

Medway NHS Foundation Trust Charitable Fund

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number: 2625254

Name of lead inspector: Peter Cox, Her Majesty's Inspector

Inspection date(s): 16–17 June 2021

Type of provider: Employer provider

Address: Medway Hospital
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Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

From October 2018, Ofsted undertook to carry out monitoring visits to all newly directly funded providers of apprenticeship training provision which began to be funded from April 2017 or after by ESFA and/or the apprenticeship levy. This monitoring visit was undertaken as part of those arrangements and as outlined in the *Further education and skills inspection handbook*, especially the sections entitled 'Monitoring visits' and 'Monitoring visits to providers that are newly directly publicly funded'. The focus of these visits is on the themes set out below.

Medway NHS Foundation Trust Charitable Fund is an employer provider. The organisation provides training to middle and senior leaders within the Medway NHS Trust. At the time of the monitoring visit, 16 apprentices were studying the level 5 operational / departmental manager standard. All apprentices are over the age of 19 years old. The organisation uses a subcontractor to teach those apprentices who require level 2 functional skills in English and mathematics as part of their programme.

The Medway NHS Foundation Trust (hereby referred to as the Trust) was significantly impacted by COVID-19, particularly with development of the Kent variant in late 2020. During this time the vast majority of apprentices continued in their learning.

The impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus) has been accounted for in the findings and progress judgements below.

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 designed the curriculum carefully so that apprentices quickly develop the skills they need to become better managers and improve patient outcomes. Leaders have aligned the curriculum well to the specific needs of the NHS. For example, staff responded positively to the Trust's focus on continuous quality improvement and added this into project management units.

Leaders make sure that their programme meets the requirements of apprenticeships. They recruit apprentices with integrity. Staff check that apprentices receive their entitlement to off-the-job training which supports apprentices to make good progress in their studies.

Leaders, including members of the Trust governance board, understand the strengths and weaknesses of the provision in detail. Leaders take sensible actions to resolve issues successfully. For example, they now use a tracking system to improve the ways they monitor apprentices' progress. This enables them to intervene quickly and fruitfully if apprentices fall behind.

Leaders and managers make sure that staff are appropriately qualified and highly experienced. Leaders support staff well in their continued professional development. For example, they teach staff about mental health awareness to better support apprentices. The vast majority of apprentices make quick progress and feel well supported.

Staff assess apprentices' needs well at the start of their programmes. They then adapt learning to apprentices' individual needs and job roles. Staff provide helpful support for learners who have additional learning needs so that they make as good progress as their peers. Almost all apprentices quickly develop new and substantial knowledge, skills, and behaviour.

Leaders do not communicate well with all line managers to plan on-the-job training or review apprentices' progress. Consequently, some line managers are unable to support some apprentices to progress as quickly as their peers.

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

Apprentices are rightly positive about the impact that training has on their job roles. They become increasingly confident and able to manage effectively in often highly stressful situations. Apprentices are ambitious as a result of their training. They look forward to progressing to senior leadership training and further promotion. They understand the progression opportunities available to them as a result of their studies.

Staff review the curriculum carefully to meet the needs of apprentices and the NHS. They have included a useful additional leadership qualification so that apprentices develop deeper knowledge and understanding of management.

Well-qualified and experienced staff provide high-quality off-the-job training for apprentices. Specialist experts work closely with staff to adapt and enhance the curriculum to develop apprentices' learning. For example, equality and diversity specialists teach apprentices about the use of core visions to better manage teams. Apprentices become more effective in their job roles.

Staff have appropriate arrangements in place to identify apprentices' prior knowledge and experience. Staff use their detailed knowledge of apprentices' job roles to illustrate theory skilfully. For example, staff carefully distinguish between clinical and non-clinical roles when discussing communication barriers. As a result, apprentices benefit from training that is tailored to their individual needs and responsibilities.

Staff give apprentices useful and purposeful feedback. Apprentices understand how to improve their work, and many do. Staff support apprentices effectively to develop the literacy and numeracy skills they need for their job roles. They teach apprentices to write professionally and use referencing correctly. Leaders and managers have been too slow to intervene where apprentices who require English and mathematics qualifications have fallen behind. Consequently, many apprentices who need these qualifications are not making quick enough progress.

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

The highly experienced and well qualified designated safeguarding lead (DSL) uses suitable policies and processes to help keep apprentices safe. Safeguarding staff work very closely with external agencies and so understand local risk in detail. The DSL has taken effective steps to meet the requirements of the Prevent duty. Leaders check that all staff, including those subcontracted, are safe to work with apprentices.

Staff and apprentices complete needs appropriate mandatory safeguarding and Prevent duty training as part of their employment with the NHS. Apprentices with clinical roles complete additional safeguarding training to support them in their jobs.

Safeguarding staff teach apprentices a range of useful safeguarding topics, including categories of abuse. Apprentices understand how to look after their own mental and physical wellbeing. For example, staff teach apprentices about stress management. Apprentices feel safe and know who to report concerns to if they have any.

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