

Walsall NHS Trust

Employer

Inspection dates

7–9 March 2017

Overall effectiveness		Requires improvement	
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement	Apprenticeships	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement		
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement		
Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement		
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection		Not previously inspected	

Summary of key findings

This is a provider that requires improvement

- Self-assessment and quality improvement planning are not robust enough to help managers to secure and sustain high-quality provision.
- A few assessors do not give feedback in enough detail for apprentices to know what they have to do to improve their knowledge and skills. Assessors do not challenge apprentices to excel.
- Trainers and assessors do not help apprentices to extend their English and mathematical skills sufficiently in training, assessments and reviews.
- Managers do not analyse or use available data sufficiently well to monitor the progress of apprentices or the performance of different groups of learners to enable them to drive forward improvements in the quality of provision.
- The board has not yet set clear performance indicators for the apprenticeship programme to hold managers better to account.
- A minority of assessors and apprentices have only a superficial understanding of British values and the risks of extremism and radicalisation.

The provider has the following strengths

- Well-qualified and dedicated staff provide high levels of support for apprentices, which enables the majority to achieve their qualifications.
- The Trust has good links with regional partnerships and other Trusts and contributes significantly to meeting government priorities for the National Health Service (NHS).
- Apprentices have good access to valuable learning opportunities on the wards and in hospital departments.
- The programme helps apprentices develop their confidence, teamwork and practical skills, and as a result the majority of them secure employment during or after their training.
- Ward and business support managers are positive about the impact of the apprenticeship programme on the day-to-day business.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Walsall NHS Trust has been running an apprenticeship programme for many years. It previously held its own contract in 2005. Since then, the apprenticeship programme has been subcontracted from a college. In August 2015, the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) granted the Trust its own contract, so they now wholly manage their programme.
- The majority of learners are taking level 2 apprenticeships and they are evenly split between health and social care apprentices and business administration apprentices.
- Walsall is the 33rd most deprived borough out of 326 boroughs in the indices of multiple deprivation in England. The proportion of pupils in Walsall who gain more than five high A* to C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics, is below the national rate. Minority ethnic groups make up 23% of the total population.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve quality assurance arrangements by ensuring that:
 - the self-assessment report identifies strengths and weaknesses clearly and that the quality improvement plan has actions which identify clearly what the expected and measurable impacts on apprentices' progress should be
 - managers adopt a consistent approach to the observation of teaching, learning and assessment, which includes assessments and reviews, and focuses on the progress apprentices are making.
- Help assessors to agree challenging, time-bound targets that enable all apprentices to make good progress from their starting points, including in the development of English and mathematics skills.
- Make sure that managers analyse and use available information to monitor the progress of apprentices and the performance of different groups of learners to identify areas for improvement.
- Ensure that the board sets clear targets for the programme so that it can hold managers, trainers and assessors more clearly to account for the performance of the programme.
- Reinforce assessors' and apprentices' understanding of British values and the risks of extremism and radicalisation so that this is consistently secure.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Having recently been granted their own contract, after years of subcontracting with another provider, managers are aware of the need to formalise and improve their quality improvement systems and processes.
- The self-assessment report draws on the views of staff and learner surveys well. However, it is too descriptive and does not sufficiently draw out what the programme does well and what needs to be improved. The quality improvement document, while better in identifying weaknesses, does not identify sufficiently how actions will have a positive impact on the learners' experience.
- Managers are aware of the need to make better use of the new management information system to produce the reports that will help them monitor the performance of different groups of learners and the progress that learners are making.
- The observation of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement. Managers carry out observations of teaching and learning, but have not agreed a consistent approach, which leads to too much variation in the quality of evaluations. Assessments are not included in the observation process, and so it is not sufficiently comprehensive. Observation records focus too much on trainers' actions and not enough on learning and the progress learners are making. Actions arising from observation are not sufficiently specific and measurable, and it is not clear how they will be followed up. As a consequence, teaching, learning and assessment are not being improved quickly enough.
- Despite this, performance management, which is part of the Trust's human resources processes, is robust. When managers find trainers or assessors are underperforming, they intervene swiftly to support and challenge them.
- The board, leaders and managers have a clear strategic vision for the apprenticeship programme. They are strongly committed to employing and developing local people, and see the programme as a means of developing the staff of the future. Training staff bring a good understanding of working practices within the NHS, which enhances the training apprentices receive and prepares them well for their next steps.
- The Trust works well with local partnerships to deliver apprenticeship training for three other NHS Trusts. The Trust's partners value the good communication they have with the Trust and speak highly of the good support it provides for learners in the partnership. The Trust also makes a significant contribution to meeting the Department for Health's targets set for NHS England.
- The Trust is responsive to local needs and runs a Prince's Trust programme which recruits disadvantaged young people into the NHS. Of the current cohort of apprentices, around one in seven has come through the programme.

