

Inspection of Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

Inspection dates: 12 to 14 October 2021

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Requires improvement
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Apprenticeships	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this provider

Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust (GSTT) provides a range of acute services for adults and children in south London. Since May 2017, the organisation has been teaching levy-funded apprenticeships to its employees. This is the first full inspection under the current contractual arrangement. At the time of this inspection, there were 12 apprentices working towards the level 3 dental nurse standard.

GSTT training academy is located at Guy's Hospital in Southwark, London. Apprentices are based across GSTT sites in the Boroughs of Southwark and Lambeth in south London.

At the start of the pandemic, training academy staff were redeployed to other areas of the hospital. The impact of COVID-19 has been considered in the findings below.

The provider currently does not work with any subcontractors.

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

Apprentices at GSTT benefit from a range of rotations in different clinics, such as paediatrics and orthodontics. They have access to high-quality facilities. Apprentices gain valuable work experience in a wide range of specialist services offered by the trust. They appreciate the knowledge and skills they learn that help them to progress at work and build their confidence and character.

Apprentices feel well supported by their colleagues in the workplace. They work alongside experienced staff and find them very helpful. Clinical leads complete effective local inductions when apprentices attend for work placement. Apprentices are included in team meetings and invited to staff lunchrooms. Most apprentices feel part of the team in the workplace.

A small number of apprentices report that they do not understand the recent changes to the curriculum. Tutors and clinical staff do not communicate effectively the changes to what apprentices can and cannot do in the clinics. Consequently, apprentices find the programme disorganised and at times confusing.

Apprentices do not receive adequate information to help them understand the different career options open to them until much later in their programme. As a result, apprentices cannot make choices in line with their interests and future career aspirations when considering their final work placements.

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

Leaders have a clear vision to train apprentices to become highly skilled dental nurses to meet the organisation's own workforce requirements. They strive to provide high-quality training that enables apprentices to work in a complex hospital dental environment. Apprentices who complete their programme continue to work for the trust, and the majority of them move into higher level roles within specialist areas in dentistry.

Leaders and managers do not critically evaluate the quality of the provision well enough. They have not analysed relevant evidence to assess the impact of their actions in sufficient detail. Subsequently, leaders do not have adequate plans in place to deal with some of the emerging issues caused by the recent changes to the curriculum.

Tutors ensure that apprentices are taught key concepts and skills at the start of their training so that they can undertake duties in their work placements. Apprentices learn about basic health and safety, dental charting and the use of key instruments, before developing knowledge of more complex topics such as dental disease, infection and sterilisation. Consequently, apprentices develop significant new knowledge, skills and behaviours essential for their work.

Apprentices do not routinely receive one-to-one support to address their individual needs. Although staff provide one-to-one support to apprentices who fall behind or have learning needs, this support is not structured and is only available if requested. As a result, staff do not consistently pick up and resolve apprentices' emerging concerns on time.

Staff do not link off-the-job teaching with on-the-job training effectively enough. Apprentices complete their work placements in different clinics, such as orthodontics and oral surgery, before learning about these areas in depth. Too often, apprentices do not feel adequately prepared for clinical rotations because they have not yet gained specialist knowledge in class. As a result, apprentices struggle to get to grips with the knowledge needed to perform their jobs successfully.

Staff do not set high expectations regarding apprentices achieving distinctions or merits in their final examination. Tutors do not provide clear enough guidance and feedback on what apprentices should do to produce high-quality work and achieve distinctions. Only a small number of apprentices who have completed their apprenticeships have achieved distinctions.

Apprentices fully adhere to the trust's values and General Dental Council professional standards. They have positive attitudes to work and learning. Tutors encourage good attendance and punctuality and support learners to improve where this is a concern. Apprentices' attendance is good, and most attend their teaching sessions on time.

Apprentices behave professionally in the workplace. They follow instructions well and communicate respectfully with colleagues and the patients. Apprentices demonstrate care and empathy when dealing with patients. Apprentices use appropriate language when advising patients about post-treatment aftercare and oral hygiene.

Staff do not routinely promote and develop apprentices' understanding of topics outside the qualification specific to the curriculum. Tutors do not have meaningful discussions with apprentices around topics such as sexual harassment or maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Apprentices complete online training on British values and the 'Prevent' duty. However, staff do not revisit these topics in sufficient detail after induction. As a result, apprentices find it challenging to explain how these topics relate to them and their work.

The newly formed apprenticeship board regularly reports to the trust's governance board. The board includes members from a wide range of clinical disciplines. They provide effective challenge to leaders and managers. As a result, governors have a suitable oversight of the apprenticeship provision.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong culture of safeguarding that includes a range of suitable training for their staff and the apprentices. Leaders track safeguarding concerns appropriately and report these to the apprenticeship board.

Apprentices feel safe in their work environment. They are well informed about how to keep safe when in the clinics. During their induction, apprentices go through work-related legislation, safety procedures and requirements around ensuring the safety of their patients and themselves.

Apprentices know whom to contact if they have concerns about their or others' well-being.

Apprentices have access to a comprehensive employee assistance programme. However, most apprentices are not sufficiently aware of the range of welfare services available to them.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders should ensure that staff provide apprentices with regular support so that their individual learning needs are met.
- Leaders should ensure that on-the-job and off-the-job learning links well, so that apprentices have suitable opportunities to apply their learning from teaching sessions in the workplace in a timely manner.
- Leaders should ensure that apprentices receive comprehensive and impartial careers information, advice and guidance in a timely way so they can make informed choices about their next steps.
- Leaders should ensure that they evaluate a range of evidence to accurately self-assess their performance and monitor the impact of their actions.

Provider details

Unique reference number	1276385
Address	Guy's Hospital Great Maze Pond London SE1 9RT
Contact number	07876 400539
Website	www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk
Principal/CEO	Julie Screamon (Chief People Officer)
Provider type	Employer provider
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Main subcontractors	N/A

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the education, training and development manager, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous monitoring 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 review sessions, scrutinising learners' work, seeking the views of learners, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

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