

Developing a Sustainable Workforce for The Royal Wolverhampton Audiology Department

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Introduction

The RWT Audiology department has an ageing workforce demographic, particularly in the higher bands.

Our mission was to develop a sustainable workforce by empowering staff to develop their knowledge and skills, foster a culture of education and learning and embed this into practice.

Methods

Initial steps included a review of the current workforce including completion of a skills matrix and a staffing restructure because of this work.

Roles have been developed for a training officer, preceptor, supervisors, mentors & assessors.

We developed an Education/Training/Workforce sustainability group looking at talent spotting with the team feeding into Appraisals and Peer review, developing Band 5 rotations into individual specialisms.

We encourage staff to undertake MSc & HTS Modules and apprenticeships and other appropriate learning opportunities.

Results

- Band 2 completed level 4 Healthcare Science apprenticeship and been rebanded to a Band 3 and is now on a level 6 BSc apprenticeship.
- 3 staff have completed MSc Modules with 2 now starting HTS Modules
- Band 6 is halfway through the Senior Leaders Management apprenticeship
- 2 members of staff have gained STP equivalence
- Accredited for STP Training and appointed STP Trainee Clinical Scientist
- Upskilled staff taking on more complex roles and activities and improving capacity within those areas

Discussion

The team are all extremely positive about the changes.

Funding is an issue with a limited training budget, and there is an impact on activity, if you are training and upskilling staff this invariably takes more time however as staff gain more skills these are utilised to allow additional activity/more complex work to be undertaken. Having a training role ensures staff keep their skills honed.

Staff retention is high, and plans are in place and being actively worked towards to fill future predicted gaps, using a blended approach of 'grow your own' and 'train for others'.

References

1. The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust (2016-2020), People and Organisation Development Strategy
2. NHS Health Education England (HEE) Quality Framework 2019-2020
3. NHS Digital (2021) Standard 1 Strategy and Service Improvement. Available online Standard 1 Strategy and Service Improvement - NHS Digital (Accessed 27th July 2021)
4. NHS Confederation (2020), Creating the workforce of the future: a new collaborative approach for the NHS and colleges in England.

