasing understanding of higher education

This university initiative aims to help students from families and communities in the West Midlands who have no or little experience of higher education, find out about what studying at university involves and to assist them through the recruitment and selection process.

Who is the main target audience?

An application process applies

This initiative focuses on a recommendation by a sixth form or Year 13 teacher stating candidates have the potential to study successfully at the University of Birmingham.

Candidates must also meet the following criteria:

- no family experience of higher education in the United Kingdom or abroad
- parents or the main income earners (in the family) are not in professional occupations, for example: not teachers, doctors, solicitors or similar
- the annual household income is £42,600 or less
- home postcode indicates that they live in an area of disadvantage with low rates of progression to higher education
- attendance at a non-selective state school or college which is a partner in the A2B scheme. If candidates are in the sixth form at a selective state school (such as a grammar school) the university will take into account the context in which candidates achieved GCSEs
- classed as a home/EU student for tuition fees
- looked after children (local authority care) three months + since the age of fourteen, who do not have to meet the above criteria
- any circumstances such as a disability or long-term illnesses which may have prevented candidates from achieving their potential.

What is the practice?

Positive action to increase representation

A2B applicants:

- receive an offer two grades lower than the standard offer i.e.: BBC
- if shortlisted A2B applicants are invited to attend an interview awareness session run by the nursing A2B tutor and A2B students currently studying on the bachelor of nursing programme
- complete an online study support module
- are invited to a face to face assignment tutorial, before successfully completing an assignment marked by the university.

If an A2B applicant achieves the standard offer grades i.e.: ABB, and achieves 75% or higher in their A2B assignment, then they are eligible for an annual £1200 scholarship which is awarded in addition to any other bursary or grants which they are eligible.

What has been the impact?

Zero attrition

Currently A2B students represent 10% of the university's bachelor of nursing degree intake and since the introduction of this scheme in 2000 all the A2B students have successfully completed the bachelor of nursing programme. One of elements of this initiative which contributes to the zero attrition rate for A2B students, is that the nursing A2B tutor is their personal tutor in Year 1.

What is the best lesson learned?

Personal tutors help keep students on track

"This widening participation initiative has led to a highly successful cohort of undergraduate nursing students, with a zero attrition rate."

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Access to medicine

Liverpool Heart and Chest Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Project Aims

[Widening access to medicine through the provision of accessible work shadowing and work experience opportunity](#)

Access to Medicine (ATM) is a fully-funded widening participation initiative developed by Liverpool Heart and Chest Hospital NHS Foundation Trust to support access into medicine. Access to Medicine provides students with an opportunity to gain valuable work experience in the field of medicine. It is delivered in close working partnership with local schools and colleges and provides a unique work shadowing experience for students which also seeks to optimize their enrolment potential, in what is a highly competitive admissions system.

Historically, it has been widely acknowledged that students who do not have any family or other links to the medical profession have found great difficulty in securing the required work experience to support university applications. Liverpool Heart and Chest Hospital has sought to create an opportunity to help prospective students to overcome these barriers by opening Access to Medicine to all individuals, irrespective of their background. Through this process, the Liverpool Heart and Chest Hospital project aims to successfully widen participation for all aspiring individuals looking to enter the medical profession and support them in their future chosen careers.

Who is the main target audience?

[Young people in schools and colleges in Merseyside, Cheshire and Wales who do not originate from identified feeder schools into medicine](#)

The main geographical audiences for Access to Medicine are schools and colleges within Merseyside, Cheshire and Wales. Access to Medicine has a specific focus on schools which are not usually seen as traditional feeder schools for higher education medical institutes, where there is an increased likelihood of students coming from lower socio-economic groups. Positive discrimination is applied in some instances for students when achievement of grades at GCSE does not reflect their true potential. As a result, the Access to Medicine programme is targeted to students aged sixteen years and above who demonstrate clear potential in terms of both academic and personal commitment levels to gain successful entry/enrolment onto medical courses. Access to Medicine takes into account references received from tutors and the programme actively engages tutors in the interview process whereby Liverpool Heart and Chest Hospital NHS Foundation Trust explores the level of student motivation, commitment and ability.

What is the practice?

[On-going engagement with prospective students through hands on activity in a clinical setting over an extended period of time](#)

The Access to Medicine project seeks to promote best practice through engaging aspiring young individuals who have the drive and passion for career in medicine. Access to Medicine entails a one day trust induction during the February half-term. In line with trust policy, the induction incorporates all the necessary health and safety requirements and an Access to Medicine project overview.

Post induction, individuals undertake a two day session during the Easter holidays. This encompasses cardiothoracic teaching and informs students of requirements within the clinical setting and roles within the multi-professional workforce. Finally, students undertake a practice week during the summer period. Each candidate is allocated a consultant mentor and exposed to a range of experiences inclusive of multi-professional clinics, theatres, wards and intensive-care. Furthermore, all candidates have the option to enrol onto the Lancashire Teaching Hospitals Trust volunteer scheme. The programme concludes with an evaluation day designed to reflect on experiences gained and the opportunity to undertake mock interviews chaired by the trust's medical director.

What is the practice?

Enhanced understanding and greater insight

Access to Medicine is now in its third cycle of student engagement. From 2010, student engagement within the programme has seen an increase in cohort size from ten (2010-11) to thirty two (2011-12) to thirty seven (2012-13). The success of the programme can be determined through the number of offers received from the higher education institute medical schools. Of the 2012-13 cohort, eleven students received offers from Liverpool, Leeds, Manchester, Nottingham, Sheffield, Birmingham, Lancaster and Cardiff. Further positive outcomes have been acknowledged through the feedback from students. Improvements in interview skills, confidence, cardiothoracic knowledge and an enhanced insight into the medical profession have all been fed back by those individuals on the programme and this feedback helps to sum up the success of the Access to Medicine programme for the trust.

What is the best lesson learned?

GCSE grades are not always a good indicator of potential

“Liverpool Heart and Chest Hospital believe widening participation within the medical profession is a plausible endeavour through a structured and supportive approach. The attainment of GCSE grades is not always a good predictor of how well students can perform and that drive, passion and motivation should be acknowledged within these young aspiring professionals.”

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Access to NHS nursing for young people

Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Project Aims

Creating access opportunity into nursing through distance learning

This Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust project focused on giving young people at school and college access to nursing careers through a partnership with the Open University.

Who is the main target audience?

Schools and colleges

This project seeks to open up entry in to nursing by targeting young people who would otherwise not consider nursing as a career.

What is the practice?

Coordinated partnership working to create new learning pathways

This project sought to take young people from school or college health and social care course (BTECs) and then onto apprenticeships and finally onto an Open University's pre-registration nursing programme.

What has been the impact?

Participants have excelled

The Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust reports that, "The young people who have gone through this programme have been excellent. They have excelled in the work place, they have been keen to learn and they have had great feedback from managers and staff."

What is the best lesson learned?

"Why have we not done this before?"

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Advice for school based staff and advisers

Newcastle University School of Medical Education

Project Aims

Supporting the provision of appropriate and accurate advice and guidance in schools

Newcastle University run annual advisory sessions for both teachers and careers advisers based in local and regional schools. These sessions seek to provide the key information that schools need to be able to advise their pupils on career options and in making good applications to medicine and dentistry courses.

Who is the main target audience?

Advisers and teachers who are involved in supporting career and course choice

The university has found frequently that prospective students are not receiving the right kind of information, advice or guidance about applying to medical school. This is why the university set up advisory sessions for teachers and advisers, in order to reach and inform those key people who are involved in advising school pupils about their future options. The sessions are designed for anyone who advises students regarding career progression from across the region.

What is the practice?

Advising the adviser

The university sessions are structured to cover the application process at Newcastle University and what the institution is looking for at an interview. The university then opens up the sessions for a panel of discussion and questions from the audience. The university has also developed a poster which contains key information that can be put in staff rooms to inform wider staff groupings.

What has been the impact?

Positive feedback and returning teachers keen to update themselves

"The university always receives very positive feedback from the sessions and teachers return to stay up to date. Over a two year period fifty teachers have attended the sessions."

What is the best lesson learned?

Appropriate advice can only be given if those advising have the opportunity to continually update

The university medical school is, "frequently reminded about just by how many young people are given out of date or incorrect information and advice on applying to medicine."

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Autumn insights for mature students: health professions

Plymouth University

Project Aims

Widening horizons through access to careers information and advice

This Plymouth University initiative is focused on encouraging mature students to develop an in-depth knowledge and gain insight into their chosen health profession while exploring other opportunities. Many mature applicants restrict their interest to the well-known areas such as nursing, midwifery and physiotherapy. This event allows prospective students to explore these chosen areas in greater depth while exposing them to other disciplines to open up the wider range employment opportunities.

Who is the main target audience?

Adult learners and labour market returners

This project targets mature students or adult returners - those who will be over the age of twenty one when they commence their studies at university.

What is the practice?

Targeted approach to supporting career decision making

The project targets mature students who are undertaking Access to Higher Education courses as this is where most adults begin their higher education journey. Adult returners normally have more complex information needs and lack confidence, so the Insights Day allows them to meet other like-minded individuals and importantly, academic staff from the health profession courses to discuss the course and the entry requirements away from the often intimidating, atmosphere of an open day.

The Insights Day seeks to tackle the issue of adult learners only focusing on better known health professions and only being able to access limited careers literature, which is frequently of a low quality. Many adult learners are unable to access high quality information about their original career choice, or indeed any others. Insight aims to help adults make informed choices about their future.

What has been the impact?

Better informed and more confident students

Students reported that they felt much better informed about their choices and that the event gave them a good deal to think about. They reported feeling more confident about going to university having met the academic staff and were able to submit an application. Some students also reported a change of heart and went away keen to explore another profession - most notably, operating department practice, having initially been only interested in adult nursing.

What is the best lesson learned?

The more you plan the better the result

The project underlined that while enthusiastic, adults can be more anxious than younger people but with a good mixture of hands on activities together with factual sessions everything works very well. Students soon feel at ease.

“And plan meticulously, so they know in advance, what they are doing!”

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Developing career pathways - a transition module approach

Middlesex University

Project Aims

Alternative entry model building on practical experience of the work place

Middlesex University has run a Diploma in Higher Education, Assistant Practitioner Programme (DIP HE AP) for over four years. Following completion of this award, students can apply to a 'Transition to Nursing and Graduate Study' module, which prepares them to then join year three of a BSc (Hons) nursing degree.

This transition module is innovative and allows for an alternative route into nursing. The module meets all nursing and midwifery requirements and comprises of theory and practice placement components. This process recognises and builds upon previous experience, and tests and challenges this through academic and practical assessments. The module addresses concepts and skills such as the role of the nurse, legal and ethical frameworks, medicines management and leading care delivery.

This module prepares students for the transition into year three of a nursing degree and a large pre-existing cohort. The first transition cohort commenced in March 2014 and students will join year three of the nursing degree in September 2014.

Who is the main target audience?

Students who have completed a Dip HE and are working in the healthcare sector

The main audience is students who have completed the Dip HE (AP) programme. These students are also generally healthcare staff working in a wide range of support roles in adult and mental health services.

What is the practice?

