



Widening Participation: Shaking up Recruitment in Leeds

How Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust took an innovative approach to recruitment for their new Red Kite View Children and Young People's Mental Health Inpatient Service.

What is Red Kite View?

Red Kite View is a new £20 million unit, which will accommodate a new enhanced Children and Young People's Mental Health Inpatient Service (previously known as CAMHS).



Planning was approved in December 2019 for the new unit to be built on St Mary's Hospital site in Armley, Leeds. It is anticipated that the new building will open to service users in January 2022. The new unit will include 22 inpatient beds and much needed improvements and facilities for children and young

people across West Yorkshire.

The challenge

Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (LYPFT) hold a strong corporate and social responsibility, so when they came to recruit staff for their new Children's inpatient service in Armley they quickly decided this would be an ideal opportunity to recruit from the local community.

Armley has the third highest level of universal credit claimants in Leeds, and a higher proportion of ethnic minority residents compared to the wider Leeds population. Most potential applicants didn't have the required level 3 entry qualifications or experience to qualify for the role of Healthcare Support Worker at Red Kite View.

With 20 entry level vacancies to fill, LYPFT knew they had to take a different approach to allow local applicants without the standard entry qualifications or experience to be successful.

What they did

To enable applicants' greater access to the roles the Trust designed the position of "Assistant Support Worker". The Trust worked closely with recruitment and staffing teams to design the role, which didn't require the typical academic entry criteria.

When it came to advertising the roles, the Trust decided to not use NHS Jobs but instead worked with Leeds City Council to directly advertise to the local community through local community hubs. They used paper application forms, and applicants were also able to access an online application via free access to IT at the community hubs. The Trust also ran a webinar for potential applicants where they were explicit about the benefits and challenges of the role.

228 applicants accessed the webinar, 100 met with community hub advisors and 75 applied for the roles. Of those 75, 25 were invited to an assessment day.

The assessment days were flexible and informal, and the applicants had access to pre-interview advice and guidance on the day. The assessment days were hosted in the local community so there was no need for applicants to travel long distances to attend.

The outcome

The Trust was able to gain a much more holistic view of the applicants that they wouldn't have been able to gain from the normal recruitment process. 20 applicants attended the assessment days and 15 were offered permanent positions, 4 of which were long term unemployed and 3 who were registered disabled.

All the applicants will be given the opportunity to study towards a Healthcare Support Worker apprenticeship and gain their functional skills in English and Maths.

The Trust have been able to tap into a previously untapped and passionate workforce, creating real job opportunities in the community in which the Red Kite View facility is based and putting it at the heart of the local community as an employer of choice.

The recruitment has been so successful that the Trust plan to use this model of recruitment to continue attracting local people for local jobs.