

Developing a new entry level Health Care Support Worker role

Background

Liverpool Community Health NHS Trust is planning to introduce a Health Care Support Worker Level 1 Role in an innovative bid to attract local young people and widen the scope of recruitment to clinical jobs in the Trust.

The Trust worked with Skills for Health to design this entry-level role which will enable recruits with the right attitudes to learn on the job with support, mentorship and training leading to formal nationally recognised and transferable qualifications.

Why develop the role?

The Trust identified that, in common with many parts of the NHS, it has an ageing workforce – it has about 3,200 staff but fewer than 50 are aged under 24.

It is currently redesigning services across the Trust, and needs a flexible, motivated and well-trained workforce to meet changing demands and to be the Trust's workforce of the future.

“We want to attract young people who are enthusiastic and who have that care and compassion that we need, and who want to be part of a new NHS.”

“By recruiting and training our own staff, we can be sure they are qualified and trained to the level they need to be and that they can do the job that we’ve taken them on to do.”

Suzanne Wood
Skills Learning Zone Manager



It will be underpinned by staff following an apprenticeship framework to include the Level 2 Diploma in Clinical Healthcare Support, and other related training to ensure basic communication, numeracy and employability skills.

How will the role work?

As an entry level role the aim is to undertake basic patient care under the direction of the registered nurse or designated mentor and receive pastoral support from the training provider.

The role has been designed to be flexible and can be implemented in a range of service areas, from bed-based ward care, intermediate care, health and walk-in centres and the community, to assisting with phlebotomy clinics.

The benefits for the Trust

The new role could:

- improve the quality of patient care - by enabling the Trust to make sure they are recruiting and training people with the right competences and attitudes into the service.
- help reduce the costs of using agency staff.
- allow the more highly skilled workforce to concentrate on higher risk and more complex patients.
- enable the Trust to recruit from a previously untapped resource.
- increase retention of local staff in local jobs as the staff progress.
- assist the Trust with supporting their workforce planning and utilising staff within the Bands 1-4 staffing agenda.



The benefits for the individual

This new role in Liverpool Community Health NHS Trust could give the individual:

- a route into the health and social care sector.
- the opportunity to ensure this is the right career choice.
- a career pathway in clinical roles with support and development.
- formal accredited transferable qualifications.
- the chance to apply for a post within the Trust or with another health and social care setting on completion of the training.

The outcomes

This is the first Level 1 clinical role which Skills for Health have had the opportunity to work on using the transferable role methodology. The organisation was very keen to be involved in its design and share its transferability. Using the same methodology the Trust has also developed a Level 1 role based in business and administration.

In developing the role, Liverpool Community Health NHS Trust has created a role which is applicable and transferable to other trusts and organisations, and could bring a range of benefits to the changing health sector of the future.

The Trust is intending to introduce the new role in the coming year to fit in with its service review and as part of its workforce strategy. In the meantime the template of required competences, the identified Learning and Development and a generic job description are all in place, with an Evaluation Plan to assess its impact.