



CALDERSTONES PARTNERSHIP NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

VOCATIONAL TRAINING

SUMMARY

Calderstones Partnership NHS Foundation Trust is a learning disability Trust situated in Lancashire, with a community service that operates out of offices in Oldham in Greater Manchester. Since 2002 the Trust has implemented several vocational training packages around learning disabilities and also literacy and numeracy, in order to help staff improve the quality of service delivery, and also to assist staff in progressing along the NHS Careers Framework. As a result 51 members of staff have been promoted by at least one band, with 29 even going on to undertake nurse training.

KEY OUTCOMES

- In total the Trust has a workforce of 1600, and since Skills for Life (SfL) assessments have been introduced, 476 people have been tested, with 96 people going on to achieve a qualification in numeracy and/or literacy.
- Since the Learning Disabilities Award Framework (LDAF) and Learning Disability Qualification (LDQ) were introduced, 1016 members of staff have achieved these qualifications. At present The Trust employs 697 health support workers

most of whom have achieved either the Learning Disability Award Framework (LDAF) qualifications, or the subsequent Learning Disability Qualification (LDQ). 12 other staff, including domestic assistants and 58 bank staff have also attained these qualifications.

GOOD NEWS STORIES

"The only failure is never to try and if you don't try you won't ever know"

Stacey Williams (Buckley)

Stacey was a support worker with the Trust, who went on to become a team leader and then a vocational trainer, as a result of vocational training. Starting with an NVQ Level 2 in Care she went on to undertake an NVQ level 3 and the Assessor and Verifier Awards, before completing a Level 4 Diploma in Learning and Development and Literacy and Numeracy.

She is pictured here receiving her Adult Learners Week Award Winner for Career Progression in Health and Social Care 2011.





GOOD PRACTICE CASE STUDY



North West

- Alan Brelsford, a Band 3 support worker, progressed to a Band 5 aggression manager trainer. Alan undertook NVQ Level 2 and 3 in Care and the Diploma in Behavioural approached along with all relevant Aggression Management Train the Trainers qualifications to enable him to progress to this position.
- Lisa Howarth started in the Trust as a night domestic. She then went on to become a support worker and is now the Band 5 assistant vocational training coordinator. During her time at the Trust she has completed NVQ Level 2 in Care, NVQ Level 3 in Care for which she won the Tallow Chandlers Medal for excellence, Assessor and Verifier Awards and also Teaching and Management level 5 Qualifications. Lisa continues to undergo training and recently trained in vaccines and immunisation so that she could be part of the Flu Vaccination Campaign for 2011/2012 for which the Team won a Flu Fighters award at the NHS Employers Conference at the end of 2011.
- Gillian Slinger started in the Trust as a Band 2 ward clerk. Gillian then joined the Learning & Development Team, as Band 3 administrative assistant, and took all the opportunities offered to her. She now holds the following qualifications; NVQ 3 in Business Administration, Level 3 Adult Literacy Support Tutor, NVQ 3 in Health & Social Care, (Gillian worked in community homes to achieve this award.) Assessors and Verifiers Awards plus Level 4 Teaching qualifications. Gillian is now a Band 5 learning skills support officer, and is part of the Vocational Team, within the Learning and Development Team. The role includes embedding and promoting Sfl throughout the Trust. Gillian keeps up to date with all training and is currently undertaking a Diploma in Advice and Guidance.

BACKGROUND

Calderstones Partnership NHS Trust is the first NHS trust to be authorised as a Learning Disability NHS Foundation Trust. It is based in the Ribble Valley in Lancashire, but also has a community service which operates out of an Oldham office in Greater Manchester. The Trust provides a specialist service to people with learning disabilities, including in-patient assessment and treatment, a forensics unit, and community-based services across the North West.

The Trust employs 697 Health care support workers across a range of locations and services. For example, some workers are based within the forensics unit, looking after people with learning disabilities who have committed crimes, others offer care to clients who have been resettled into community homes.