Blended theory and practice with recognition of prior learning

The transition module commences each March, following completion of the DIP HE (AP) programme the preceding summer. Students with the DIP HE are required to undertake maths and literacy assessments, and are interviewed for nursing, to ensure all NMC requirements are met. The module has theory and practice components, both 50% of the module assessment, and achieves 30 credits at Level 5. Students undertake two allocated placements, which are assessed by a mentor. The first placement is within a field related to the students work area (adult or mental health), but away from their previous place of employment. The second placement is within a different context to their pre-existing work experience, for example mental health students do an acute adult placement. The students also complete a portfolio of evidence structured around learning outcomes. This process allows us to use Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) and credit the student against years one and two of the BSc (Hons) Nursing programme, and prepares the student for study at Level 6.

What has been the impact?

Too early to say

"Our first cohort of the transition module are mid-module at present, thus 'impact' itself cannot be quantified. However, the student feedback is positive and they are doing well; and meeting the assessment requirements."

One student commented, "This is so great, exciting and challenging. It makes me realise what I do already know, but what there is still left to learn..."

What is the best lesson learned?

Ceilings are meant to be broken

Middlesex University believe, "That staff working in support roles have no ceiling on their career, if they are willing to meet the challenges and opportunities available through education."

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Discover medicine

Newcastle University School of Medical Education

Project Aims

[Supporting student ambassadors to encourage more medical school applications](#)

Discover Medicine as a project originally evolved from an initiative developed by a proactive group of medical students who went back into their home schools and colleges to encourage pupils to apply to study medicine. These students then approached the University of Newcastle Medical Faculty to see if the university was able to offer support in developing this activity further.

The university now has a core team of four medical students who they liaise with each year on organisational matters and there are also around twenty additional students who help to deliver school sessions. The university liaises with the schools to organise times for the students to visit and to provide funds for resources and expenses. At the request of the students this is a voluntary scheme.

Who is the main target audience?

[Local school pupils in Year 8 10 and 12 aged 11-16 years \(Key Stage 3-4\)](#)

The university and the medical school ambassadors target local state schools within the Tyne and Wear area.

What is the practice?

[Student ambassador led tailored outreach in local state schools](#)

Newcastle University medical school student ambassadors have developed three Discover Medicine sessions aimed at school pupils in Year 8, 10 and 12 to support university widening participation activity. The university coordinates the Discover Medicine activity sending out an email communication to local state school contacts. This covers the dates that are available (they only offer Wednesday afternoons so that it doesn't impact on student studies) and the sessions that they have to offer and how to book them. Once the schools make a booking, the university then arranges with their student ambassadors who will lead on the actual school sessions. This is very much a student led activity, with students identifying both the school year groups (in discussion with university) and leading on school session development and content.

The Year 8 session is very practical and it focuses on raising awareness and aspirations. The Year 10 session is again activity based but it also looks at what pupils will need to be doing if they are thinking about applying to medicine. The Year 12 session focusses on the application process, admissions and interview skills.

What has been the impact?

[Watch this space](#)

The university doesn't currently evaluate this activity but this is a development for the future. However, the university does receive good feedback from the teachers they have contact with and the medical school is also starting to see an increase in the number of students applying from widening participation backgrounds. The future plan is to collect the details of the students attending these student led sessions so that the university can track progression.

This is just one of a range of activities the university offers local schools, and as such it is seen as a way of helping to develop good links with local state schools and colleges, by raising aspirations and supporting local

students in their applications to medical school. The university believes that this activity is also helping their medical students develop valuable skills and the confidence that they will need throughout their careers.

What is the best lesson learned?

Student ambassadors are a huge and powerful resource when harnessed

“Internal partnerships between staff and students can be incredibly powerful.”

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Encouraging local school children to study medicine at Lancaster

Lancaster Medical School

Project Aims

[Encouraging more young people to consider medicine as a career](#)

This Lancaster Medical School project has:

- provided role models for school students, to demonstrate the feasibility of entry to higher education, in general, and medical school, in particular
- increased awareness of higher education in local area
- increased the rate of progression to higher education from the schools involved.
- increased awareness of the opportunity to study medicine at Lancaster University
- helped recruit local people to the course with the ultimate aim of training doctors who will stay and practice in the region
- provided informal information, advice and guidance to school students interested in studying medicine
- established school based sessions to deliver formal 'teaching' sessions to school students in Years 8-10
- created opportunity for medical students to meet with school students in later years (Years 11-13), usually over a break or lunch time to talk about their experiences of applying to medical school.

Who is the main target audience?

[School children in Lancaster Year 8-10](#)

This project targets school children in the Lancaster area in Years 8-10. The scheme is voluntary for medical students. The medical school work primarily with one local school, Our Lady's Catholic College (OLCC). OLCC was chosen because it is a non-selective school that teaches students in Years 8 -13.

What is the practice?

[Undergraduate medical students develop relationships with key school groups over time](#)

This project involves small groups of volunteer undergraduate medical students visiting local schools to provide health related education. Each group is associated with one school and will re-visit the school in successive years, meeting with the same cohort of school children and delivering different topics each year (Year 8: Healthy Eating; Year 9: Exercise and Health; Year 10: Smoking, Alcohol and Drugs). These topics have been chosen to complement the National Curriculum taught in the relevant age groups.

This scheme started in 2008, with students in Year 8. The longitudinal nature of the association between Lancaster Medical School students and the local schools fosters the development of a rapport between medical students and the school children and a good working relationship with their teachers. Years 8-10 have been chosen in an attempt to influence school children's attitudes before they become entrenched and before they sit their GCSEs, the results of which will influence their ability to enter higher education.

What has been the impact?

[Watch this space](#)

Lancaster Medical School have not yet evaluated the impact of this scheme but have identified the following areas that they wish to evaluate:

- the numbers of applications to further/higher education from the involved schools before and after the implementation of the widening participation project (the schools have agreed to provide this information but the data has not yet been gathered)
- feedback from school students about the impact of this scheme on key decisions, for example: GCSEs, A levels, BTECs, application to university and to medical schools

- feedback from teachers at the school about the impact of this scheme on the attitude of their students to higher education. Informal feedback from the key liaison teachers is that this scheme has had a positive impact on their school and a huge impact on certain individual students.

In 2013, the first cohort of school students left school for higher education. Therefore, a meaningful evaluation of progression to higher education, before and after the scheme, will not be possible for at least another three years.

What is the best lesson learned?

Informal settings work well to provide information, advice and guidance to school students

“Trust your students; they are wonderful ambassadors for your medical school and provide excellent role models for school students. Many of the volunteer medical students come from a ‘non-traditional’ background themselves and have a better understanding of the intangible barriers to higher education than faculty staff.

Make the lessons fun and interactive to pique the interest of school students in health and medicine topics

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Enrichment programme

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Project Aims

Better equipped degree applicants who understand the value of practical experience

This Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust pilot initiative had the broad aim of providing students at a local Catholic sixth form college, who had expressed an interest in the allied health professions, with the opportunity to develop high quality applications for degree courses in the allied health professions; and with 'the skills that cannot be taught in the classroom' but are essential for a career in health care.

This pilot programme gave the opportunity for selected candidates to attend timetabled practical sessions held at Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust which were delivered by members of the hospital clinical education team. These sessions were then supported by further activity delivered at the college which provided underpinning theory.

Who is the main target audience?

Year 12 students at the Cardinal Newman sixth form Catholic college

This project was aimed at Year 12 students who were preparing to apply for an allied healthcare professional degree course.

What is the practice?

Undergraduate medical students develop relationships with key school groups over time

This pilot project enabled Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust to support young and ambitious students that had a desire to pursue careers in the health sector. In addition, the delivery of the programme at Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust provided the opportunity to encourage local students to pursue their future career in their local hospital/community setting by highlighting Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust as an employer of choice.

What has been the impact?

Although this pilot project came to an end in spring 2014, the feedback from students has been excellent. Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust has been able to support students with their career choice and provide students with the knowledge and experience to help them through the degree application process.

Benefits for participants to the programme have included:

- gaining knowledge and experience to improve interview performance
- an opportunity to experience and gain a realistic insight into delivering care
- the development of the key vocational skills needed to provide care
- an understanding of how to improve the quality of degree applications.

This pilot activity will be extended to three additional colleges in the autumn term of 2014.

What is the best lesson learned?

Investment in supporting more informed students pays off

"Young and ambitious students are full of motivation and a pleasure to teach!"

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Foundation degree in healthcare practice

Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Widening access to university for healthcare staff

Better equipped degree applicants who understand the value of practical experience

Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust works in partnership with the University of the West of England and Gloucestershire College to improve access for healthcare assistants who do not have traditional entry requirements to pre-registration nursing programmes.

The foundation degree has been designed to provide a transitional opportunity for individuals to undertake this programme as a route for progression into the BSc in Nursing Studies (Adult Branch) at University of the West of England. The programme was also aimed at supporting healthcare assistants, who could not afford to give up work to undertake a three year undergraduate programme. Successful candidates only have to support themselves on the last eighteen months of the programme.

The foundation degree was also open to applicants from the local student community who did not possess the direct entry requirements for the University of the West of England Pre-Registration Nursing Programme.

Who is the main target audience?

Support staff in Gloucestershire hospitals and school leavers

The project targeted:

- healthcare support workers within Gloucestershire hospitals
- school leavers within the local community.

What is the practice?

Blended and flexible learning programmes

A Nursing and Midwifery Council approved programme was developed that consisted of a two year foundation degree with direct progression onto the final eighteen months pre-registration nursing graduate programme, for adult nursing. This consisted of one day classroom teaching and two work-based learning days over the course of two academic years. This opportunity was offered to healthcare assistants employed by the trust. The student was required to complete a specified number of clinical practice hours and academic learning outcomes. The practice hours were provided by Gloucestershire hospitals. They also supported the delivery of some of the academic based learning.

What has been the impact?

High completion rates for participants

This programme was very successful with over forty healthcare assistants and local candidates progressing onto and completing, or in the process of completing, their nurse training. The trust is currently in the process of re-employing these individuals as Band 5 staff nurses. This partnership programme has successfully addressed aspects of the shortfalls for registered nurses entering the workforce..

What is the best lesson learned?

Give people opportunity and they will take it

“The dedication and enthusiasm of individuals to learn once they are given the opportunity.”

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Gateway to medicine

Durham University

Project Aims

The Durham University Gateway to Medicine programme provides a route into the medicine (MBBS) degree delivered at Durham University, for young applicants from low socio-cultural and poor educational backgrounds. This initiative was a response to the well documented concern that traditional admissions to medical study does not deliver the diversity of doctors that we would like to see in practice.

The aim of this project is to deliver a programme that allows students, for whom education and social opportunities have limited their achievement and aspirations, an opportunity to develop and demonstrate their academic potential and personal aptitude for medicine. In this way, it is hoped that greater representation of the wider population can be reflected amongst our medical students.

Who is the main target audience?

School pupils studying in North East England who are deemed to be underrepresented in higher education and medicine

The university targets school pupils who:

- have home fee status
- have a clear and demonstrable interest in medicine, which is supported by a personal statement from the student and a testimonial from an academic member of their school or college.

Candidates must also meet at least two of the following:

- first generation applicant including those who have a parent or parents who graduated from their first degree within the last five years or are currently studying for their first degree
- attend a school whose GCSE performance is below the national average
- be eligible for free school meals
- be resident in an area that falls within the lowest 40% of the Index of Multiple Deprivation.

Additional consideration is given to applicants who have spent time in local authority care, or are from a traveller family, or have a registered disability.

What is the practice?

