

News Release

1 July 2010

Health sector apprentice numbers rise by one-third

The number of people beginning health apprenticeships in England has risen by nearly a third, according to new figures published by Skills for Health.

The analysis of apprenticeship performance for 2008-09 – the most recent year for which full figures are available covering the apprenticeships frameworks managed by Skills for Health – shows that total new starts reached 3,096 in 2008-09, compared with 2,230 in 2007-08, an increase of 28 per cent.

The figures, which cover the NHS, independent and voluntary sectors, also show that the proportion of health apprentices who successfully complete their training rose for a third consecutive year, to 74 per cent – 10 percentage points above the national average.

Healthcare support roles accounted for the largest overall number of new health apprenticeship starts during 2008-09. However, the fastest year-on-year growth in apprenticeship numbers was among pharmacy technicians and dental nurses, where new starts rose sharply.

These increases follow the introduction of statutory regulation for both occupational groups during 2009, which is believed to have encouraged more trainees to follow an apprenticeship as a means of acquiring professional accreditation.

Skills for Health chief executive John Rogers said: “These figures are very encouraging and a testament to the hard work of the many trainees who have taken up apprenticeships within the health sector.

“They also show that more and more employers are realising that apprenticeships offer a realistic workforce development solution which supports new ways of delivering services and improving patient care.”

Richard Marsh, Employer Service Director and Health lead, National Apprenticeship Service, said: “The Health sector is one of great importance

for the country and it is great to see its renewed commitment to Apprenticeships really taking off. Health employers are realising great benefits from the employment of apprentices and those they employ are embarking on valuable and varied careers.”

Skills for Health is actively promoting take-up of apprenticeships within the health sector and offers a range of materials, advice and guidance to help employers implement successful programmes. These include online resources with a database of more than 80 apprenticeships now available within healthcare. For further information, see www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/apprenticeships

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Media contacts:

Dominic Moody, Press & PR Manager
Tel. 0117 910 3853, mobile 0776 818 8994
dominic.moody@skillsforhealth.org.uk

Notes to editors

1. Analysis of Skills Funding Agency data covering Skills for Health apprenticeship frameworks for the NHS, independent and voluntary sectors, undertaken by SCALE consultants on behalf of Skills for Health, May 2010. For a copy of the report 'Apprenticeship Performance Analysis for Skills for Health' please visit <http://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/~media/Resource-Library/PDF/Executive-Summary-Apprenticeship-Performance-Analysis-for-Skills-for-Health.ashx>
2. The four apprenticeship frameworks covered by the Skills for Health footprint are 236 Health & Social Care (Health); 287 Pharmacy Technicians; 315 Dental Nursing; and 319 Support Services in Healthcare. For these four frameworks, key figures are as follows:

Apprenticeship starts (England)

2008-09	3,096
2007-08	2,230

Starts by framework

	236 Health & Soc. Care	287 Pharmacy Technicians	315 Dental Nursing	319 Support Services in Healthcare
2008-09	1,054	344	194	1,504
2007-08	856	87	17	1,273

Success rates

2008-09	74 per cent
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2007-08	64 per cent
2006-07	60 per cent

3. Skills for Health is the Sector Skills Council for the UK healthcare sector, encompassing the National Health Services, independent healthcare providers and voluntary organisations. It offers a range of proven tools, products and services to help employers deliver a skilled, flexible and productive workforce to improve health and health care. For further information, see www.skillsforhealth.org.uk