



New Workforce Models – Keeping You Informed Edition 9

Your Guide to **SWeET** **S**trategic **W**orkforce **E**ducation and **T**raining

This edition of the 'Keeping You Informed' bulletin concentrates on the **Clinical Apprentice** role that is currently being utilised to great effect within the **Occupational Therapy** team.

Building a succession plan – Andrew Loveridge, General Manager of Integrated Care



I'm delighted to hear that the clinical apprentice role is proving to be a success and it's especially pleasing as I'm keen to ensure that this division is supportive of apprenticeships in general. It should be encouraged and helps to develop a wide skill mix within teams and we're hopeful that this is just the beginning.

We have introduced apprentices in a number of areas, including clinical engineering, pharmacy, pathology and, of course, within therapies. The apprentice role has become much more than the traditional administrative roles and we're starting to see it develop into something approaching succession planning. I was there to introduce the open day for our clinical apprentices who came to try for the role within Occupational Therapy. It was clear to me then that some of these youngsters intended to use it as the first step towards attaining a professional qualification, gaining experience and knowledge that could one day come back to benefit this hospital.

, to find out if it really is for them whilst at the same time providing our qualified team with informed help that gives them more time to carry out their clinical work. I have no doubt that we will revisit this and in the future, once we have the education packages in place, look at bringing in higher level apprentice roles across the division to further support our teams.

Our Head of Occupational Therapy, Rebecca Sheldon, has put a lot of work into this and I would like to thank our Clinical Apprentices for all of the effort they continue to put in to support our team.

The Clinical Apprentice Role in Occupational Therapy

The Occupational Therapy (OT) team has recruited four clinical apprentices as part of efforts to change the way they work and maximise the patient experience.

Rebecca Sheldon is the Trust's Head of Occupational Therapy, she said: "Last year we had a review of OTs and Physios to make sure we had the right people with the right skills for our patients' needs. At the time we had a couple of Band 2 vacancies and, as part of the review, we wanted to see if we could give up those vacancies to accommodate apprentices.

Cont'd on page 2...

The Clinical Apprenticeship Role in Occupational Therapy

“We were aware that a lot of work was being done surrounding apprentices and the new roles introduced to nursing teams, so explored the possibility of doing the same. By holding an open day for apprentices within OT we were taking a drastically different approach; usually we stress experience but here we were going in the complete opposite direction.

“We had a good response and had around 30 people come to a morning session where we laid bare what the division was like, the type of patients we see and the work we do. This gave those with a genuine interest the chance to stay on for the afternoon and we were really blown away by the quality and enthusiasm of those who remained. We ended up recruiting four who will be here until the end of March next year.



“It’s been fantastic as their enthusiasm, drive and willingness to learn has been first rate and them being here has allowed our full time OTs to concentrate on the work they need to be doing. It’s also a great way for us to focus on the detail, passing on our knowledge and expertise to a new set of youngsters who may well be the next generation of OTs.”

Chelsea Hardy (above, left with Rebecca) is one of those recruited from that open day, she spotted the advert through her school’s apprenticeship site. She was at sixth form before coming here and has wanted to be an OT since she was 11 years old; she’s now beginning to realise that ambition.

She said: “It all came from when I was younger and my Mum had to have surgery which resulted in her also having to go through a course of Physiotherapy. I often went with her and I was fascinated by how they were able to make her better without what you might call traditional medicine and told her that I wanted to be a Physiotherapist. She said that if I wanted to get into that line of work then I should consider Occupational Therapy instead.

“My Nanna went through Occupational Therapy so I was able to see first-hand what they do and I was attracted to the thought that you’re helping somebody to keep their independence. It’s not just physical help you’re offering, you’re helping them to go home, stay out of hospital and get their life back.

“I came here from 6th form after finding out about the apprenticeship, I thought it would be a great thing for me to do if I wanted to become an OT. I was thrilled when I found out I was one of the ones chosen and I’m thoroughly enjoying it. We get to see patients one to one and I’ve learnt such a lot about the different types of patients we see, the various situations, treatments, exercises, techniques and generally how to talk to and interact with patients.

“I’m even more convinced that this is what I want to do so when I finish this in March I will be applying to go on the Chesterfield College Diploma for Health and Social Care which starts in September 2018 and then the year after hopefully go to University, there are good courses in Derby and Sheffield where I can study Occupational Therapy.”

Rebecca added: “Chelsea and the others have been fantastic and, if Occupational Therapy is what they want to do, then this apprenticeship has given them a head start over others wanting to apply. They have the relevant experience, they already know many of the techniques and we’ve taught them the people skills to be able to maximise the way they will eventually treat their patients.

“For us, the decision to move towards utilising apprentices in this way has been a good one. Our workforce has grown and we have been very lucky in the quality of apprentice, they are a credit to the Trust’s army of apprentices and I wouldn’t hesitate in repeating this for next year.”

For more information contact:

Rebecca Sheldon (Extn: 2177), Alison Hobbs (Extn: 6045), Liz Claridge (Extn: 3698).