



SKILLS FOR HEALTH ACADEMY NORTH WEST (SFHANW)

EMPLOYMENT PROGRESSION PATHWAY

SUMMARY

Skills for Health Academy North West (SfHANW) works with a range of partners to deliver education and learning programmes for people who wish to work in the healthcare sector and for those staff already working in the sector at Agenda for Change bands 1 to 4. All SfHANW programmes are 'demand-led' which means their design and content is based on the current recruitment and training requirements of healthcare employers. SfHANW particularly supports employers to put in place developments that prepare individuals as they leave school, aged 16 to 18, and also those who are currently unemployed and on working age benefits.

As part of the training offered by SfHANW, an Employment Progression Pathway (EPP) was developed which provides six months' dedicated post-programme support to participants who have completed NHS and other publicly funded SfHANW training programmes. The aim of this pathway is to provide support for participants to successfully apply for vacancies within the North West health and care sector and the wider public sector. Support at this stage assists retention of participants, ensuring consistent availability of applicants for band 1-4 posts within the NHS or wider healthcare sector.



KEY OUTCOMES

From January 2010 to December 2012, positive outcomes include:

- 1251 people referred for support
- 842 positive progressions
- 708 people moved into employment- 70% into NHS employment
- several trusts in the North West using EPP as a preferred recruitment service, providing resource efficiencies and accelerated recruitment
- 134 people moving onto further training
- from January 2011 to December 2011 the total salaries gained for these participants were just under £2,967,000 (ranging from £2,969 - £18,402 at an individual level).





GOOD PRACTICE CASE STUDY

BACKGROUND

SfHANW was formed in 2003 by the North West Strategic Health Authority (NHS NW), whose workforce and education department has now become part of Health Education North West. However the Academy is managed by Skills for Health (SFH), which is the Skills Council for the health sector in the UK.

The need for EPP was identified by the challenges of the economic downturn, the urgent requirement to address worklessness issues within the North West and the need to maximise the investment that has already been committed in supporting learners to achieve job-ready skills. As such a successful proposal was submitted to NHS North West in 2009 to support the development and delivery of this service

BENEFITS OF DEVELOPING THE EPP SERVICE

It was agreed that EPP would offer several benefits which are delineated in the table below:

FOR NHS EMPLOYERS	FOR CANDIDATES	FOR NHS NORTH WEST
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource efficiencies –SfHANW manage first sift of EPP candidates • Return on investment i.e. training provided on placement • Accelerated recruitment • Access to advice and support to secure funding e.g. Invest in Health (IIH), other employer subsidies • Provides evidence of corporate responsibility, local regeneration, commitment to Local Employer Partnerships and improved health of the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to Information Advice and Guidance Service • Access to internal vacancies • Job search support from dedicated specialist staff • Support to secure employment with training • Access to e-learning • Focused post programme support • Maintains capability/motivation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visible commitment to worklessness agenda • Extending involvement • Maximising investments already made in learning • Innovative model

KEY AIMS

The overall aim of the EPP is to provide support for participants to successfully apply for vacancies within the North West health and care sectors and the wider public sector. A key aspect of SfHANW's mission is that it works in partnership with a variety of public and private sector organisations to:

- develop and coordinate the delivery of employer demand-led programmes
- promote and deliver activities which enable participants to acquire essential, transferable skills and competences
- promote the personal development, confidence and work skills of participants undertaking programmes of learning

- support developments which help to widen access and equality of opportunity and remove barriers to learning and employment
- innovate and test new workforce solutions which help to prepare a healthcare workforce capable of delivering high quality and safe patient care

This is achieved through the following objectives:

- design, develop and deliver a bespoke vacancy matching and Information, Advice and Guidance Service (IAG) for participants
- work with health and social care employers to enhance their recruitment of local people into local jobs

- maximise the training investment made by sector employers, contributing to meeting workforce recruitment requirements whilst supporting "worklessness" challenges
- further enhance the profile of Health Education North West in leading health sector pre-employment, cadet and apprenticeship training programmes
- work with employment and training partners to identify relevant referral pathways for participants
- work with external employment partners to identify vacancy opportunities outside of the NHS for EPP participants



GOOD PRACTICE CASE STUDY

KEY STAGES OF SET-UP

2009 - business proposal submitted to NHS North West



January 2010 - funding secured from NHS North West for development and delivery of service, and EPP team recruited and trained



January 2010 to December 2011 - programme development and delivery piloted



January 2012 - evaluation report submitted to NHS North West



January/February 2012 - second evaluation produced



January 2012 onwards- NHS North West commissioned continuation of the EPP service

HOW IT WORKS

EPP operates across the North West providing post-programme support to SfHANW supported programme completers. Using a caseload management and a vacancy matching service, together with the delivery of bespoke workshops, the EPP team provide effective support to empower an individual to progress.