Learning Disabilities Award Framework (LDAF)

In the 1990s there was an unusually high proportion of unqualified people working in learning disability services, with between 75 and 90% of all workers holding no relevant qualifications. There was good training taking place but it was often lost or repeated, as it did not translate into a recognised qualification. Also, for those working in the sector, there were few career pathways. Staff turnover was often high, and it was difficult to recruit new workers. As a result the Department of the Health held a consultation and set up a project to develop qualifications relating specifically to those working in the field of learning disability. This gave rise to the LDAF.



'Valuing People' White Paper

In 2001 the first White Paper on learning disability for thirty years set out an ambitious and challenging programme of action for improving services. It recommended that social and health care staff who work with people with learning disabilities, should be appropriately skilled, trained and qualified to promote a better understanding of the needs of people with learning disabilities.

The government recognised that LDAF shared the same objectives and would provide a route to achieving the necessary skills. The 'Valuing People' White Paper stated that; 'From April 2002 all new entrants to learning disability care services should be registered for qualifications on LDAF' and 'By 2005 50% of front line staff should have achieved at least NVQ level 2'. Therefore, Calderstones put in place this framework for all health care support workers and other relevant staff from 2002 onwards, until LDAF became the Learning Disability Qualification (LDQ) in 2007.

Skills for Life (Sfl)

Skills for Life is a national strategy launched in England in 2001, for improving adult literacy, language and numeracy skills. Sfl qualifications are designed to help people develop the skills they use in everyday life, such as reading, writing or maths. They also help boost peoples' CVs and can encourage them to move on to further study. Calderstones became involved in helping to deliver this strategy in 2009, when it partnered up with the Skills for Health Academy to improve Trust employees' access to Sfl assessments and qualifications.



GOOD PRACTICE CASE STUDY

PURPOSE

Objectives of the Learning Disabilities Award Framework (LDAF) and Learning Disability Qualification (LDQ):-

- Put in a place a relevant qualification that could be accessed by workers at all levels and from all backgrounds.
- Improve the uptake and achievement of NVQ Level 2 in Health & Social Care
- Increase the number of career pathways, which would help staff to progress through the ranks more easily
- Reduce the high staff turnover within the service and help with the recruitment of new workers

Objectives of Skills for Life Qualifications:-

- Make the whole workforce better qualified, from domestic assistants right the way up to the chief executive.
- Help boost people's confidence and motivate them to progress
- Give all staff the opportunity and support needed to brush up their skills, and/or gain qualifications.
- Help Trusts to provide a first class service by ensuring that all staff acquire a sound basic understanding of literacy, numeracy and communication skills,

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Induction Programme

When support workers and domestic assistants first join the Trust they take part in an induction programme, during which their SfL needs are assessed through an Initial assessment and they undertake an Information, Advice and Guidance session in order to ascertain what qualifications they already hold, and whether they have any learning support needs.

All new support staff are required to take part in a three week on-site Induction Programme before they take up their position fully, and have contact with service users/ clients. These inductions are run every month for all new starters at the Calderstones site.

The support staff who work within community services are given a more flexible induction, tailored to their needs, with a one week programme and follow-up sessions one day a week, for seven weeks at the Trust's Oldham Offices. These inductions run on a two-month cycle.

Throughout inductions, new starters work to achieve a set of learning outcomes via several learning sessions. To do this they are required to complete workbooks, which are knowledge-based but also require them to find answers specifically relating to their workplace e.g. what is the role of their manager, what policies were in place at the Trust to safeguard vulnerable adults, and what is the procedure if someone is caught abusing their client.