The university targets applicants from the North East of England, and from under-represented groups in higher education who are identified and referred in partnership with their school or college; and who participate in a programme of activities during their AS year (pre-entry phase). Up to ten successful pre-entry phase students then spend one year (year zero) at Durham University's Foundation Centre developing the skills and subject knowledge required for successful study at degree level. On successful completion of the foundation year students will progress to the first year of their MBBS medicine degree course.

The pre-entry phase includes a three day summer school delivered jointly by the Durham's Foundation Centre and Durham's School for Pharmacy, Medicine and Health. Students receive information, advice and guidance about applying for medicine, both at Durham and other providers across the UK. They participate in a range of hands-on activities in our medical training labs and also develop and present a mini-project relating to a patient case study. Students also attend a first year undergraduate lecture and lab session. Students are observed to identify personal and academic potential.

Students successfully completing the pre-entry phase may apply to the Gateway to Medicine foundation phase via UCAS (Jan 15th deadline). They must be predicted three GCE A levels in the grade range AAB - BCC which would normally be completed within two years and taken in one sitting). In order to progress to the foundation centre phase final GCE A level grades must not fall below BCC and must include A2 Biology and Chemistry at grade C or above (for 2015 entry). All applicants meeting the academic criteria are interviewed. Applicants will

also require a successful DBS check and a UKCAT score (with concession from standard entry requirement).

During the foundation phase students study a 120 credits academic programme including the following specific modules:

- key skills and language for higher education
- scientific imaging
- anatomy
- physiology and disease
- basic Clinical skills for medics
- foundations of statistics
- advanced chemistry
- core foundation biology combined
- core foundation chemistry.

Successful completion of the foundation phase provides progression to Level 1 of the MBBS medicine degree

What has been the impact?

This programme has increased the number of students from low-socioeconomic and state school backgrounds entering the Durham medicine (MBBS) programme from the North East region.

The following table provides details of the number of students participating in the various phases of the programme since 2009.

	<i>Applied pre-entry</i>	<i>Attended pre-entry</i>	<i>Applied for A190</i>	<i>Entered Year 0</i>	<i>Entered Year 1</i>	<i>Entered Year 2</i>	<i>Entered Year 3</i>
2009	16	15	11	4	4	3	2
2010	25	19	15	10	10	8	
2011	37	21	15	3	3		
2012	36	23	6	2			
2013	46	31	11				
Total	160	109	58	19	17	11	2

What is the best lesson learned?

Market forces don't support widening participation agendas

"Market forces are the prime influence on medical school admissions and alternative ways of identifying merit and potential amongst students from under-represented groups in higher education are necessary to overcome educational disadvantage in entry to medical school."

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Health sciences and scholars scheme

University of Liverpool

Project Aims

Target and support underrepresented groups to apply to higher education

The University of Liverpool aims to recruit one hundred students per year who will be successful at the university regardless of their social background. To facilitate this they have developed the Scholars Scheme to target and support talented students from backgrounds currently underrepresented in higher education, for example: students from low-income backgrounds or students with registered disabilities.

The University of Liverpool Scholars Scheme gives students the opportunity to demonstrate potential and to develop skills through taking part in a range of activities which include student shadowing, academic writing and key skills workshops, UCAS pre-application guidance and the submission of an academic assignment and more.

Students who successfully complete the programme develop a portfolio of evidence which the university use when making a 'scholar' an offer of a place at Liverpool. If successful, they are offered a guaranteed conditional offer at the university. This offer is reduced by the equivalent of 40 UCAS points needed for entry.

Who is the main target audience?

In order to be eligible to apply, students must attend one of the university's target schools or colleges in Greater Merseyside and meet the following:

- be a Year 12 student currently studying two year, Level 3 qualifications
- have at least 8 A* - C grades at GCSE (or equivalent, for example: GNVQ, BTEC etc) including English and maths, five of which must be at grade B or above
- neither parent has attended university and obtained an undergraduate degree or equivalent level qualification in the UK or abroad (If one parent is currently studying for their first degree or they graduated from their first degree within the last five years, applications will still be considered)
- entitled to free school meals at high school or currently receive a discretionary bursary from their school and have a household income of less than £25,000.

The university may also consider applications from those with household incomes of up to £35,000 in some circumstances. During the selection process there will be preference for considering criteria which relate directly to the applicant, such as experience of local authority care, being in receipt of a 16-19 bursary or other discretionary payments, having received free school meals and having a household income of less than £25,000. Applications from students who don't meet the eligibility criteria cannot be considered.

What is the practice?

Cross departmental working

Currently seven staff from the School of Health Sciences act as academic tutors on the Scholars Scheme and support students during their academic assignments. School of Health Sciences staff also deliver academic lectures to scholar students to support their assignments and also provide support regarding the admission processes and UCAS application to allied health professions and nursing programmes.

Admissions staff from all programmes in the School of Health Sciences (diagnostic radiography, physiotherapy, nursing, orthoptics, occupational therapy and radiotherapy) also attend information sessions providing scholar students with comprehensive information regarding careers in health sciences and nursing.

What has been the impact?

This scheme is helping to ensure the diversity of NHS workforce

The main impact has been that students from underrepresented backgrounds have passed the course and directly entered the University of Liverpool and other institutions as undergraduates. A number of these students have now graduated and have gone on to gain full time employment or in some cases, further study. These successful student outcomes have contributed towards the success of the programme and the success of our WP activities both institutionally and nationally. The programme acts as a case study of good practise and benefits from being able to bring together a number of partners; academics, students and professional services.

What is the best lesson learned?

The provision of timely and appropriate information and advice opens up options

Mentoring and exposure to information regarding NHS allied health professions (AHP) and nursing careers can provide opportunities to underrepresented groups and diversify the NHS workforce.

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Healthcare spring/summer schools

St George's University of London

Project Aims

Raising aspirations, increasing awareness and providing opportunity to develop insight

St George's Widening Participation Spring and Summer Schools are an aspiration, attainment raising and information, advice and guidance (IAG) activity for Year 7-12 pupils. They are lively, interactive courses designed to raise young people's aspirations, increase awareness of a range of educational and career opportunities in medicine and healthcare, and give participants an insight into studying healthcare subjects at university. Each course is tailored to the year group participating, utilising an extensive range of on-site training facilities, the experiments roadshows, soft skills workshops, student ambassadors, academic teaching staff, alumni, and other healthcare professionals.

This is a multiple intervention programme with participants invited to attend reunion events in Year 12, offering IAG on finance, entry criteria, the application and selection process, interview and reflection skills, and how to prepare for the transition from post sixteen to degree level study. If successfully embedded following the 2013/14 pilot, summer school participants will also be invited to take part in the St George's NHS Trust work experience scheme in Year 11/12.

Who is the main target audience?

London schools

Over three hundred and fifty London schools who meet the following criteria are sent information brochures and application forms in January each year, along with detailed guidance for school coordinators on participant targeting and eligibility criteria.

School targeting 2013/14:

- secondary
- state
- london boroughs.

And they must meet one or more of the following additional criteria:

- an Aimhigher London South partner school
- previous engagement with St George's widening participation or student recruitment activity
- had previous students enrol on St George's undergraduate provision
- key stage 5 results of: $\geq 60\%$, A*-B grades in biology and chemistry, and/or ≥ 10 , A*-B grade students in chemistry and biology (based on 2012 A Level results).

Participant targeting 2013/14:

- all pupils who attended the St George's Primary Practice Scheme are automatically offered a place on the Year 7 and 8 summer schools
- all other places are awarded using a competitive application process.

For all events, participants must:

- have achieved, or expect to achieve, 5 A*-C GCSE's including maths and English (minimum)
- demonstrate an interest in science/healthcare
- have no parental experience of working in healthcare
- have not previously attended a St George's Summer School.

And for Year 12 events participants must:

- be taking 3 A Levels with one science subject (min) or a BTEC Level 3 extended diploma in science/healthcare subject.

Target/priority applicants:

- no parental experience of higher education in the UK
- low socio economic background (NS-SEC 4-7)
- claiming/eligible for free school meals (FSM)
- parents registered unemployed
- looked after children (LAC) - in state care
- disability
- acorn category 4 or 5.

What is the practice?

Flexible and rich summer school format

Spring and summer schools range in length and format from two day, non residential events with participants on-site at St George's from 9am-4pm each day, through to five day/four night residential events, with students staying in the university halls of residence, and taking part in a range of evening social activities in addition to the core 9 am - 4pm healthcare specific programme.

Each course introduces life as a student in all of the healthcare professions. They are friendly, lively and interactive, covering the range of health professions offered by St George's – medicine, physiotherapy, radiography, biomedical science and paramedic science, as well as other related subjects including nursing and pharmacy. The overall aim is to give students a chance to experience university life first hand, with the objective to encourage and support them in making future education and career choices.

Each programme is tailored to the year group in question and devised by the widening participation officer and spring/summer school academic coordinator – a qualified healthcare professional employed to oversee the content and act as a figurehead for each event.

The 2012/13 spring/summer schools included the following activities:

- a wide range of ice breaking and team building activities
- introductory lectures on the range of options available in healthcare
- presentations and practical sessions by healthcare professionals and university academics on various aspects of scientific research
- a medical simulation session in St George's Advanced Patient Simulation Centre (GAPS)
- ethical debate sessions
- surgery skills sessions with the St George's Surgery Society
- small group problem based learning scenarios (PBL)
- practical, hands on sessions in: paramedic science, surgery, physiotherapy; prosthetics; radiography; clinical skills; basic life support; pathology; and healthy living
- role-play sessions around the healthcare multi-disciplinary team, and clinical communication skills (featuring professional actors as patients)
- workshops in student funding; finance and budgeting; work experience; the university application process; interview skills; and the transition from school/college to university.

What has been the impact?

Significant numbers of participants move on in to university level study

The results of a ten year evaluation of St George's spring/summer schools conducted in 2012/13 found subject specific summer schools were valued highly by participants, and a significant proportion of respondents went onto apply to or study a healthcare related course.

The university will publish a paper on the findings of this research once data analysis is completed later in 2014. In addition, all participants were asked to complete an evaluation form on the final day of their spring/summer school. Feedback has been consistently positive year on year.

The following evaluation data has been collated from the last eighteen spring/summer school events from 2009-2013. Of the 700+ participants who completed an evaluation:

- 87% found it helped them to decide what subjects they would like to study in the future
- 91% thought the spring/summer school increased their confidence
- 92% thought the spring/summer school improved their motivation
- 92% thought the spring/summer school improved their communication skills
- 96% thought the St George's Student Ambassadors were helpful
- 82% 'definitely' think they will go to university or other higher education institution after they have completed A-Levels/BTEC/GNVQs, and
- 84% thought the spring/summer school helped them reach this decision (38% - 'A lot', 29% 'A fair amount', and 17% 'A little').

Finally:

- 90% of participants said they would 'definitely' (61%) or 'probably' (29%) like to pursue a career in healthcare, and
- 92% thought the spring/summer school helped them reach this decision (51% - 'A lot', 33% 'A fair amount', and 8% 'A little').

What is the best lesson learned?

Always seek to broaden perspectives

"Ensure events cover a range of healthcare courses/careers to broaden participant perspectives, make sessions interactive/practical, and utilise the skills, knowledge and experiences of current healthcare undergraduate students."

