

Inspection of University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust

Inspection dates:

19 to 21 October 2021

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Apprenticeships

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

Information about this provider

University Hospital Southampton NHS Trust (UHST) has been training staff working in healthcare settings for over 25 years. UHST began teaching levy-funded apprenticeships in 2017. At the time of the inspection, 25 apprentices were studying the level 3 senior healthcare support worker apprenticeship standard.

Apprentices work at the hospital in Southampton or at one other local NHS trust. They attend a combination of in-person and remote training one day a week in different cohort groups. UHST has continued to teach existing cohorts and started new ones since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. At the time of the inspection, apprentices from four cohorts were in training.

UHST works with one subcontractor, Eastleigh College, for the training of functional skills in English and mathematics. At the time of the inspection, there were no apprentices studying functional skills qualifications as part of their apprenticeship.

UHST received a new provider monitoring visit from Ofsted in 2018.

What is it like to be a learner with this provider?

Apprentices do not benefit from effective reviews with their tutors to identify gaps in their knowledge in sufficient detail. Most apprentices who are not progressing well enough do not receive appropriate support in a timely manner to help them to make quick and sustained progress with their studies. Trainers do not intervene early enough or set appropriate, time-bound actions to help apprentices to catch up. As a result, those who fall behind with their studies do not know what they need to focus on to improve, and make slow progress or leave before completing their training.

Apprentices develop significant new knowledge, skills and behaviours throughout their apprenticeship. They learn the clinical skills required for their roles, such as taking electrocardiograms and caring for patients with catheters. They understand the reasons why they must follow certain procedures and the implications of not doing so. As a result of their training, apprentices provide increasingly better care for patients and carry out their daily responsibilities with increased confidence.

Throughout their training, apprentices complete detailed reflective statements and take useful multiple-choice tests that help them prepare well for their final assessment. Most of those who complete the apprenticeship achieve merit or distinction grades, which some did not think they were capable of when they started. These apprentices are rightly proud of their achievements.

Apprentices are well informed about how the apprenticeship can help them develop their careers. They benefit from extensive and helpful information, advice and guidance about progression opportunities in different areas of the trust. Apprentices have aspirations to get promotion at work, move into higher education or go on to study a degree apprenticeship in nursing, which many do.

A few apprentices do not benefit from planned opportunities to put what they learn in their training into practice at work. These apprentices cannot apply their new knowledge and skills quickly in a clinical setting. This slows their progress and they feel frustrated as a result.

What does the provider do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders and managers do not involve apprentices' line managers sufficiently in planning the training for their apprentices or in reviewing the progress they make throughout their studies. Leaders and managers have been too slow to find different ways in which they can work closely with line managers in the busy and demanding hospital environment in which they work. As a result, most line managers do not know the actual progress that their apprentices are making or how what they are currently studying links to the practical skills they need for their jobs.

Leaders and managers have not resolved the issues identified at the time of the new provider monitoring visit with regard to their quality assurance and quality improvement arrangements. Although managers introduced observations of in-

person training sessions, they have not yet observed training sessions or progress reviews since these have been taking place remotely. Thus, they are not aware of the quality of the remote training that apprentices receive or how well trainers monitor and support apprentices' progress.

Leaders, managers and governors have carefully considered their decision to teach the senior healthcare support worker apprenticeship to their staff. This is part of the trust's long-term strategy to develop its workforce to meet its specific staffing needs. A number of apprentices who have completed their apprenticeship have moved up to higher pay-band roles within the trust.

Leaders and managers have planned an ambitious curriculum that is relevant to the apprentices' varied job roles and prepares them well for their next steps in their careers and education. Managers work closely with colleagues from specialist departments to plan and teach the optional units on the qualification the apprentices complete as part of their apprenticeship. For example, physiotherapists select appropriate reading lists and independent study materials in topics such as falls and frailty. Apprentices receive high-quality, up-to-date specialist training from experts in their chosen fields of study. Apprentices benefit from planned opportunities during their training to practise interview and presentation skills that help them when they apply for jobs or further training. Trainers support apprentices well to learn research skills and gradually become more autonomous in finding and using information for their written assignments.

Trainers use their extensive and current expertise in their subject areas to teach topics in a suitable order. Trainers teach key concepts and skills at the start of the course so that they can later build on these as the training progresses. For example, apprentices learn about anatomy and physiology at the start of their training. Once they have developed an in-depth understanding of health and safety, risk assessments and effective communication with patients, they move on to learning about specific clinical skills, such as cannulation and taking blood.

Trainers do not currently plan for their training to include activities to develop apprentices' knowledge of current issues outside work that could affect the apprentices' lives and well-being. Staff do not develop apprentices' understanding of fundamental British values sufficiently well beyond the training that apprentices receive at the start of their studies. As a result, apprentices find it difficult to explain how these topics relate to them and, most importantly, their patients and colleagues.

Trainers skilfully use professional discussions, presentations and reflective accounts to teach apprentices new or complex topics effectively. They check apprentices' understanding well through workplace observations, marking their reflective accounts and checking their answers to tests. Trainers provide helpful and constructive feedback to apprentices, which they use to improve their work and skills. Trainers support apprentices well to learn research skills. Apprentices build their skills to cite and annotate their work and produce increasingly detailed reflective accounts.

Leaders and managers do not collect and analyse performance data from previous cohorts to identify what is working well and what they need to improve. Managers have introduced a more robust process to identify candidates' starting points and ensure the apprenticeship is right for them. This has resulted in an improvement in the proportion of apprentices achieving their apprenticeship. However, the proportion who leave before completing their apprenticeship or continue in learning beyond their planned end date remains high.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Apprentices feel safe and work safely following the hospital risk assessments. They know to whom to report concerns they may have about training or work. Leaders carry out thorough checks on staff to ensure that they are safe to work with apprentices.

Apprentices complete training in online safety, including how to use cameras in meetings and make online transactions safely. Staff, governors and apprentices receive appropriate safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty training. Trainers do not make apprentices aware of risks specific to their local areas. As a result, apprentices do not know what threats they may face outside work.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders and managers should ensure that they involve apprentices' line managers in the planning, teaching and reviewing of their apprentices' training so that they know how apprentices are progressing and what they need to do to support them.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that apprentices' line managers know what apprentices are studying so that they can provide them with opportunities to quickly apply at work the new skills and knowledge they learn on their training.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that trainers conduct frequent and effective reviews of progress with apprentices to identify those who are struggling with their studies early and provide them with suitable targets and support to help them catch up and complete on time.
- Leaders should ensure that apprentices benefit from opportunities during their studies to revisit the training from the start of their apprenticeships to deepen their understanding of fundamental British values and to learn about local risks.

Provider details

Unique reference number	58839
Address	Tremona Road Southampton SO16 6YD
Contact number	02381 206512
Website	www.suht.nhs.uk
CEO	Anita Esser (Head of Wider Healthcare Teams Education)
Provider type	Employer provider
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Main subcontractors	Eastleigh College

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the Skills for Practice lead, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous monitoring visit report. The inspection was carried out using the [further education and skills inspection handbook](#) and took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors collected a wide range of evidence to inform judgements, including visiting learning sessions, scrutinising learners' work, seeking the views of learners, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

Inspection team

Montserrat Pérez-Parent, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Saher Nijabat	Her Majesty's Inspector

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