The governance of the provider

- The director of organisational development and human resources is the board member with direct oversight of the apprenticeship programme. The board receives regular

updates through the director. Board members are well informed about the issues facing the programme and the performance of apprentices.

- The board member is a designated safeguarding officer and is very well informed about safeguarding incidents and how they are dealt with.
- The board is ambitious for the programme but has not yet devised and set key performance indicators or targets. The directorate is in the process of developing key performance indicators within its workforce plan.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding has a high priority within the Trust. The Trust has a bespoke policy for safeguarding within the apprenticeship programme. A manager with enhanced training is the designated safeguarding officer. All members of staff, including apprentices, have received mandatory safeguarding training. Assessors and apprentices have also received training in fundamental British values, the 'Prevent' duty and online safety.
- Despite the training, a significant minority of both assessors and apprentices are not able to demonstrate a good understanding of fundamental British values or of the risks of radicalisation and extremism.
- The Trust has very good links with local bodies, including social services, the Local Safeguarding Children Board and the police. Managers deal with safeguarding incidents swiftly and appropriately and make referrals where necessary.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Aspects of assessment are not yet consistently good enough to ensure that apprentices are making good progress on their programme. The feedback that a few assessors provide to apprentices too often focuses on unit completion rather than on developing their knowledge and skills. A significant minority of the written records of progress lack developmental feedback to guide apprentices on their next steps.
- Targets on a few personal development plans are not specific enough and very few challenge the most able apprentices. Many of the apprentices grade themselves as outstanding at reviews with little challenge from assessors, which gives them little incentive to improve further.
- The majority of apprentices start the programme with the required qualifications for English and mathematics. Trainers and assessors do not help these learners to extend and increase their skills, especially in developing further their spelling, grammar and punctuation. Too many of apprentices' written records have errors, which assessors do not routinely correct. Learners undertaking functional skills in mathematics make slow progress and a significant minority take several tests before they pass.
- In a few instances, the coordination between what apprentices are learning on the programme and their work on the ward is weak. A few ward staff are not aware of what apprentices are doing or what progress they are making. As a result, these apprentices are not making good progress from their starting points. In the best work placements,

assessors work well with ward and business support staff, and learners benefit from good learning opportunities and make good progress relative to their potential.

- Trainers and assessors provide good induction training that gives apprentices confidence and prepares them well for their work placements. Training includes confidentiality, manual handling, information governance, health and safety, infection control and minute-taking.
- Health and social care apprentices enjoy good learning opportunities and gain valuable skills in patient care and administrative procedures. They demonstrate sensitive care and good understanding of infection control and blood pressure management when helping elderly patients with their personal care. Business administration apprentices gain knowledge in safely managing information.
- Assessors provide good, extra, one-to-one support for apprentices. Managers arrange for those with additional learning needs to receive extra support with their assignments and assessments, which enables them to achieve in line with other apprentices.
- Assessors are caring and dedicated to helping apprentices make good progress, and they provide encouragement and frequent advice and guidance on future career opportunities. Apprentices are keen to progress to higher levels of learning and further their careers. The large majority progress to employment on the wards and in hospital departments.
- Assessors are suitably experienced and most use their knowledge effectively to plan and deliver bespoke training that meets the needs of apprentices well. Learners enjoy their training and are keen to learn.
- Trainers and assessors communicate up-to-date subject knowledge that reflects the required industry practice and meets employers' needs well. Apprentices in health and social care become confident in their knowledge and develop skills in managing patients' personal care and in maintaining a safe environment. Apprentices make considerable positive contributions to the employers' business. Ward staff speak highly of the apprentices and value the time that they are able to give to patient care.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

