

Bitesize Case Study: Student Nurse Placements at St. Ann's Hospice

Voluntary Sector North West

This case study is one in a series of studies curated to capture best practice, and highlight innovations, from the joint Health Education England (HEE) working across the North West and Voluntary Sector North West 'Learning Matters' awards 2017. The awards are part of a cross sector adult learning campaign delivered for the health and care sector through a number of key regional partnerships and collaborations. The overarching theme of the awards is simple: lifelong learning is good for people, organisations and health.

HEE Quality Standards met:

3 - Supporting and Empowering Learners

What was the issue or problem? What did you set out to do?

- The student mentorship project runs throughout the year, supporting 3 local universities. The project looks to empower students with the skills and the knowledge to help deliver specialist palliative care for patients and families / carers affected by malignant and non-malignant life limiting illnesses.



- Students are offered placements across our three sites, with appropriate mentorship support. These may be elective or spoke placements

- The project is ongoing and the hope is that students will develop a true understanding of palliative care that will underpin each individual's nursing practice in their future years

What did you do? What was the intervention or initiative?

Continual training and updating of hospice staff with regard to mentoring. Engagement with universities to motivate staff with regard to CPD.

Training of student nurses with regard to palliative and end of life care, specifically:

- Working in partnership with those patients who are either inpatients or outpatients who wish to stop smoking. This is provided on an individual basis.
- Preventative falls group, Outpatient COPD Group, Carers support. Bereavement Support. Motor Neurone Outpatients clinic, Rehabilitation team.
- Exposure for the students to see mortality data being reported to local Health Protection Units; such as communicable diseases or the coroner with industrial disease. This is important in the surveillance of infectious diseases as well as monitoring the effectiveness of immunisation and other preventative programmes.
- Opportunity to participate in regional audit data collection in End of Life Care which could have been seen as a public led enquiry.
- An awareness of antibiotic stewardship e.g. checking for prescribing stop dates, sample collection.
- Engagement with communities to demystify the hospice and palliative care provision in general.
- Patient information provision regarding the promotion of pressure area care and how they as individuals can participate in this partnership.

What were the Key Outcomes?

The hospice provides a supportive and challenging work placement for all nursing students. The bespoke nature of the organisation allows a wide variety of learning opportunities for students and truly emphasises the importance of multi-disciplinary working. This skill set mix challenges students to communicate with different health care professionals and also to understand the complexity of patient journeys.

In summary students are provided with a holistic placement that illustrates to them the need for patient-centred multi-disciplinary working at the end of life. Feedback from students has always been highly complementary.

What were the lessons learned?

One challenge was ensuring enough hospice staff are trained as mentors and encouraging staff to train as mentors, this has been embedded in the PDR process. The importance of regular updates for staff has been a challenge with regards to ensuring staff are released from the ward and staff understand the importance of such updates. Developing strong relationships with external partners e.g. local trusts and universities has allowed us to do this.

Level of award: Nominee - Projects

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