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MaD Days (medicine and dentistry)

Newcastle University School of Medical Education

Project Aims

Raising aspirations and awareness of the range of medical careers

The aim of the university MaD Days is to raise pupils' aspirations by introducing them to medicine and dentistry and increasing their awareness of the different careers available through science subjects. MaD Days explore both medicine and dentistry at Newcastle University. They offer prospective students the opportunity to spend a structured day on campus in the university medicine and dentistry facilities, taking part in a variety of activities developed around these subject areas.

Who is the main target audience?

School pupils in Year 9 and 12

The Newcastle University Medical School targets young people in state schools in the Tyne and Wear area.

What is the practice?

Immersive campus based activity tailored to year group needs and interests

The university offer MaD Days for Year 9 and Year 12 school pupils. The Year 9 pupils spend the day exploring both medicine and dentistry to raise their awareness and aspirations about both subject areas. The Year 12 pupils choose whether they would like to attend the medicine or dentistry session and then spend a morning looking at the application process, communication and interview techniques, professionalism and difficult decisions. This is followed by an afternoon in practical sessions in the relevant clinical skills unit.

Year 9 MaD Days allow Year 9 pupils to experience a day of interactive and informative sessions exploring medicine and dentistry. School pupils have the opportunity to take part in a session in the medical clinical skills lab and the dental learning resource center through a series of hands on activities. Pupils spend time in the faculty's lecture theatres, as well as interacting with the university's current medical and dentistry students. Year 12 MaD Days allow Year 12 pupils to experience what it is really like to study medicine or dentistry at university.

The day includes:

- interactive lectures on the application process
- interview and communication skills
- difficult decisions in medicine, as well as
- an afternoon spent in the university clinical skills laboratories exploring the practical side of either medicine or dentistry.

Pupils also have the opportunity to work alongside university medicine and dentistry student ambassadors throughout the day. Unlike the Year 9 MaD Days, pupils must decide if they would like to spend the day exploring medicine or dentistry, as the day is much more focused.

What has been the impact?

This intervention is building relationships with local schools and developing key skills for existing medical students

The university intend to expand the MaD Days programme over the next academic year (2014/15) by offering those who attend a Year 12 MaD Day session the opportunity to be linked with a current medical school student as an e-mentor in order to support them further through their actual application and in the lead up to interview should they be successful.

What is the best lesson learned?

Tailor the sessions to the year groups and their interests

“Different year groups have different needs subject to where they find themselves in relation to course and career choice.”

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Making connections: a problem-based learning approach to post-16 biology

Hull York Medical School

Project Aims

[Engaging students in science in order to open up new career pathways](#)

This Hull York Medical School project focused on:

- using a problem based study approach to deliver the post-16 biology curriculum
- allowing students to see the relevance, importance and application of science to the solving of clinical problems
- enthusing students in the study of science using a different learning approach
- promoting and fostering an enjoyment of biology
- making the study of biology fun
- further developing the students' study skills
- encouraging students to take up a possible future career in the healthcare professions.

Who is the main target audience?

[Post 16 years science students](#)

The audience benefitting from this project were students studying biology at a post-16 level at a variety of sixth forms in schools and colleges in the area surrounding the medical school. This includes students studying AS/A level biology and those studying on vocational courses such as BTEC (Level 3) Health and Social Care.

What is the practice?

[Problem based learning](#)

This project is based on the pedagogy of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) and involves a series of virtual patient scenarios that are linked to the various AS/A level and vocational curricula. The problem-based learning sessions are followed up with students visiting the medical school to undertake some practical work linked to the virtual patient scenarios. The various schools and colleges select students with the academic ability to succeed at the post-16 level. These sessions are run as part of the students' enhancement activities timetabled at their respective institutions. For the problem-based learning sessions staff from the schools and colleges have been trained in the Hull York Medical School Problem-Based Learning Guided Discovery Method and act as the facilitator for the problem-based learning sessions.

What has been the impact?

[Problem based learning scenarios have worked well and have embedded learning](#)

Feedback from both students and staff has been very positive across the project. The problem-based learning scenarios have worked well and the students have engaged enthusiastically with the material and related practical activities. The teachers have reported that the project has strengthened and refined the students' decision to apply to university and that they can cope with the intellectual demands. Teachers have stated that the students' self-confidence has increased, as well as becoming more focused on their learning. The students have progressed onto a variety of higher education course that include: biology, biomedical science, biochemistry, dentistry, genetics, medicine, nursing and midwifery, psychology and veterinary medicine.

What is the best lesson learned?

Student centred learning is highly productive

“This project makes the core activities student-centred and contextualised to the students’ current curricula.”

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Maximising talent and developing routes into nursing

The Open University

Project Aims

Creating opportunity to harvest talent

This Open University initiative is concerned to maximise talent in the workplace by creating new career development pathways from partnerships between employers and higher education.

Who is the main target audience?

Support staff working in health and social care settings

The primary audience for this initiative is healthcare assistants and healthcare support workers who are working in a range of settings across health and social care and who have the support and organisational commitment of their employer.

The Open University's pre-registration nursing programme / BSc (Hons) in Nursing is delivered in line with formal commissioning contracts with five Local Education and Training Boards in England (LETBs):

- Health Education East Midlands
- Health Education Thames Valley
- Health Education Wessex
- Health Education Yorkshire and the Humber
- Health Education North East (new contract for 2014/15).

As well as formal commissions with LETBs, the OU is working with a number of NHS trusts in the East of England and in Kent, Surrey and Sussex (with support from their LETB) and with some national independent sector service providers to deliver the pre-registration nursing programmes in England.

The OU also have long-standing contracts and commissions from:

- the Scottish Government (since 2003)
- the Department for Health Social Security and Public safety in Northern Ireland (since 2004).

In addition, the Open University work with Health Education Yorkshire and the Humber and Health Education Wessex, includes the provision of a wide range of modules, undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications and some non-accredited, online short courses for learning beyond registration and wider workforce development; including the Certificate of Higher Education and a Foundation Degree in Healthcare Practice for Bands 1–4 staff.

"The OU's pre-registration nursing programme has meant we can tap into the talent of our healthcare support workers and develop them. This is a life-changing opportunity that maximises people's potential by helping them develop personally and progress professionally"

Partner employer

What is the practice?

Invest in and grow your own workforce

The Open University's tried-and-tested model of work based learning enables employers to invest in and 'grow their own' workforce while retaining their support staff as employees for part of each week, thereby minimising the challenges of releasing staff from the workplace.

Open University courses recognise that all healthcare support staff have fundamental development needs but not all will wish to become nurses – so learning opportunities range from short, transforming care course in key areas such as dementia care and end-of-life care through to Certificate of Higher Education and Foundation Degree in Healthcare Practice – and a purposefully developed, part-time, work-based pre-registration nursing programme in adult nursing and mental health.

“...students have to fulfil rigorous admission criteria to ensure they are fully prepared to go to this level of study. If accepted they study for twenty-six hours per week – sometimes it will be studying theory at home, or sometimes in clinical practice – and they do their ‘day job’ the rest of the time. A tutor who is employed by the Open University helps the students complete the portfolios of evidence they need...Our mentors and senior charge nurses have been very supportive in making the programme a success...This is a life-changing opportunity that maximizes people’s potential by helping them develop personally and progress professionally.”
Partner employer

Students learning in practice is supported by a practice tutor and local mentors who meet the NMC’s standards for supporting learning and assessment in practice. Students learn alongside their mentors for at least 40% of their supernumerary practice time. Supervision is provided at a level appropriate to the student’s competence, and confidence profile.

What has been the impact?

A huge return on investment for everyone and better care

Investing in learning and development for Bands 1–4 staff brings benefits to individual staff but, much more importantly, it make a significant contribution to the delivery of care within organisations – care which is safe, compassionate and meets the high standards to which we all aspire. Above all it makes a real difference to the experience of the patients and service users.

The Open University believes this kind of programmes enables organisations to develop talent and capability in the local workforce by motivating staff; supporting their development and improving staff retention. Employers who work in partnership with the Open University are able to promote values and behaviours which improve the experience of patients/service users.

The Open University believes providing appropriate and timely student support is paramount, especially when adult learners are new to higher education and this is evidenced by the fact that 90% of their pre-registration nursing students successfully complete their programmes. Since the first formal intake in 2002, 1,065 students have graduated from the programme – for many the Open University programme represented a dream come true.

The Open University route and trust support programme provide answers to the current career blocks which include:

- financial - sponsorship in addition to part time study allows staff to access this development and remain working part time
- academic - NMC minimum access requirements allow experienced staff to access the programme without having to complete an access course/ A levels
- flexible-the OU placement cycle can ‘avoid’ traditional capacity challenges presented by current higher education commissioned courses.

“This programme contributes to a drive to reduce nurse shortages and recruitment challenges. The programme builds on staff motivation and enthusiasm, proven experiences and proven positive values and behaviour in a way ensuring there is career progression available.”

Partner trust

What is the best lesson learned?

Staff need support mechanisms to be in place to be successful

“There is a lot of talent in the Band 1- 4 workforce but they do want something ‘real’ and nationally recognised as a qualification, something that will open doors and change their lives potentially.”

“Because of the nature of the programme, our students need very supportive families. They are learning nursing skills but there is also an enormous amount of reflection and personal development. This course encourages you to challenge, to question practices and to realise that there are other ways to do things. It changes the way they think. Our students are aged from their 20s to their 40s and as you can imagine, for some people this is like opening a door to a whole new world and they can change – which obviously can put a lot of pressure on families. The students we take on need to be prepared for that change.

However, they get a lot of support from within the partnership, not least from nurses who have already gone through the programme and can help them as they develop.”

Employer feedback

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(Please mention the Health Education England Widening Participation Directory when you contact the Open University)

Mock interviews for Access to HE learners applying for nursing programmes at UWE Bristol

University of West England

Project Aims

Supporting mature entry into nursing

The overall aim of this University of West England initiative is to offer mature students submitting an application to a range of nursing-based degree programmes an opportunity to experience a mock interview. These mock interviews offer students an opportunity to gain a greater understanding of the stringent selection process involved for acceptance onto nursing degrees. As these programmes are entirely funded by the National Health Service Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) and therefore students incur no cost, the university receives a high volume of applications per available place. Often mature students have limited experience within a group interview situation; exposure to this in advance helps to improve their confidence and their opportunity to succeed.

Who is the main target audience?

Mature learners on access courses

This initiative targets Access to Higher Education students from local colleges as mature students often have lower confidence in their ability to be able to transition into university and need support, advice and guidance in how to practice ready for their interviews.

What is the practice?

Mock interviews

Mock interviews are delivered at Glenside Campus (the central training facility for nursing-based programmes at UWE Bristol). The day involves a range of activities designed to mimic the robust and competitive selection process. UWE student ambassadors who are completing an NHS-funded programme are involved in the delivery of the day and are on-hand as a convenient and accessible information point for attendees. The sessions involve a mock group interview where the students are asked to discuss the requirements of the modern nursing profession, following which they present their conclusions to the rest of the group. During both stages of this process attendees are observed by both nursing tutors and student ambassadors who grade their performance accordingly. Attendees are given one-to-one feedback at the end of the day and suggestions for required improvements are given.

What has been the impact?