- The large majority of apprentices who join the Trust with functional skills or GCSEs at grade A* to C receive little support from trainers and supervisors to develop and extend their English and mathematics, which affects the development of these key employability skills for the apprentices.
- Progress is slow for a significant minority of business administration apprentices. Too many are not set timely and focused targets, and where targets are set, assessors do not monitor them with sufficient rigour.
- Most health and social care apprentices demonstrate appropriate awareness of the need for respect for all groups of patients and their individual and cultural needs. However, business administration apprentices who are dealing with service users with diverse cultural and language requirements do not demonstrate a good understanding of how to adapt their approach to meet service users' needs.
- The development of apprentices' understanding of British values and their knowledge of how to keep themselves safe from radicalisation and extremism require improvement to

be judged as sound.

- Apprentices attend regularly and are punctual. They meet the same expectations as for other employees at the hospital.
- The majority of apprentices develop good levels of self-confidence and teamwork skills because of the ongoing support from their trainers and supervisors. Apprentices are positive about their experience of working for the Trust and take pride in their work. Assessors provide them with valuable information, advice and guidance to pursue job opportunities at the Trust as they arise.
- Apprentices benefit from a comprehensive induction process. They value the additional qualifications they achieve as part of the induction, which contribute to their employability skills. However, a small minority of health and social care apprentices struggle to adapt to the professional behaviour required on a hospital ward and do not always display expected levels of professional conduct.
- Apprentices in health and social care develop their practical skills well, for example in swabbing, processing pathology samples and maintaining clinical suites. Trainers and supervisors place a high priority on safe working practices and as a result apprentices feel safe and know how to keep themselves and others safe.

Outcomes for learners

Requires improvement

- The progress that apprentices make varies considerably between programmes. Progress is slow for a significant minority of business administration learners. A high proportion of health and social care learners are making at least expected progress. A significant minority of those learners taking functional skills make slow progress and very few pass tests at the first sitting.
- The standard of apprentices' work in health and social care meets and sometimes exceeds the requirements of the qualifications. The standard of work of business administration apprentices meets the required standards.
- Walsall NHS Trust has a contract with the SFA which started in August 2015, and therefore does not have a full year's achievement data. The Trust's data for learners who are now beginning to complete the programme indicates that the proportion of apprentices who are successfully completing their programme is above national rates.
- The proportion of apprentices who are achieving within the planned timescale is also above the national rate. The proportion of health and social care apprentices who are successfully completing their programme is above the low national rate, and most learners who are completing do so within the agreed timescale.
- Achievement rates are above national rates for business administration apprentices. However, only half of them are achieving within the planned timescale. The vast majority of apprentices, across all programmes, progress into employment within the Trust.
- Managers do not analyse and monitor the performance of different groups sufficiently and are not taking actions to close gaps in performance. For apprentices who have achieved their qualification to date, White British learners are achieving less well than minority ethnic learners. Male learners are achieving slightly better than female learners.

Provider details

Unique reference number	55255
Type of provider	Walsall NHS Trust
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	110
Principal/CEO	Richard Kirby
Telephone number	01922 721172
Website	www.walsallhealthcare.nhs.uk

Provider information at the time of the inspection

Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 or above	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	55	55	1	11	-	-		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	-		-		-			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	-							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	-							
Funding received from:	Skills Funding Agency							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	None							

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the NVQ coordinator, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

Inspection team

William Baidoe-Ansah, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Debra Gray	Ofsted Inspector
Penny Mathers	Ofsted Inspector

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