Once the employee completes their learning sessions they are allocated an assessor to support them through their Diploma Units, and once their work is assessed and verified it can be used towards their City and Guilds Qualification

Skills for Life (SfL)

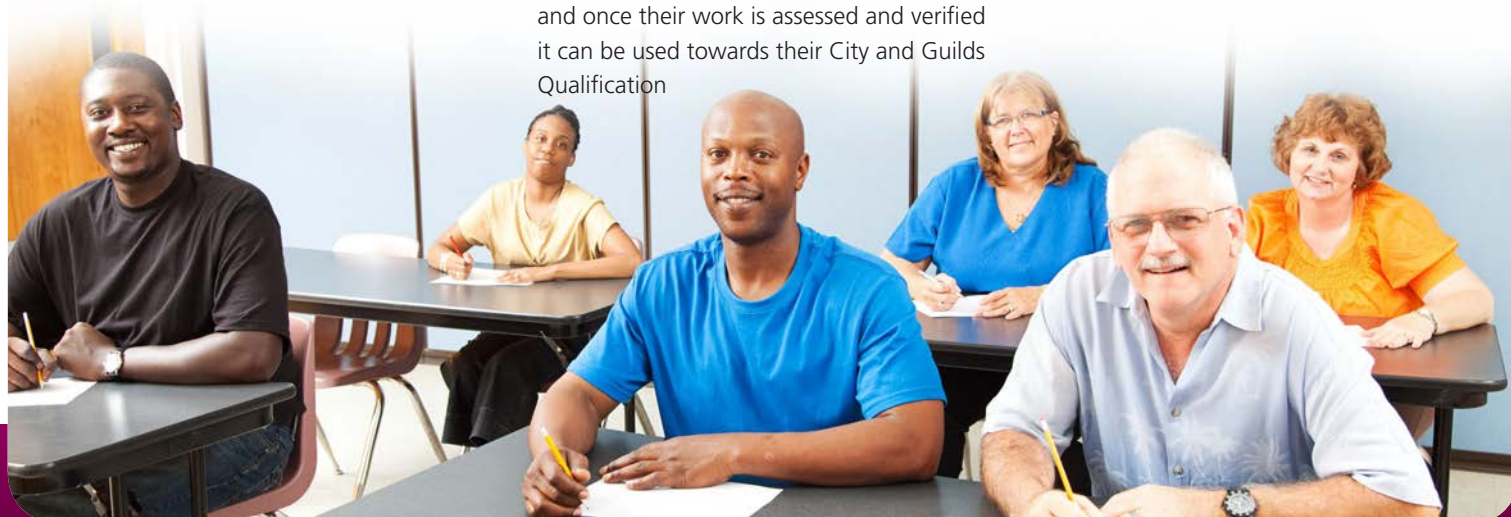
SfL assessments are now embedded in the induction policy and it is mandatory for all new employees, not just health care support workers. This allows all staff to undertake assessments to check what level they are working at in literacy and numeracy. Anyone who is not at Level 1 in numeracy or at Level 2 in literacy is now signposted to e-learning resources or to Burnley College to work towards improving their skills and gaining a qualification by attending classes one day a week.

Personal Development Programme (PDR)

SfL assessments are not embedded in the PDR process at present for existing staff, but staff are encouraged to speak about their learning needs and to set action plans with their line managers at appraisal.

New employees are advised to speak to their line manager at PDR. Once they have been employed for six months they can then apply to undertake a Diploma in Health and Social Care. This was previously known as an NVQ level 2 and 3 in Health & Social Care, but since January the NVQ structure in England has changed and all vocational training is now on the Qualification Credit Framework (QCF) with NVQ level 2 and 3 turned into a level 2 and 3 Diploma. This allows people to progress and encourages them to take their training further.

Any employees who undertake these diplomas must also undertake SfL assessments before they can commence training, if they haven't already done so. This occurs on the first day of their diploma training.





GOOD PRACTICE CASE STUDY

2001: Government White paper 'Valuing People' released, which led to the LDAF being implemented across the country.



