

Virtual Apprenticeship Recruitment during Covid-19

The Challenge:

In South Yorkshire, Trusts were collaborating to run their first cohort of clinical coding apprentices, Covid-19 however meant that just as the Trusts were about to interview, the whole country went into lockdown, meaning candidates and staff couldn't undertake the usual face to face recruitment processes. The Trusts did not want to delay their first cohort so decided to move their recruitment virtually.

What they did:

The Trusts made adaptations to their interview processes which meant that the entire process could be done remotely using IT and telephone interviews. Below is the process they undertook:

1. Vacancies were advertised on NHS Jobs
2. The recruiting manager short listed candidates remotely
3. Shortlisted candidates were agreed, and email invitations were sent to the candidates
4. Explanation of the recruitment process & PowerPoint presentation was emailed to candidates 24 hours before a scheduled interview test (which was based upon information provided in the PowerPoint presentation)
5. 24 hours later a phone call was made to the candidate to confirm their email address and to explain a test will be sent via email. Candidates were asked to verbally confirm that they had received the test. The candidate had 35 minutes to complete the test
6. Completed test paper were returned by the candidate after 35 minutes. Those returned after 35 minutes were not counted
7. Candidates were then shortlisted based upon their test results
8. **Candidates were phoned the same day after the test to inform if they have been successful / unsuccessful. For those candidates which had been successful they were allocated an interview time**

9. A telephone interview (15 / 20 minutes duration) then took place at an allocated interview time
10. Successful candidates were then chosen based upon their test result and telephone interview results
11. HR checks were then carried out remotely via email and telephone

The Outcome:

Being able to continue with recruitment virtually has meant that 9 clinical coding apprentices have been recruited for South Yorkshire. The training has experienced minimal delay and the apprentices will start this summer. Trusts have also only seen a few weeks slippage in their workforce plans, whereby had they waited to do face to face recruitment they would have been facing many months delay and not been able to fill these business critical roles in on time.