Increased confidence for participants

A university feedback-focus group was clear in its belief that the mock nursing interviews had increased the participant's confidence, communication skills and ability to reflect. Participants cited the experience as giving them a realistic taster of the real interview and noted that the positive effect had continued into their studies at UWE. Participants also felt that the Access to Higher Education course better prepared them for both the mock Interview and future study than other course areas such as A Levels. This was due to both the intensity and higher education specific nature of Access to Higher Education study compared to other Level 3 programmes.

A quote below from a focus group clearly demonstrates the support students feel during their transition period and into the first year.

"Yes... I had a visit here three years ago and I remember saying that if ever I decide to go to University, then it would be UWE. It's so inclusive and no matter what your age, your ethnicity, your background Everyone is seen as a member of one group, which is really good because if you're not a confident student or a confident person ... you get this image that people are here to support you. That's what I like about UWE. I'm the first

person in my family to go to university ... when I spoke with my father and said I wanted to go to university ... he said that that I should go to UWE. He said that UWE is such a good university for people from a range of backgrounds ... even my parents know it! I haven't had a bad experience at all ... I've had a great personal tutor and she's been really helpful."

The University of West England is clear in its belief that the mock nursing interviews add positive value to the UWE experience. Thematic analysis has shown that attendance at interview increases student confidence, communications skills and ability to reflect. Participants recognised that the skills they gained from the experience continued into their studies, suggesting the interviews have a lasting, positive effect throughout university life. The mock interviews therefore increase the cultural capital from a widening participation standpoint, the interviews add true value. Participants are able to engage in university life more effectively than non-participants and will arguably enter the workplace better equipped with the 'soft skills' that modern employers seek. An interesting extension activity would be to ascertain success in the workplace by attendant and non-attendant groups.

Quantitative data show a decrease in attrition rate of 2% for the students who attended a mock interview compared to those who did not.

Outcomes:

- an increase in understanding of higher education and the UWE interviewing process
- increased confidence in applying for nursing at UWE
- an increased understanding of pre-existing skills which will be useful to nursing.

What is the best lesson learned?

Building confidence increases access

"Providing interview practice for mature Access to Higher Education students applying for nursing programmes helps their confidence and improves success."

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Multiple mini interviews (MMIs)

Kingston University

Project Aims

Getting the right students and providing the best support

This Kingston University project provides an opportunity:

- to select students with the right values
- to ensure that the university approach is objective and that it allows for equal opportunity for applicants
- to identify and then ensure that students who score low in numeracy/literacy or in the Multiple Mini Interviews (MMIs) are supported during their course.

Who is the main target audience?

All applicants who are selected for interview

The project encompasses all students selected for interview, but in particular, students who score low in numeracy and literacy.

What is the practice?

An established, tried and tested university selection process

Multiple Mini Interviews (MMIs) are used extensively across those key institutions offering healthcare courses:

- St George's, University of London use MMIs to select healthcare students for nursing, midwifery and associated health professions
- within nursing, once students have passed their numeracy and literacy test they have to participate in Kingston University MMIs
- interviewers are not aware of a student's qualifications or past experiences but make the decision to offer a place based on the student's performance in their MMIs (this ensures that students are selected for their values and the skills demonstrated through the MMI and not on any subjective assessment by the supervisor)
- personal tutors are informed about any of their students who meet the entry score but have scored low in their numeracy/literacy/ MMI scores so that they can continue to provide guidance and support to students through the programme.

What has been the impact?

Exceeding targets on widening participation

The profile of Kingston's nursing students demonstrates that MMIs are contributing to successful applications and in supporting students through to completion.

What is the best lesson learned?

Get the support right at the beginning to secure student success

"Identifying students who may require support early in the programme can ensure success later on."

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Pharmacy foundation year

University of Manchester

Project Aims

Providing routes in to pharmacy for disadvantaged groups

The main focus of this project is to provide an opportunity for young learners from socio-economically deprived areas, and in particular from poorly performing high schools, to enter into higher education and register on a pharmacy degree programme.

Selection is based on a combination of academic attainment / potential and contextual data. Without this foundation year programme students would not otherwise be able to register with any other school of pharmacy in the UK. The foundation programme is a one year stand-alone programme based at a local sixth form college and it provides an in depth background for students that are successful, enabling them to study with confidence and ability on the main four year MPharm programme.

Who is the main target audience?

Young people in danger of not reaching their potential

The main audience for this initiative is young learners with academic potential who are studying in poorly performing high schools. Many of these pupils will not have the opportunity of reaching their potential and achieving the high grades required to study pharmacy. If successful on the foundation programme students automatically transfer onto the main MPharm programme if they so wish.

What is the practice?

Selection process providing a pathway into supplementary learning experiences

This initiative uses selection based primarily on contextual data but supplemented with academic potential. Small class size (approximately twenty) which helps distil confidence in the learning environment. Learning experiences take place at the university as well as a sixth form college.

What has been the impact?

Creating new pharmacy students (with no attrition) who graduate at the top of their class

Students that would not otherwise have an opportunity to study pharmacy in the UK now have that opportunity through this programme. The programme has been running for five years and of the first cohort of students that entered the Manchester Pharmacy School from the foundation year, all are in the final year of the MPharm programme. Of those, there is the distinct possibility that one third will achieve a first class MPharm degree whilst the others an upper second class degree. Hence, not only will they be graduating as pharmacists, but all will be in the top 50% of our student intake.

What is the best lesson learned?

Admission processes need to be balanced and finely tuned

“Undergraduate admissions processes are a fine balance, whereby academic achievements should be viewed holistically in the context of an applicant’s background.”

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Pharmacy in primary schools (PIPS)

University of Manchester

Project Aims

Promoting pharmacy as a career choice in deprived neighbourhoods

The overall aim of this project is to introduce pharmacy as a potentially viable career opportunity to Year 6 pupils living in and attending school in a socio-economically deprived area of Manchester. It also aims to raise aspirations and expectations, introduce the benefits of higher education and generate a feeling of self-worth amongst the pupils.

Who is the main target audience?

Primary school children Year 6 in deprived areas of Manchester

The main target group for this initiative is Year 6 pupils (final year of primary school) in a socio-economically deprived area of Manchester, followed by their parents / carers. A secondary group that also benefit are the university undergraduate ambassadors as it helps them to develop their communication skills and community engagement profile.

What is the practice?

Multi-faceted campus and school based practical learning activities

There is a programme of activities whereby two, two hour visits are made to the class that the university is working with on consecutive weeks to introduce the concept of higher education (week 1) pharmacy as a career (week 2), which are then followed up by a visit of the class to the Manchester Pharmacy School for half a day. Pupils get to experience a mini lecture, make medicine models and then calamine cream in the dispensing lab, before being taken for lunch in the refectory; then finishing the visit with a mini graduation ceremony in the main university at Whitworth Hall.

All activities both at school and in the university are hands-on, informative yet fun. Whilst many have a pharmacy spin to them, they are based on the Key Stage 2 curriculum. Undergraduate ambassadors from the Manchester Pharmacy School support these activities and are excellent role models for the pupils to aspire to. The programme concludes with a class assembly (including lots of photos) held at the school to inform parents / carers about the activities that the pupils have been involved with and to discuss this programme with them directly.

What has been the impact?

Raising expectations and supporting progression

The project has resulted in:

- pupil expectations are raised
- pupils enjoy the experience
- pupils enjoy all of the activities
- pupil interest in science is stimulated.

This programme has been running since 1997. From the first cohort of pupils, at least four have now gone on to study at university.

What is the best lesson learned?

Everybody has something to offer

“Everybody has something to offer, our job is to enable that skill to its best capability.”

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Preston widening access programme (PWAP)

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Project Aims

Increasing aspirations whilst supporting applications in to medicine

The Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Preston Widening Access Programme pilot activity was aimed at a) supporting and encouraging students from a local sixth form college who aspired to enter the medical profession and b) to help these students to attain a place on the medical school undergraduate programme with the University of Manchester. There was also a specific project focus of targeting those sixth form students from non-traditional backgrounds to encourage an application to medicine.

The programme comprised of a range of practical activities and study opportunities which supported students to enhance their application to university. The sessions were held on site at the trust. Successful completion of the programme, guaranteed an interview with the University of Manchester for a place on the MBChB Manchester/Preston undergraduate programme with a slightly reduced academic entry requirement.

Because this pilot programme was developed by the Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, current medical students were identified as a key resource to provide support for successful applicants through the Preston Widening Access Programme.

Who is the main target audience?

Year 12 students undertaking A levels at a sixth form Catholic college

This pilot activity was designed for students studying at a local college who were undertaking A levels and considering applying to study medicine.

What is the practice?

This Lancashire Teaching Hospitals Trust pilot activity is a first for trusts, in terms of the Lancashire Teaching Hospitals Trust's commitment to deliver the programme on a hospital site. This commitment was felt to be particularly advantageous for medicine for the following reasons:

- it provides continuity and supports transition on to the medicine degree
- it allows the candidates to engage with medical students already on the programme
- it creates continuity with year three and five of the degree which are delivered on site
- it provides candidates with the opportunity to meet degree staff and tutors
- it provides a realistic view of what to expect in terms of being a medical student.

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust believes this pilot programme presents as an exciting opportunity to engage with and support young and ambitious students that have a desire to follow a career in medicine. This pilot will be extended to three other local colleges in autumn 2014.

What has been the impact?

Too early to say

This programme is still in the pilot phase and has yet to be assessed for its impact. This will be measured in terms of how many students gain a place at the University of Manchester to study medicine and then how many actually graduate to become doctors.

What is the best lesson learned?

Managed transitions can support success

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust firmly believes, " With the right support dreams can become reality regardless of background."

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Progression to higher education- nursing

Sheffield Hallam University

Project Aims

Fast tracking high achievers through the use of advanced standing

The aim of this initiative is to enable high performing healthcare assistants who have successfully completed Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust's access course to progress with advanced standing to year two of the pre-registration nursing course at Sheffield Hallam University.

Who is the main target audience?

Experienced healthcare assistants

The main audience are healthcare assistants who are about to complete their access course. The next main audience are healthcare assistants who have previously completed the Access to Higher Education course, who have been in employment as healthcare assistants for some time, and who are viewed by both the Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and the university as having the academic and caring attributes required of nurses.

What is the practice?

Blended learning and accreditation of prior learning

The university is committed to enabling those students with the qualifications, confidence and experiential learning to progress with advanced standing into year two of the nursing programme.

The project can be characterised by:

- close working partnerships between Sheffield Teaching Hospitals and Sheffield Hallam University from the design and approval stage of the access course and into the recruitment process
- shorter qualification to registration facilitated through Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)
- careful management of accreditation of year one skills to ensure that prospective students have sufficient study skills to cope with the demands of the programme.

What has been the impact?

Fast tracking support staff in to professional roles

Full time study is reduced to two years. As the healthcare assistant workforce moves into nurse education they are highly likely to return as qualified nurses within two years. Both the Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and the university are involved in selection of suitable candidates. The provision also contributes to the trust planning of its nursing workforce.

The university is discussing with the commissioners the potential roll out to other trusts.

What is the best lesson learned?

Joint working makes sense

"Partnership working between the university and the trust makes sure the experience works."

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Progression to medical professions programme

University of Exeter

Project Aims

Realising potential

The University of Exeter's Progression to Medical Professions initiative is designed to improve access to the medical school for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The initiative brings together staff from across the medical school, the wider university and the local NHS trust.

