

INSPIRING STORY: HEALTHCARE SUPPORT WORKERS IN MENTAL HEALTH

Background

A successful partnership has been developed between Jobcentre Plus (JCP), Bradford District Care Trust (BDCT) and Shipley College in order to support the recruitment of Healthcare Support Workers in Mental Health throughout Bradford and Airedale. A number of meetings took place between the three Partners to discuss the job requirements, skills and training and the decision was made to use the JCP sector based work academy (sbwa) route in order to fill these job roles.

The Process

The sector-based work academy (sbwa) lasts up to six weeks and has three key components:

- Pre-Employment Training relevant to the Job Role which provides a qualification in Introduction to Health and Social Care, First Aid, Food Safety and Employability Skills.
- A Work Experience placement - this includes a visit to the employer and meeting the current staff who undertake the role.
- A guaranteed job interview

The key feature of the sbwa is that it offers a flexible approach and can be adapted to meet the needs of the Trust. Participants remain on benefit throughout, and JCP pay travel and childcare whilst they are taking part in the academy.

There is no direct cost to BDCT for the sbwa as the costs are covered by government funding.

The eligibility consists of unemployed people on Jobseekers Allowance/Employment Support Allowance (Work Related Activity Group only), who are aged 19 and over and are not already qualified in Health and Social Care. Applicants are referred to an Assessment Event where all three Partners describe their roles in the process, the Job Roles and the benefits of the academy.

Pre-Employment Training – Simon Wadsworth, Shipley College

The core of the Shipley College element is the BTEC Level 2 Certificate in Preparing to Work in Adult Social Care. Our tutors have previously spent some years working in the Care sector so are able to incorporate valuable experience from real life into their sessions.

A key strength of the Pre-Employment Training is the opportunity for employers to have job applicants assessed before they reach the interview stage, so recruitment decisions can be made with more confidence. Employability & Interview Skills have been an important factor in helping learners to secure employment.

Having learners in a classroom for a number of weeks, provides many opportunities to assess them - their punctuality, how they interact with others, levels of concentration and commitment, how they communicate etc.



The Employer perspective – Abdul Khalifa, BDCT

Bradford District Care Trust serves a population of 550,000 across Bradford District and provides an integrated community and mental health service to people of all ages.

Lynfield Mount Hospital, in Bradford and the Airedale Centre for Mental Health near Keighley provide our Inpatient mental health services.

To support our recruitment to the Healthcare Support Worker workforce we were delighted to undertake a partnership working approach with Job Centre Plus (JCP) and Shipley College. Using this approach has been successful in fulfilling our recruitment needs.

This has meant that we can see the potential in each of the candidates prior to selection and assess their interest in the roles and responsibilities of a Healthcare Support Worker.

After undergoing their training they are invited to apply via an application form followed by a guaranteed interview. The interviews are carried out by Trust staff based on demonstration of the Trusts Values, this process helps the student to discuss their own values and experiences around the healthcare profession.

We hope to continue with academies to help support our recruitment needs but also help in the employment of students who may not necessary get through the normal channels of the Trust recruitment process.

We believe this Partnership has worked really well and will be expanding this approach to include clerical and administration posts and we would encourage other employers to work in this way.



Success Stories

Quote from Niall, Health Care support Worker

"I talked to my JCP Work Coach stating I was interested in the Mental Health area of work. After discussion they referred me to the academy, which I thought was perfect.

I already had care experience so was interested in taking this forward and was always passionate about working within a mental health setting and relieving acute distress.

I worked hard at the College and really enjoyed the course as this was concise and provided a well-rounded theory approach to care in a short period of six weeks. Following my success at the Guaranteed Job Interview I am now in my seventh month of employment and am really enjoying the work and challenges in this role.

I have recently met with a number of students who are on the academy and have shared with them my journey through this programme and working with the trust".

The Future

Four academies have run to date resulting in 14 job offers and a further 16 candidates going on to secure employment at a number of other care providers. All three partners have planned dates through to the middle of 2015 for further sbwa's.

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