

University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust

Monitoring visit report

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| Name of lead inspector: | Russ Henry HMI |
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| Address: | University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust Apprenticeship and Development Centre Knighton Street Offices Leicester Royal Infirmary LE1 5WW |

Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

This monitoring visit was undertaken as part of a series of monitoring visits to a sample of new apprenticeship training providers that are funded through the apprenticeship levy. Ofsted's intention to carry out monitoring visits to these new providers was first announced by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector in November 2017. The focus of these visits is on the three themes set out below.

University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust (UHL) began providing apprenticeships in its own right in May 2017, having previously provided them as a subcontractor of North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College. Most of the apprentices are employees of UHL, with a small number who are employees of Leicester Partnership NHS Trust (LPT). At the time of the monitoring visit, there were 114 apprentices following standards programmes in customer service at level 2, team leading at level 3, and health-related apprenticeships at levels 2, 3 and 5.

Themes

How much progress have leaders made in ensuring that the provider is meeting all the requirements of successful apprenticeship provision?

Reasonable progress

Leaders and managers have established a wide-ranging programme of apprenticeships intended to help address the skills needs of UHL and contribute to meeting its obligations in respect of the public-sector apprenticeship target. The apprenticeship team delivers a suite of apprenticeship programmes in vocational areas in which its practitioners (teachers) and assessors have appropriate expertise. For other vocational areas, the team manages the procurement of apprenticeship training from other providers.

Managers have developed a range of clinical apprenticeships that provide progression from entry-level jobs for healthcare assistants through to nursing-associate roles that provide a progression route to registered-nurse training. Their aim is to provide a pipeline of staff to meet the clinical needs of UHL. This is a well-considered approach. In addition to these clinical programmes, the apprenticeship training team provides programmes in customer service at level 2 and team leading at level 3.

Programmes meet the apprenticeship requirements. All apprentices work in appropriate roles. Training staff evaluate each role to ensure that it provides opportunities for the apprentice to develop the full range of knowledge, skills and behaviours required to complete all elements of the apprenticeship standard. Apprentices are either new recruits or existing staff for whom the apprenticeship

provides an opportunity to develop their skills and progress to more senior roles. Newly recruited apprentices are employed on fixed-term contracts, but in all cases there is a clear expectation that they will gain a permanent position at the end of their programme. All those interviewed understood their entitlement to 20% of their working time for off-the-job training and most spend more time than this on their studies. Apprentices who are new recruits are supernumerary and this enables managers to release them from the workplace without difficulty.

Staff make suitable arrangements to meet the evolving requirements of end-point assessments, and most apprentices understand what will be required of them. However, the programme at level 5 for nursing associates, previously offered as a stand-alone foundation-degree programme, has only recently been launched as an apprenticeship, and apprentices on this programme are not fully aware of assessment arrangements.

Managers have established effective relationships with LPT that ensure that apprentices from this trust receive the same standard of provision as those from UHL. Managers within both trusts are committed to the programme. Before they take on an apprentice, they attend a workshop that ensures that they understand the demands of the programme on both the apprentice and themselves.

What progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that apprentices benefit from high-quality training that leads to positive outcomes for apprentices?

Reasonable progress

The vast majority of apprentices develop their knowledge, skills and behaviours to a good standard and are able to apply their learning in the workplace. This is because of the high standard of the training they receive. They become confident in their roles and can describe the ways in which the apprenticeship programme has helped them in their work. For example, a level 3 team leader explained how she had used her new project management skills to develop a process that enables patients to undergo as a day patient a procedure that the trust currently delivers over a period of time. This will make the process more convenient for patients and save UHL time and money.

Managers have developed sensibly structured programmes, with off-the-job training that is planned well in advance. Apprentices spend at least 20% of their working time in off-the-job training. In most cases, apprentices attend formal lessons for one day a fortnight. Practitioners plan lessons well. They focus carefully on the knowledge, skills and understanding that apprentices need for their jobs. Apprentices find these lessons helpful and stimulating. They supplement them with further independent study that they complete during working hours; this contributes well to their progress.

Apprentices understand the end-point assessment requirements of their programme. Consequently, they are able to focus on relevant topics and this helps the majority to make progress. Although a minority of apprentices do not have the same clarity and understanding, this has not had a significant adverse impact on their learning.

The majority of apprentices benefit from regular meetings with assessors, who work flexibly to ensure that their visits are convenient for the apprentices. Apprentices' managers are involved closely in reviews, and this helps to ensure that on- and off-the-job training is coordinated effectively. However, not all apprentices receive the same frequency of progress-review visits, and in a very few cases managers are not sufficiently involved in the review process.

All apprentices take tests at the start of their programme to establish the level of their English and mathematical knowledge and skills. Those who need to undertake English and mathematics qualifications attend lessons at a nearby college, and the proportion who pass functional skills qualifications at the first attempt is high. Initial tests show that a few apprentices have weak English and mathematical skills when they join their programme, despite having previously passed GCSE examinations in these subjects. Staff do not do enough to support these apprentices to improve their knowledge and skills, particularly in mathematics. Those who already hold the required English and mathematics qualifications and whose knowledge and skills are good seldom receive help to improve them further.

Quality-assurance processes are largely effective in ensuring that apprentices receive a good standard of training. Managers conduct annual lesson observations of teaching staff, complemented by unannounced visits to classrooms. They use the results of these observations to develop individual action plans that help staff to improve their performance. Managers have recently introduced a programme of monitoring boards to review all aspects of each programme on a frequent basis, but the impact of these is not yet clear. Managers monitor the progress of apprentices on a monthly basis, but their processes are not yet fully developed.

Practitioners and assessors are well qualified and experienced. They provide good support to apprentices to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to be successful employees. Apprentices value highly their expertise and support.

How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place?

Reasonable progress

UHL has comprehensive safeguarding policies and procedures and these help training staff to understand their responsibilities. Managers and staff adhere to UHL's safeguarding policies and procedures. Consequently, apprentices are safe in their workplaces and when in lessons. They know to whom they should report any concerns. Apprentices receive guidance and training on relevant safeguarding topics, including those related to radicalisation and extremism, and related topics on British

values. This training takes place at the start of their programme through online learning courses. For many apprentices, safeguarding topics are a component of their apprenticeship and they study them in their lessons. However, while all apprentices can remember studying these themes, many are unable to recall detailed information.

Managers adhere to appropriate processes for checking the backgrounds of new staff. They verify, for example, the identity, qualifications and employment backgrounds of staff, and carry out appropriate disclosure and barring service checks. However, although managers provided evidence of these checks during the monitoring visit, they lack a centralised system for holding these records within the training department. This hampered their efforts to provide the information, particularly for those staff who teach on the nursing-associate programme at level 5.

All new staff undertake initial safeguarding training that includes the 'Prevent' duty. Training is updated at regular intervals and ensures that they understand their responsibilities clearly. However, details of completed training are not held centrally. Although managers provided clear evidence that this training has taken place, this proved to be a challenge for them.

Although there are references to professional conduct throughout safeguarding policies and employment contracts, there is no clear, separate code of conduct for staff that makes clear the expectations governing their interactions and relationships with apprentices, whether face to face, via the telephone or through social media.

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