This initiative has two key aims. The first is to encourage aspiration: too many children grow up believing that university is not an option for them. To realign this perception the project engages with children, on the university campus, to share the thrill of hands-on discovery-based learning. Secondly, to deliver targeted support to help these children turn aspiration into reality. The university works closely with teachers to identify what can be done that best supports their pupils.

Importantly, research shows that pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds out-perform other students after entering higher education. Participants in this initiative may therefore enrol with a lower entry tariff than other applicants.

The Progression to Medical Professions Programme gives up to sixty Year 12 students the opportunity to attend eight half day sessions; half of these take place on the Exeter campus and the rest are delivered on the Truro campus. At these sessions students can find out about medicine and the wide range of professions allied to medicine, whilst learning more about the universities three undergraduate programmes which include medical sciences and medical imaging as well as medicine. Participants are provided with opportunities to develop key study and reflective practice skills that will assist them in their future studies and careers.

Who is the main target audience?

Young people with an interest in the medical professions

The main target audience are pupils that attend schools whose examination performance places them in the bottom 40% of schools in their local education authority. This innovative measure of educational disadvantage has been approved by the Office for Fair Access (OFFA).

Students who wish to apply to the Progression to Medical Professions Programme must have an interest in the medical professions and:

- have achieved a minimum of 6 Bs and 2 Cs at GCSE (or equivalent), including maths and English
- be studying at least 1 science at A Level

PLUS at least one of the following statements must apply to applicants:

- they live in a neighbourhood where a low percentage of young people progress to higher education as defined by home postcode*
- they live in a low income neighbourhood as defined by home postcode*
- they are in receipt of free school meals**
- they are eligible for school bursaries**
- their parents have not studied at university
- they are or have been living in care

* Verified by home postcode

** Verified by School/College

What is the practice?

Hands on aspiration raising events

The University of Exeter has a strong track-record for delivering hands-on events which raise the aspirations

of pupils to study at university. However, aspiration is only one factor in students being able to access higher education, so this initiative combines aspiration-focussed and attainment-focused activities.

Students are split into three groups of ten on each campus (to reflect an ethos of small group teaching) and they attend eight half day sessions. They then complete a programme of activities:

	Session 1	Session 2
Block 1 – Circulation	Medicine	Poster Creation
Block 2 – Cell Division & Tumours	BSc Medical Sciences	Written Reports
Block 3 – Musculoskeletal System	Medical Imaging	Presentations
Block 4 – Consolidation	Reflection Task Setting Career Talks / Options Study Skills	Reflection Task Submission Mock Interviews UKCAT Guidance and Practice Reflection Task Conference

The two sessions within each block are a week apart allowing the students some time to reflect on the first session in preparation for the second.

Pupils shadow undergraduate, academic and clinical staff, attending placements that accommodate their particular interests. This process plays a crucial role in normalising the decisions entailed in accessing higher education.

This project highlights access alone is not enough. The university has therefore developed a range of analytical processes to monitor students' progress once they arrive, and identify those that would benefit from additional support. These methods were commended by the GMC during recent accreditation visits to the university.

What has been the impact?

Increased access to medical school from pupils attending state schools

The Progression to Medical Professions Programme has:

- introduced the experience of being on a university campus to the students
- provided more information on medicine on medicine whilst highlighting the wide range of allied health professions that are available
- given students confidence in completing a variety of styles of work
- provided general advice and guidance on progression to higher education through webchats supported by the central University of Exeter teams
- provided skills and experience to support the students' university applications
- provided the opportunity for the students to interact with peers who have similar aspirations and backgrounds.

What is the best lesson learned?

Collaboration and institutional support are key planks for widening participation

The project team plan to use student feedback gathered through a Reflection Task Conference, as well as formal feedback forms, to review the effectiveness and success of the programme as part of continuous improvement. In addition, the university will look at the outcomes for the individual students who take part in the programme as a way of measuring the programmes impact.

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Recruitment and selection events for adult and mental health nursing degree programmes

University of Lincoln

Project Aims

Developing effective, efficient and equitable nursing degree admissions systems

This university initiative has sought to review and change admissions systems and procedures for the University of Lincoln BSc (Hons) Adult Nursing programme. It introduced new selection and admission processes which included the integration of practitioners, service users and carers in to the selection process.

This project includes a two stage screening process for nursing degree applicants which commences with specialist admissions staff looking at academic filters whilst establishing the suitability of candidates in terms of supportive personal references. Applications are then subject to further 'professional' screening. This involves scrutiny by an academic nursing admissions team which includes adult and mental health nursing specialists.

Successful candidates attend nursing selection events which involve candidate participation in a group work activity based around a current and topical values based discussion. This group activity is observed by a specialist panel which typically consists of a nurse academic, service user, clinician and student nurse. This group activity is assessed and measured.

The candidates also undertake short literacy and numeracy tests. All members of the panel are involved in scoring candidates and they contribute to the final decision making process.

Who is the main target audience?

Nursing degree applicants and university admissions teams

This project incorporates expertise from specialist academic staff, service users, student nurses and clinicians. The benefit of this process is experienced by all those involved in student recruitment through increased internal dialogue and understanding. The process highlights the range of individual and shared roles which when brought together contribute to effective recruitment, as well as underlining the challenges, successes and strengths of each person's respective role. This process ultimately also supports feedback from applicants about their personal experiences and knowledge of how the recruitment process works for applicants.

Nursing applicants directly benefit from selection panels with a wider understanding of recruitment processes and the selection panels are in turn better able to identify nurses 'of the future' who have been screened and selected through a robust and measurable screening process.

These nurses 'of the future' are assessed through a recruitment process which looks at the applicant's personal values and communication skills as well as their academic ability. The selection panels recognise that nurses need to have many qualities including the desire to care, compassion, commitment, competence, courage and leadership ability as well as excellent communication skills. This project recognises that nurses must be all-rounders in terms of ability and be able to use their intelligence to ensure the best care for their patients.

What is the practice?

Developing effective and equitable screening to support appropriate recruitment

This initiative highlights a 'best practice' approach in university nursing degree admissions which incorporates both an understanding of the essential nature of the selection panel member mix and the kinds of representation needed to create balance; as well as the creation of directly measurable screening processes which reflect the applicant's different skill sets and experiences.

This work has enhanced the University of Lincoln's widening participation activity by measuring applicants through a screening tool, as equal. This works by ensuring all those who meet the entry criteria, have their UCAS application forms screened and measured on a weighting scale. The score from this is then carried over to a selection event. The component scores from these events are all weighted equally and include the screening score. All candidates must pass all the elements of the selection event, but some applicants may score more highly at group work, others at numeracy and so forth.

What has been the impact?

Highly positive so far....but early days...

The impact of this initiative has been positive from both the perspective of practice environments and the university. It is hoped that the students recruited through this selection process will have lower levels of attrition rates, represent the wider community, and be committed to undertaking and successfully completing their nurse education programme.

Practice colleagues have reported positively on the calibre of student nurses they have on placement and practice colleagues have appreciated and enjoyed being involved in the recruitment process. This has given all participants a clearer understanding of the intricacies of recruiting students to degree programmes in the 21st century.

The university believes better partnership working has arisen out of the kind of alliances forged through joint working to support selection; and between nurses operating in higher education and clinical settings. The inclusion of service users in admission processes has contributed greatly, adding benefit to all those involved by bringing a new and informative narrative and a different range of experiences into the selection process. Service users have therefore been able to inform and influence admission processes where appropriate.

What is the best lesson learned?

Effective widening participation enhances the workforce of the future

"Widening participation in recruitment and selection of the nurses of the future enhances recruitment of a diverse, highly skilled and knowledgeable workforce."

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Residential healthcare university experience (Year 11)

Plymouth University

Project Aims

This Plymouth University initiative comprises of a five day residential UniExperience for under-represented groups interested in progressing onto a health profession. It is run in partnership with the university Faculty of Health Education and Society.

It is focused on the need:

- to widen students' knowledge of the availability of different health career professions, routes into the professions and to provide an accurate picture of the different health careers
- to raise the students awareness of the facilities and opportunities available at Plymouth University.
- to give the students a better idea of what it is like to live and study at university
- to overcome any inhibitions that students might have about applying to university, increase their confidence in training as a health professional.

Who is the main target audience?

Underrepresented groups who are targeted at Year 11

The objective of this project was to invite up to thirty students, who meet at least one the criteria for the strands outlined in the Plymouth Access Scheme (PAS) for widening participation initiatives.

That is:

- students from low income socio-economic class groups who come under the PASC (Plymouth Access for School and College Learners) prioritising applicants from quintile 1 of POLAR2, IMD, NS-SEC 4-8
- students with declared disabilities
- students from Black and Minority Ethnic groups
- care leavers
- students who are the first in their family to go to university.

What is the practice?

Blended mix of practical activities and academic study

The project includes a process of targeted recruitment at Year 11 (just prior to A level) to ensure students select the most appropriate A level/BTEC subjects and they are also able to identify action plans for gaining relevant experience

Participants are offered a mix of activities, ranging from team-building to lectures and seminars and a field trip to Derriford hospital in the daytime, followed by recreational activities in the evenings. Academic sessions reflect the full range of health professions offered at Plymouth University and are organised to mirror what students would experience at university studying on a health course. The opportunity to stay in university halls of residence gives students the full experience of living at university but with support in place from student ambassadors and staff. All student ambassadors who are involved are studying towards a health profession degree which enables them to talk about their experiences within their subject areas, and provide more specialist support during the workshops provided as part of the health UniExperience.

What has been the impact?

Confirms understanding and commitment to go on into higher education

Students complete a questionnaire asking them about their future plans and thoughts at the beginning and end of the week, to ascertain any attitudinal shift.

At the beginning and end of the UniExperience all attending students are asked how likely they thought it would be that they would continue onto higher education. At the end, all students agreed or strongly agreed that they planned to go into higher education, compared with a mixed response at the beginning of the week.

Over the week the evaluation highlighted that students felt they had an increased understanding of higher education to decide if they wanted to go, and an increased feeling of fitting in if they were to continue onto higher education.

On the whole, the choice of workshops and activities are very popular, enabling students to explore all the options within the health professions. Visiting Derriford Hospital allows students to meet health professionals who give them a tour of their ward, providing a “real-life” perspective of the role of the health professional.

The importance of the role of health student ambassadors is also clearly highlighted as they share their own experiences of both the course and placement activity.

This brings the team together as well as:

- overcoming concerns through discussion
- offering advice and guidance, along with positive feedback about their own experience.

What is the best lesson learned?

Target students at the right juncture before key decisions are made

Targeting Year 11 students rather than Year 12 ensures that this intervention is made prior to A level choices being made; enabling students to select appropriate subjects and identify opportunities for work experience.

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Residential summer schools

Lancaster Medical School

Project Aims

Experience university life and gain insight into medicine and surgery

This Lancaster Medical School Summer School project was designed:

- to allow school students from a widening participation background the chance to experience university life (fear of the unknown is thought to be one barrier to applying to medical school for non-traditional applicants)
- to provide an insight into studying medicine and surgery at Lancaster University (unrealistic expectations that are not borne out in practice are thought to contribute to the higher drop-out rate amongst students from a widening participation background)
- to give potential applicants the opportunity to take part in problem based learning
- to provide information, advice and guidance about applying to medical school, both formal (from the Director of Admissions to the MBChB degree programme) and informal (through contact with current medical students)
- to help potential applicants from a widening participation background make informed decisions about applying to medical school.

