

# Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust

Report following a monitoring visit to a 'requires improvement' provider

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## Monitoring visit: main findings

### Context and focus of visit

Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust was inspected in January 2020. At that time, inspectors judged the overall effectiveness of the provision to require improvement.

The focus of this monitoring visit was to evaluate the progress that leaders and managers have made in addressing the main areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection.

Since the previous inspection, the board of trustees has made substantial changes to the senior leadership team. Two months after the full inspection, and in immediate response to government instructions, the board of trustees suspended all governance meetings. This was because the board members were immediately required to support the national fight against COVID-19 (coronavirus) as key workers.

Currently, 386 apprentices are studying standards-based programmes in healthcare support worker at level 2, senior healthcare support worker at level 3, team leader/supervisor at level 3 and business administrator at level 3. The large majority of apprentices study healthcare support worker at level 2 and senior healthcare support worker at level 3.

The impact of COVID-19 has been taken into account in the findings and progress judgements below.

### Themes

**To what extent do leaders and managers effectively include employers in the planning of apprentices' learning to ensure that apprentices, including those with additional support needs, make at least their expected progress and are prepared to complete their end-point assessment within the planned timescales?**

**Insufficient progress**

What inspectors found at the provision is not a result of the pandemic, but a failure by senior leaders to put in place many of the principles of an apprenticeship. Leaders continued to recruit large numbers of apprentices, even though they knew they would be unable to meet all the requirements of an apprenticeship.

Most changes introduced by senior leaders have only been put in place recently. None of the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection has been fully resolved.

Leaders have been too slow to help apprentices catch up. They do not ensure that assessors set effective targets for apprentices to rapidly develop substantial new knowledge, skills and behaviours. Instead, assessors set targets relating to the completion of units. As a result, over half of apprentices are still behind in their learning.

Leaders do not ensure that on- and off-the-job training is effectively coordinated. They do not ensure that assessors routinely involve apprentices' line managers in the review and planning of apprentices' progress towards developing their knowledge, skills and behaviours at work. As a result, most line managers do not know what they need to do to help apprentices apply their skills and knowledge at work. The apprentices' line managers told inspectors that they were very keen to be much more involved. However, due to poor communication from senior leaders, their involvement was limited.

The support assessors and tutors provide to apprentices with additional learning needs is inconsistent. This is because leaders have been too slow to provide training for assessors and tutors to develop their confidence and skills to support apprentices with a range of additional learning needs effectively.

Most apprentices develop new knowledge, skills and behaviours at work. For example, apprentices studying the healthcare support worker standard at level 2 skilfully insert a nasogastric tube and confidently measure patients' blood pressure, temperature and oxygen levels. Level 3 senior healthcare support worker apprentices on the maternity pathway learn to manage their emotions effectively when caring for sick babies. Apprentices on the mental health support pathway confidently assist people with eating disorders. Apprentices on the theatre support pathway skilfully carry out swab, instrument and needle counts.

### **How successfully do functional skills tutors use apprentices' starting points to develop apprentices' English and mathematical skills?      Insufficient progress**

Senior leaders do not ensure that assessors and tutors use apprentices' starting points to plan and rapidly develop apprentices' English and mathematical skills. They do not ensure that assessors set effective actions for apprentices to complete English and mathematics functional skills in a timely manner. Senior leaders have implemented new processes to improve the collection of apprentices' starting points in relation to English and mathematics. They have introduced a one-to-one meeting

with apprentices to determine what apprentices already know and can do at the start of their programme. It is too early to evaluate the impact of this.

Leaders have not recruited enough teaching staff to provide high-quality English and mathematics training for apprentices. A small number of tutors are responsible for a large number of apprentices. This means that they do not have the capacity to support all apprentices effectively.

Senior leaders and managers do not ensure that they monitor apprentices' attendance at English and mathematics functional skills sessions effectively. They do not intervene quickly enough when apprentices do not attend. As a result, too many apprentices fall behind in their learning and routinely exceed their planned end dates for functional skills.

Most apprentices' line managers do not know whether their apprentices are required to complete functional skills. This means that line managers in the workplace do not know what they need to do to support and develop apprentices' English and mathematical skills at work.

A few apprentices develop their mathematical skills at work, for example, in accurately calculating the calories required for meal-replacement drinks.

**To what extent do leaders and managers ensure that apprentices receive high-quality careers information, advice and guidance to help them make decisions about their future? Insufficient progress**

Senior leaders and managers do not ensure that apprentices receive high-quality careers information, advice and guidance. Most apprentices told us that they have not had the chance to discuss what progression opportunities are available to them. The large majority of apprentices have clear and aspirational career aims. They want to be nurses and operations department practitioners, and are extremely motivated to succeed. They have researched their next steps to higher learning and know what they need to do to achieve this.

Leaders acknowledge that they have yet to see the impact of their recent improvements to the careers information, advice and guidance they give to apprentices. They are training staff so that they can help apprentices to make well-informed decisions about their future.

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