Referral criteria:

- referral to EPP is made by SfHANW staff towards the end of work / training placement
- completion of all mandatory training
- 85% attendance on training programme
- acceptable CRB
- occupational health clearance
- participant is able to demonstrate a clear commitment to their development after the training programme

Service delivered to participants:

- access to internal NHS vacancies
- support in applying for external vacancies
- job search support from dedicated specialist staff
- support to work towards securing employment with training
- access to e-learning
- comprehensive one to one action planning
- careers information, advice and guidance
- advice on interview techniques
- signposting to further training and qualifications

Service to employers:

- resource efficiencies – SfHANW manage the first sift of EPP candidates
- return on investment i.e. training provided on placement
- accelerated recruitment
- access to advice and support to secure funding e.g. Invest in Health, other employer subsidies.
- provides evidence of corporate responsibility, local regeneration, commitment to Local Employer Partnerships and improving health of the community.

See Appendices 2, 3 and 4



GOOD PRACTICE CASE STUDY

RESOURCES

The programme of activities provided by SfHANW, alongside staffing costs and development of the service was originally commissioned and funded by NHS NW, with part-funding for the delivery of programmes obtained through local partners such as

local authorities and the Skills Funding Agency (SFA). Skills for Health also hold an adult response budget, which is accessible by the region's trusts through the SfHANW. Following closure of NHS NW on 31 March 2013, funding will be continued under Health Education England – North West.

The dedicated team consists of a pre-employment NW lead, EPP coordinator/team leader and three EPP facilitators. The team is supported through matrix working by the wider SfHANW team, and internal and external partners also support the team in identifying employment opportunities.

KEY CHALLENGES

Developing a model/proposal

A task and finish group was established and an outline model developed. This utilised existing expertise within the SfHANW, including previous welfare- to-work training and recruitment knowledge

Funding for resources e.g. systems and staff

A business proposal was submitted to NHS North West and a successful submission maximised existing resource across the SfHANW teams

Promotion to SfHANW work streams

A launch event was held at a SfHANW staff away day and guidance was issued on referrals. An EPP operational steering group was also established with representation from all work streams. The agenda for this steering group included; performance updates, developments and continuously improving processes and quality of service in partnership

Promotion to participants

Development and distribution of marketing material. Attendance and delivery of EPP presentation at programme recruitment events and induction to programmes

Promotion to NHS trusts and other employers

Development and distribution of employer marketing material. Presentations to employer forums. Submission of report to NHS clearing house group via NHS North West. Matrix working with other SfHANW work streams to promote service

Caseload management

Bespoke caseload/recruitment management system purchased to record all participants' EPP interventions, activity and outcomes. Forward planning volumes, geographical spread of caseloads. Allocating staff resource in advance to specific cohorts

Access to internal NHS vacancies

Submission of report to NHS clearing house group via NHS North West. Agreement to allow access to EPP supported participants to internal vacancies at stage 2 of clearing. Negotiated access to vacancies, temporary banks with individual trusts. Processes developed to quality assure applications and monitor progress and outcomes (see appendices 5)

Developing tools and resources to support job seekers

Continuous development and evaluation of documentation e.g. CV templates, personal statement questionnaires, workshop lesson plans, interview techniques, online applications

Due to the size of the North West, establishing relationships with participants, sustaining contact and activity is a challenge

Relationships are initially established at the beginning of programmes, by presenting EPP to a group of learners. Support is also offered with recruitment and selection onto programmes, development of electronic documentation, and intervention via workshops whilst still on programme. A range of engagement tools are used to assist this e.g. phone, email, text, face to face



GOOD PRACTICE CASE STUDY



KEY LEARNING

- Project planning is crucial
- The need to be flexible and adaptable to continuously improve service provision to both employers and participants
- Partnership working is also vital
- Feedback, reflection and evaluation supports a demand-led service and quality improvements
- Centralising the post-programme support with a dedicated team has allowed work streams to concentrate on programme delivery in the knowledge that participants will be supported following training
- Caseload and employer vacancy management system supports accuracy of performance data and best use of staff resource

SUSTAINABILITY

- EPP is embedded in everyday practice via performance and updates to colleagues using e-mail, meetings, and 'All Staff' days.

- It is an integral element of induction for both staff and programme participants, and is promoted to employers at a strategic and operational level at meetings and through communication reports.
- It is reported on a regional basis to Health Education North West and Skills for Health by means of an annual operational plan.
- EPP is also promoted to referral and delivery partners as a unique service to maximise the potential of participants.
- Matrix working with work streams also identifies employment opportunities.

NEXT STEPS

- Promote and increase awareness of the 'invisible' EPP service to sector employers
- Continuously evaluate and explore further developments to enhance the service offered
- Engage with employers to agree service level agreements on an individual trust basis

- Promote NHS employment opportunities with apprenticeship frameworks attached
- Support the delivery of health and employment programmes to increase employability skills, health and well being

SUPPORTING MATERIAL

- **Appendix 1-** EPP Employer Leaflet
- **Appendix 2-** Vacancy Process
- **Appendix 3-** EPP Support Process
- **Appendix 4-** EPP Participant Case Studies
- **Appendix 3-** Evaluation Report Year 2

FURTHER LINKS

www.investinhealth.org.uk



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