Who is the main target audience?

Year 12 school students

The project targets Year 12 school students from a widening participation background, UK-wide, who are interested in studying medicine, and not necessarily at Lancaster University.

What is the practice?

An intensive and immersive experience on campus

The summer school consists of four days of activities, academic and social, that are designed to give attendees an impression of university life. The attendees stay in student accommodation, attend classes and take part in a variety of social and sporting events. Classes include problem based learning (PBL), anatomy, clinical skills and a medical ethics debate. Attendees experience the entire problem-based learning process: learning objective setting, self-directed study and discussion of what they have learned. This is particularly useful in helping potential students decide whether problem based learning is a form of learning that would suit them.

In addition, attendees get advice and guidance about applying to medical school through a formal admissions advice talk and through informal contact with medical students, who help in classes and attend social events with the attendees. Those who are deemed suitable for a problem-based learning curriculum are offered a guaranteed interview, if they apply to Lancaster Medical School.

What has been the impact?

Nearly half the attendees applied for medical school places

Of the thirty-six students who attended the 2013 summer school, fifteen applied to Lancaster Medical School for 2014 entry, twelve were interviewed and five were made offers.

The UK Student Recruitment and Outreach Office at Lancaster University intend to contact those who did not apply to Lancaster Medical School to enquire whether they applied to medical school elsewhere, to find out whether they got into medical school and to evaluate the impact of our summer school on their decision-making process this past year.

What is the best lesson learned?

Students benefit from learning about their own learning styles

“For potential students, learning that they are not suited to problem based learning is valuable in itself, in making decisions about applying to medical school.”

But, “You should not view these ventures as a way to recruit applicants to your own medical school but as a way to help non-traditional applicants understand what is expected of them (a) when they are applying to medical school (to help with recruitment into the profession) and (b) when they are studying at medical school (to help with retention on medical degree programmes).”

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Sheffield Hallam compact scheme

Sheffield Hallam University

Project Aims

Overcoming barriers to progression

The Sheffield Hallam Compact Scheme provides additional support to students who have the ability to progress to university but may face real or perceived barriers to progression. This support may include interview preparation workshops and special consideration during the admissions process.

Who is the main target audience?

Pupils who can only apply to Sheffield Hallam

The Sheffield University Compact Scheme is available to all pupils who meet at least one of the criteria below and must only be able to study locally at Sheffield Hallam University. Students on the scheme may receive additional consideration in relation to their application.

Eligibility criteria include:

- caring responsibilities
- cultural reasons
- financial difficulty due to low parental or personal income
- disability related reasons
- looked after children, and
- extenuating circumstances (i.e.: interrupted studies such as serious illness or family bereavement).

What is the practice?

Supported entry

Compact interview preparation workshops are provided for health and social care courses and they are held each year for students on the Compact Scheme who have been offered an Interview. These sessions are delivered by academics from the relevant course areas to provide advice and guidance on how to perform well at interview stage. They also provide the students with a chance to meet academics who will be teaching them on the course and to feel more comfortable in the university environment.

What has been the impact?

Overcoming perceptual barriers through engagement

Students who may have never considered applying to university due to perceived barriers have applied to university.

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Student healthcare support worker programme

Addenbrookes NHS Trust Cambridge University Hospitals

Project Aims

Developing and expanding the number of work placements in clinical settings

Addenbrookes NHS Trust Cambridge University Hospitals (CUH) incorporates the Deakin Learning Centre on the CUH campus. This is a self-financing enterprise operating as part of the Cambridge Regional College Academy of Care, Health and Early Years. This building also houses the CUH Clinical Skills Unit and the trust's Pemberton Learning Centre which is used for the training and development of trust staff.

This innovative building has supported a partnership with Cambridge Regional College to develop and extend an already extensive work experience and volunteers service. This facility has provided an opportunity for health and social care students to undertake their studies in a hospital environment and have a more tailored work experience programme that will support their learning, coupled with an opportunity to experience volunteering, and a year two experience in a clinic.

Who is the main target audience?

Students and their tutors

This project targets:

- students undertaking health and social care through the Cambridge Regional College
- tutors delivering the programme and the students who have benefited from a chance to see theory put into practice and can experience what is required to be a good healthcare worker
- tutors who visit the students in the work placement areas
- clinical staff benefit from supervising and mentoring the students
- the trust itself and managers who benefit from the development of future talent and possible future recruits.

What is the practice?

Graduated immersion in the workplace

During year one of the health and social care course the students are invited to apply to join the volunteer programme giving them the opportunity to help out on wards doing a variety of tasks such as help with feeding, running errands and talking to patients.

Year two students can apply for a placement within a clinic to undertake weighing, chaperoning, communicating and sitting in on consultations with patients. Students spend three days in training with the Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust Care Team before their placement and they attend a trust corporate Induction. The students then complete a competency workbook in placement with support of clinic supervisor/tutors.

What has been the impact?

Seeing theory translate into practice

The project has provided an opportunity for which clinical staff report a positive experience, specifically in having a new young person who is enthusiastic to do hands on work. Students have discovered how they can put theory into practice and experience how staff and teams work together to the benefit of patients. Students have shown a real understanding of what the work involves through reflection and completion of the work books.

What is the best lesson learned?

Clarity of purpose and clear communications are core to effective placement

This project has demonstrated a need for:

- clarity of purpose
- for responsibility and communication of the expectations of students
- for support from tutors and clinical staff
- celebrating results in a worthwhile programme that will equip young people to become healthcare professionals in the future.

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Using simulation based activities with year 12 students

University of West London

Project Aims

This University of West London project is focused on encouraging pupils from local schools to come into the university and spend an introductory day in the College of Nursing, Midwifery and Healthcare. The aim of the day is to stimulate interest in higher education and health care courses in particular.

Part of the day includes the introduction to courses on offer, meeting current students, and advice regarding personal statements and selection days. The participants spend an hour in small groups in the university's state of the art simulation centre engaging in activities and simulated scenarios related to health care. The university believes this is both innovative and interesting for the pupils attending.

Who is the main target audience?

Year 12 pupils

The main audience is Year 12 students from local schools and colleges who have shown an interest in healthcare.

What is the practice?

Immersive experience based on real life scenarios

Dedicated academic and technical staff who are based in the university simulation centre run simple health care scenarios using interactive mannequins in which the pupils can engage. This intention is to provide a snapshot of a realistic healthcare situation and the role of healthcare workers within this. In addition pupils, who might be considering applying to the University of West London, get first-hand experience of the state of the art facilities and expertise on offer to support their learning.

What has been the impact?

Watch this space

The university has run similar projects in the past as taster days for Year 10 and 11 pupils undertaking health and social care courses and they have been evaluated enthusiastically by those who have attended. They have planned feedback at the end of the taster day and over the longer term the university will collect data at selection days regarding attendance at events such as these and whether they stimulate the interest to apply.

What is the best lesson learned?

Make it hands on

"From similar previous projects; involve them in something interesting and active."

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Utilising pre-registration student involvement to inspire school children to access health care professions.

Bolton NHS Foundation Trust

Project Aims

This Bolton NHS Foundation Trust initiative sought to:

- encourage the local school children/college student population to aspire to access higher education and health care professions through pre-registration involvement at a careers event
- making health care professions accessible to all regardless of background, status and ethnicity.

Who is the main target audience?

Young people aged 13-18 years old

This project targets:

- school children/college students aged 13 -18 years across a wide geographical area in Bolton
- eight different venues are utilised encompassing all the local schools and colleges (approximately twenty).

What is the practice?

Make learning fun

Bolton NHS Foundation Trust Practice Education Facilitators (PEFs) wanted to develop a different way to engage with school children, and to get the best possible interaction/ engagement from a careers event. It was decided to move away from a taught teacher led session to a fun scenario based and information giving. To promote this the team utilised CPR manikins and a selection of equipment. Simple clinical demonstrations are used to trigger engagement. Events also involve pre-registration students who are out on placement at the time.

The Practice Education Facilitators liaise with the Bolton NHS Foundation Trust's coordinator of careers events and deliver information about all occupations within the NHS. Allied health professionals also participate in these events and they are encouraged to bring their students along. The nursing students are recruited slightly differently due to the numbers involved in this profession.

Bolton NHS Foundation Trust contacts all nursing students in their third year and volunteers are sought for careers events. Volunteer students must be achieving all their objectives in practice and ideally their documentation has all been completed for their placement. A maximum of two students per profession accompany the trust staff and students do not repeat the process despite requests that they may do so.

What has been the impact?

Highly animated sessions

This Bolton NHS Foundation Trust project has demonstrated that:

- having the pre-registration students present resulted in the school children being far more animated and open to discussion than in previous events
- pre-registration students have now been participating in career events for two years
- previously it appeared to be the parents who did the majority of questioning during a careers event but the children are now more engaged
- Involvement of someone nearer the young people's own peer group does appear to be beneficial; however mature students are also invited to participate

- the pre-registration students who have been involved in the career events have become more confident in their communication skills, acknowledging their own career development. The feedback from these individuals is very positive; many ask why they could not participate earlier in their career and more than once.

Future plans are to engage with primary aged school children and to focus on health care as a profession are under consideration.

What is the best lesson learned?

Involving existing healthcare/nursing students is catalytic

Involvement of pre-registration students in careers events has a positive effect on school children, providing an opportunity to discuss the actual programme/process of accessing higher education within a safe and comfortable environment.

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Widening participation in nursing; healthcare science and operating department practice

Anglia Ruskin University

Project Aims

Creating an enabling infrastructure to widen access

Anglia Ruskin University is committed to promoting widening participation agendas and has therefore responded to calls for Fair Access on a number of fronts. This work has included running careers in the NHS events, promoting access to nursing through the acceptance of a range of entry qualifications; and involvement with the Children's University and STEMNET.

Who is the main target audience?

Young people

The primary focus for these university initiatives are young people aged 11-16 years who need to develop an understanding of the wide range of careers available in the NHS. Widening participation activity is also available for nursing for those individuals aged eighteen years and over, who are eligible to apply for higher education courses. There is also a geographical focus on the Eastern Region.

Anglia Ruskin University works with schools and colleges, across the Eastern Region and beyond to offer advice, guidance and events to promote widening participation and the benefits of studying at university.

What is the practice?

Developing good internal communications across university departments to support both fair access and the provision of timely and appropriate health careers information

The Faculty of Health, Social Care and Education work very closely with the university Outreach and Recruitment Team to promote widening participation. The Outreach and Recruitment Team at Anglia Ruskin University is geared to help students, parents and staff access information and advice about higher education. All of the events the university offer schools and colleges are free and are focussed on helping students work towards achieving the 2013 Education Act's statutory guidance on Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG).

There are a number of activities which underline the university commitment to fair access.

Access to nursing

The Anglia Ruskin University nursing course accepts students from vocational courses, Access to Higher Education courses and traditional A levels courses. The UCAS tariff for adult and child nursing is 240 points and for mental health nursing is 200-240 points. Nursing staff work closely with the university admissions, recruitment and marketing teams to ensure that all enquiries are dealt with, that there is opportunity for nursing taster days, open days and other recruitment events to provide potential applicants with the opportunity to seek information.

Assisting the Surgeon and the Children's University

Anglia Ruskin University run a widening participation event as part of a Children's University initiative. The Children's University is a national project to provide exciting and innovative learning activities and experiences outside normal school hours. At the heart of its work is the ambition to raise aspirations, boost achievement and foster a love of learning, so that young people can make the most of their abilities and interests.

