

Healthcare

Apprenticeships



Education & Skills
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Coventry and
Warwickshire Partnership
NHS Trust

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Case Study from ESFA

Case Study - Coventry & Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust

Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust provides health services to over one million people living across the Coventry and Warwickshire including mental health and learning disability services, plus community physical health services in Coventry only. Apprenticeships have been part of the Trust for almost 10 years and have proven a great way to give back to the community and the patients it serves. Since the introduction of the levy, however, the Trust is also looking to focus on using apprenticeships to upskill its existing staff, address its ageing workforce, as well as open up career opportunities to a wider talent pool.

Growing talent

Apprenticeships at Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust have played a role in the organisation since 2010. Prompted by the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy and the Trust's growing, ageing workforce, the Trust began looking at apprenticeships more closely as a way to build a pipeline of young and new talent and open up careers in both clinical and non-clinical roles to both new and existing staff.

"We offer a range of apprenticeship standards and, since the introduction of the levy, we've been able to offer some of these up to master's level – for example in Facilities Management and Senior Leadership. We see apprenticeships as a way to provide career progression opportunities to people of all ages, levels, and backgrounds. At present we have over 70 apprentices on the programme, which many of them are existing staff, and we hope to see that number continues to grow."

Charlotte Sutton, Talent for Care Manager

Widening opportunities

As a specialist centre in providing mental health and learning disability services, the Trust is keen to embed these values throughout its workforce, including in its apprenticeship programme, and is a member of the Apprenticeship Diversity Champions Network. As such, the Trust is working closely with organisations such as the Prince's Trust, to encourage those with mental health issues and learning disabilities, into an apprenticeship and on a potential pathway to a long-term career within the NHS.

“Living our values is important to us as an organisation and the opportunities provided by an apprenticeship are a great way to attract and support more people with mental health issues and learning disabilities into the Trust. At present, around 20% of our apprentices have a disability. This is something which we’re incredibly proud of not only from a diversity and inclusivity perspective but, by employing apprentices of this nature, we can seek to understand our own service users better. This is vital to the work we do as an NHS Trust and providing high quality patient care.”

Charlotte Sutton, Talent for Care Manager

With openness and inclusivity a key part of the Trust’s approach to apprenticeships, the organisation is also looking towards other groups of untapped talent that it can nurture and support with an apprenticeship. One group which the Trust is keen to reach out to is older workers; they are hosting an ‘Over 45s’ recruitment day to support people with their CVs and application forms. In doing this, the Trust is confident that apprenticeships can serve as an effective route for more mature workers to enter or re-enter the workforce at a level that fits their knowledge and experience.

Offering support

A common challenge across the NHS is its ageing workforce, something which the Trust is also experiencing. Having identified this, the Trust is moving towards changing its entry-level positions in healthcare into apprenticeship roles. In doing this, the Trust hopes it can attract and retain young talent in these entry-level roles by taking them on as apprentices, offering them the necessary support and training needed and demonstrating a clearly marked career path.

“We want to invest in our staff from day one and apprenticeships help us do that. We go out of our way to support our apprentices both personally and professionally. We also want to be competitive and we have increased our hourly rate for new apprentices as we want to be able to attract and develop the best talent.”

Charlotte Sutton, Talent for Care Manager

Looking ahead

Going forward, the Trust is keen to see where its growing commitment to apprenticeships will take them. The Trust has plans to continue to increase its apprenticeship offer and roll out more higher standards for existing staff, particularly in management and leadership roles.

Healthcare Apprenticeships

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“Apprenticeships are growing in interest across the Trust and we’re keen to see that continue – particularly as we branch into more higher and degree apprenticeships. We also want to continue to ensure our apprenticeships remain open and inclusive. That way we can attract, train and retain the talent we need to continue providing our specialist services and a high level of patient care.”

Charlotte Sutton, Talent for Care Manager