A consultation was held with senior managers and the Induction Policy was re-written before LDAF/LDQ was rolled out at Calderstones



APR 2002: LDAF was built into an Induction Programme for all new Health Care Support Workers at Calderstones Partnership Foundation Trust. Existing support workers were reached through a PDR process, with the need for qualifications picked up by line managers at appraisal.



2002 ONWARDS – literacy and numeracy assessments built into recruitment process for support workers. These assessments were not set at a specific level, but were designed to check if applicants would be able to complete records or read management guidelines if they were recruited. They were not discounted from getting a job if they did not pass, but were signposted to sources of support and advised to return at the next round of recruitment.



2007 – LDAF became the Learning Disability Qualification (LDQ). This is very similar but is more person-centred, and is focused upon the person with learning disabilities. The Trust's Induction Programme was altered at this time to meet the demands of the new qualification.



2009 – Skills for Life (SfL) assessments and qualifications were introduced at the Trust to replace existing numeracy and literacy assessments. Calderstones worked very closely with the SFL Advisor from the Skills Academy for Health to create an action plan for a whole-organisation approach.



2010 – Calderstones took part in a SFH Academy pilot along with a few other Trusts, and tested 80 staff, with 10 people tested from each band through 1-8. The Report that was produced as a result helped to successfully embed SfL throughout the organisation. This report is available as Appendix 1.



GOOD PRACTICE CASE STUDY

RESOURCES

The SFH Academy funded nine people to undertake a City & Guilds 9297 Level 2 Certificate in Learning Support Qualification, to become SFL champions and to help support other staff with their literacy and numeracy learning needs. These champions are now able to carry out assessments and to signpost people to further support.

The SFH Academy also fund staff to undertake Health and Social Care Diplomas and apprenticeships

The Trust funds relevantly qualified staff to undertake the Assessor and Verifier Awards to support the staff undertaking diplomas or apprenticeships

All of the staff employed within the Learning and Development Centre are funded directly by the Trust including:-

- Vocational training coordinator
- Assistant vocational training coordinator
- Vocational trainer
- Learning skills support officer

KEY CHALLENGES

- At the beginning it was difficult to convince people to undertake SFL assessments. This was overcome by the Learning and Development Centre Team all doing assessments and going on to undertake qualifications themselves. This allowed the team to demonstrate that there was nothing to be worried about, and they could hold themselves up as an example to reassure people.
- It was sometimes difficult to encourage people to do the work that they were set, when they did go on to undertake qualifications. Some people blamed everyone but themselves. To address this the team set up two support days a month (one at Calderstones and one at Oldham) where people can come to seek help. The Learning and Development Centre staff are available on those days to help with SFL qualifications, Health and

Social Care Diplomas and Assessor Qualifications (for those people who are helping others undertake diplomas).

KEY LEARNING

- The uptake of assessments and qualifications used to be hit and miss; however by building these into induction programmes it is easier to reach all relevant staff.
- It is important to plan ahead and make sure that qualifications are built into the induction programme properly, because once this takes place, everything runs like clockwork.

SUSTAINABILITY

- In partnership with Burnley College the Trust introduced modern apprenticeships at level 2 and 3 in Health and Social Care in January 2012. and is now planning to employ Band 2 activity assistants and support assistants who will do a Modern Apprenticeship in Health and Social Care
- Health and Social Care Diploma units have been incorporated into the Trust's induction programme. In this way some of the diploma will be completed by staff before commencing on the Diploma programme e.g. Learning Disability and Autism units.

SUPPORTING MATERIAL

- **Appendix 1** – SFH Academy Pilot Report
- **Appendix 2** – Induction Programme Schedule
- **Appendix 3** – Diploma Programme – Level 2
- **Appendix 4** – Diploma Programme – Level 3
- **Appendix 5** – Apprenticeship Programme

REFERENCES

Learning Disability Qualification (2009)'The History of LDAF' [Online] [26th March 2012] <http://www.ldq.org.uk/page9/page9.html>

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