As part of an Assisting the Surgeon event young people from Peterborough were given an insight into the

Operating Department Practice (ODP) profession at the Guild House campus in Peterborough in January 2014. Local young people, aged seven to fourteen, took part in activities linked to the role of an operating department practitioner including resuscitation, handling instruments and dressing up in gowns and masks.

For more details see:

http://www.anglia.ac.uk/ruskin/en/home/faculties/fhsce/news-events/news/archive/Assisting_the_Surgeon.html

Healthcare Science and STEMNET

Members of the healthcare science course team from Anglia Ruskin University have supported a STEMNET event at Duxford Imperial War Museum over a number of years. They have introduced the participants to cardiac and respiratory clinical physiology. Children from primary schools and secondary schools have attended the event and experienced some of the tests of the cardiac and respiratory systems. The sessions are interactive and give an insight into how the cardiac and respiratory systems respond to physical exercise using actual clinical equipment. The participants have fun testing themselves and their classmates and are inspired to consider a career in healthcare science.

Anglia Ruskin University accepts a variety of entrance qualifications and puts in place a supportive infrastructure to support and encourage informed course choice for prospective students.

What is the impact?

An increase in representation of previously under-represented groups

Since 2009, Anglia Ruskin University has seen an increase in the number of BME students:

- 2009/10 8
- 2010/11 17
- 2011/12 26
- 2012/13 31
- 2013/14 39

Since 2009, Anglia Ruskin University has also seen an increase in the number of male students:

- 2009/10 1
- 2010/11 2
- 2011/12 3
- 2012/13 5
- 2013/14 7

This information is monitored through the Course Performance data on Qlikview.

What is the best lesson learned?

Always make learning fun

The widening participation activity at Anglia Ruskin is characterised by a focus on 'hands on' and interactive.

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Widening participation in clinical psychology and the Lancaster doctorate in clinical psychology (DClinPsy)

Lancaster University

Project Aims

The widening participation outreach group at Lancaster University is passionate about inclusivity and as such they were interested in recruiting clinical psychology applicants from people who identify with a minority group. The main aim of this project was to diversify the clinical psychology profession by disseminating information about how to become a clinical psychologist to sixth form schools and colleges that have large minority populations. The university outreach focuses on recruiting applicants from minority groups who are currently underrepresented in the clinical psychology profession - this is not limited to ethnic minorities.

There is a national issue affecting all training courses in clinical psychology. In 2012, 81% of total applicants were white, with 3% of mixed ethnic group, 8% of Asian origin and 3% black. 82% of applicants were female, 76% under 30 years of age, 92% heterosexual and 90% identified themselves as non-disabled.

Who is the main target audience?

Identifiable underrepresented groups

This project focused on:

- young people studying at identified widening participation schools and colleges in Lancashire and Cumbria, in the first instance
- influencing young people from a variety of minority backgrounds who may not have heard of clinical psychology, or may not have considered a career in the field, to find out more and
- making young people aware that Lancaster DClinPsy values diversity across its selection procedures and during training.

As such the initiative was keen to attract and engage young people from minority groups who are currently underrepresented in the clinical psychology profession.

Ultimately, the audience benefiting from the initiative will be clients accessing mental health services in the future, as widening participation in clinical psychology will go some way to make the profession itself more representative of the populations it serves.

What is the practice?

Clear careers and course information

In collaboration with Lancaster University's UK Student Recruitment and Outreach Officer, the project team sent a specially developed information leaflet and covering letter to careers leads in schools and colleges identified as widening participation institutions (in Lancashire and Cumbria, in the first instance). It is hoped to expand this nationally.

The leaflet includes information about clinical psychology as a career, including possible routes to professional training, and gives more information specifically about the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology at Lancaster University, where trainees are employees of Lancashire Care NHS Trust. The information leaflet and covering letter are available on request.

What has been the impact?

Watch this space

To date, Lancaster University has no outcome data or measures of impact as the initiative is still in its early stages of development. They will however be collecting details of those schools who express an interest in hearing more about the profession and the DClinPsy at Lancaster University.

What is the best lesson learned?

Too early to say

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Work experience scheme

St George's University of London and St George's Healthcare NHS Trust

Project Aims

Tackling placement barriers for disadvantaged students

St George's Healthcare NHS Trust, Education and Development Department, piloted a new scheme in 2014, offering Year 11-12, widening participation spring and summer school alumni the opportunity of a healthcare work experience placement. The St George's Education and Development Department is responsible for liaising with trust teams to find the placements. The St George's University of London widening participation team are responsible for managing the programme paperwork, student induction and behaviour standards.

Securing relevant work experience is often a barrier to some students and this is particularly problematic in healthcare arenas as it is a prerequisite for all medical, and the majority of allied healthcare subjects.

The unequal access to work experience opportunities for students from lower socio-economic backgrounds was highlighted in the Milburn report in 2012, University Challenge: How Higher Education Can Advance Social Mobility. In addition, the Medical Schools Council, Selecting for Excellence, End of Year Report 2013, encouraged all NHS Trusts to sign up to the PRACTISE scheme, through which health service providers make a commitment to prioritise work experience opportunities for pupils claiming free school meals (FSM) and/or pupils who attend a school with a high proportion of FSM eligibility; and have no family experience of higher education.

Being co-located on a single campus, university and hospital side by side, St George's is in a strong position to utilise and combine their knowledge and expertise of higher education outreach and healthcare provision, enabling both organisations to meet shared objectives regarding community engagement, widening participation to higher education, and access to work experience for students from under-represented groups.

Who is the main target audience?

Summer school alumni

This project targets St George's University of London Widening Participation Spring and Summer School alumni. St George's Widening Participation Spring and Summer Schools are an aspiration, attainment raising and information, advice and guidance (IAG) activity for Year 7-12 pupils.

Students are contacted in Year 11 or 12 and in line with St George's Healthcare NHS Trust aims and objectives. Students from Wandsworth and Merton are prioritised.

What is the practice?

Mixed menu of flexible placements

Students are offered a three to five day work experience placement during late July or August (outside of school term time). To ensure participants are fully supported throughout their work experience placement, the St George's University of London Widening Participation Team provide the following:

- financial assistance to ensure students can attend their work experience placement
- a named contact in the widening participation team to support the participant and healthcare professional overseeing them, as/when required, before, during or after the placement
- a work experience induction session to ensure students are fully prepared and aware of their personal expectations and those of the NHS staff/department they will be working with, so they can maximise the opportunity and know how to reflect on their experiences
- a post work experience session to discuss and reflect on their experiences, recognise the skills gained, development that has taken place, and how they can present this when applying for a university course or at interview
- a certificate/transcript of completion.

What has been the impact?

Increased insight into the real world of the NHS

The pilot scheme is being evaluated using feedback from the participants, placement supervisors; and the trust and university programme co-ordinators. Themes are emerging relating to the positive impact of the programme on the students showing that the scheme increased insight into the real world of the NHS, the importance of team work; the value of patient centred communication as well as giving participants an opportunity to reflect on their career aspirations and plans. Discussions are underway to develop the scheme in 2015 adding it to the menu of multiple intervention activities on offer to the university's widening participation spring / summer school students. This will also strengthen the collaboration between St George's University of London, and St George's Healthcare NHS Trust, a key NHS employer.

What is the best lesson learned?

Know your partners

"Shared aims and objectives drive collaboration."

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Year 10 health taster day

Cumbria University

Project Aims

Students are identified from schools in areas described as 'low participation neighbourhoods' where there is little or family no history of going to university are given priority. The Lancaster day includes schools from Blackpool, Colne, Burnley and Preston. The Carlisle day includes schools from the west coast of Cumbria, traditionally an area of low participation in higher education.

What is the practice?

Learning through case studies

Each taster day is organised around a case study developed by academic staff. Pupils attend four sessions delivered by academic staff in nursing, radiography, rehabilitation and working with children and families. Each session explores different elements of the case study and helps pupils understand the cross-disciplinary nature of health and social care provision. The sessions are practical and 'hands-on' with pupils having access to clinical laboratories and facilities. Pupils also have the opportunity to talk to current students.

At the end of a taster day students are evaluated on their experience. The university measure the impact of the event on the student's knowledge of higher education and their desire to progress. Pupils who express an interest and give consent can then be followed up with more information and invitations to further University of Cumbria Health Taster Days in Year 12.

What has been the impact?

Positive evaluations from pupils and teachers

One hundred students attended this project across the two events. Evaluations from teachers and pupils were very positive. One teacher commented that it was "a well-constructed day giving a clear insight into areas in health and social care". The vast majority of pupils felt that they knew a lot more at the end of the day and were more likely to progress to university as a result of attending. One teacher later reported that students were more engaged in their academic studies having identified potential career paths.

What is the best lesson learned?

Having an awareness of the range of health careers is part and parcel of raising aspirations

"Providing an engaging practical experience for younger students improves their awareness of careers in health and social care and raises aspirations. It can also have positive effect on school performance."

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Young professionals - tomorrow's professionals

Leeds Metropolitan University

Project Aims

Demonstrate a range of healthcare careers and decision making strategies

The Leeds Metropolitan University Young Professionals programme is an initiative aimed at young people in key target groups who are interested in a career in health and who have the potential to study at university. Pupils begin the programme in Year 10 and remain on the scheme throughout Year 11. They are then able to progress on to the Tomorrow's Professionals programme in Year 12.

The programme is designed show the wide range of careers available in health and to encourage participants to think about their future career plans and choices between key stage 4 and 5. The culmination of the Tomorrow's Professionals scheme is a three-day residential at which Year 12 pupils from schools and colleges across West Yorkshire gain a real student experience by staying in the university's halls of residence. The overall aim is to allow individuals to develop the confidence, skills and knowledge to gain a place at university.

Who is the main target audience?

School students from across West Yorkshire in Year 10-12

The project targets:

- year 10 and Year 12 students from schools and colleges in West Yorkshire who have the potential to progress to university but who are disadvantaged due to socio-economic factors
- students who will have expressed an interest in pursuing a career in health.

What is the practice?

Campus based activity based programme

The Young Professionals programme includes workshops on general topics related to studying at higher education level as well as subject specific taster days at which participants engage in hands on activities in specialist facilities.

The Tomorrow's Professionals programme includes activities throughout Year 12 with subject specific focus days at university at which topics are covered in more depth than in the Young Professionals scheme. Across the three days of the Tomorrow's Professionals residential there is a full programme of academic and social activities. The aim of giving participants a true impression of student life is greatly assisted by the involvement of our own students as ambassadors; their enthusiasm and knowledge really help to engage the interest of the participants.

The emphasis of the programme is continuity, forming strong links with participants, tracking them through all their interactions with the university right up to, hopefully, admission on to our courses.

What has been the impact?

Positive feedback

There has been extremely good feedback from participants on both the Young Professionals and Tomorrow's Professionals activities, especially in relation to the residential. Positive feedback has been particularly evident in terms of participants feeling less worried about the prospect of coming to university and having a clearer idea of the course that is most suitable for them. This initiative began solely for health related subjects, but its success has now led to it being used across all four faculties of the university.

What is the best lesson learned?

Continuity matters

“Maintaining contact with prospective students over an extended period of time, offering them a range of experiences at university allows them to make more informed decisions about their future careers.”

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