

University Hospital Southampton NHS Trust

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

Unique reference number:	58839
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Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

University Hospital Southampton NHS Trust (UHST) has trained staff working in healthcare settings for over 25 years. UHST began teaching levy-funded apprenticeships in 2017. At the time of the monitoring visit, 12 apprentices were studying the level 3 senior healthcare support worker apprenticeship standard.

UHST was last inspected in October 2021. 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 resolving the main areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection.

Apprentices work at the University Hospital Southampton NHS Trust. They attend a combination of in-person and remote training one day a week in different cohort groups. While UHST has continued to teach existing cohorts, they have not started any new apprentices since the previous inspection.

Themes

To what extent have leaders and managers made progress in ensuring that apprentices make good progress, become better at their job roles and complete their studies in a timely manner?

Reasonable progress

Leaders use employer and apprentices' feedback successfully to align the curriculum to their job roles carefully. For example, where required, staff teach cannulation and catheterisation early in the course, to help learners to be able to complete these important tasks quickly.

Leaders and managers have introduced successful curriculum working groups. Staff work closely with the apprentices' line managers and so have a good understanding of the clinical workplace needs and what apprentices need to be able to do. As such, leaders use this information well to inform the curriculum content and taught sessions to enable learners to become valued team members.

Assessors work collaboratively with apprentices and their employers at review meetings to give apprentices clear and meaningful targets. Consequently, apprentices know what they need to do to and are on track to achieve well in their final assessments.

Leaders and managers have made sensible changes to apprentices' study days to better meet their needs of the apprentices. For example, leaders now use a combination of face-to-face sessions, online sessions and independent study groups so that all apprentices can now access learning. Apprentices appreciate the opportunities to work independently and to have supportive discussions with assessors and their peers during allocated study time. This enables them to share practice and consolidate their learning on topics such as person-centred care procedures for nil by mouth, and nursing values. As a result, apprentices become more confident and competent. Where apprentices need to become proficient in areas outside of their daily tasks on their ward, leaders have introduced well-planned shadowing activities to extend their learning.

Since the previous inspection, leaders and managers have rightly recognised the need for apprentices to better review their learning and progress. They have successfully introduced the use of reflective journals. Apprentices use these reflective journals well to consider their daily work, the skills and knowledge they have developed and their achievements. For example, apprentices report that using the reflective journal helps them to understand their own productivity and enables them to re-evaluate their work. Consequently, apprentices are now more evaluative of their learning and work and improve in their job roles as a result.

To what extent have leaders and managers made progress in ensuring that employers are suitably involved in the apprenticeship programme so that apprentices make good progress?

Reasonable progress

Leaders have rightly recognised the need to improve communication with line managers. They have provided informative monthly newsletters for managers about the topics being taught and offer opportunities to attend workshops on updates to the apprenticeship programme. Subsequently, most line managers understand requirements for the apprenticeship and so are able to better support their apprentices.

Leaders have made reasonable progress in improving communication between staff, apprentices and employers. Line managers value more frequent and helpful contact between tutors and their apprentices. Leaders have ensured that reviews of progress and study days are now scheduled in advance, enabling assessors and programme managers to ensure that apprentices' shift patterns do not interfere with their study days. Apprentices now attend sessions very well, and so make good progress in their studies.

Leaders and managers have successfully adapted the apprentice review process to mirror the UHST's appraisal process. Line managers are familiar with this process and use it frequently. As a result, managers and assessors discuss apprentices'

learning since the last review and their health and well-being and plan for their future careers purposefully.

Although leaders and managers invite employers to attend the frequent, comprehensive review meetings, so that they understand apprentices' progress, their learning goals and how to better support apprentices in the workplace, they have not been successful in ensuring that all employers are suitably involved in the apprenticeship programme.

What progress have leaders and managers made in checking the quality of training and responding to those checks to improve provision as a result?

Reasonable progress

Leaders have rightly recognised the need for better oversight of the quality of the training. They have recently appointed a new manager to oversee this area, but it is too early to judge the impact on improving the quality of training.

Leaders and managers have a clear understanding of the actions they need to take to improve the quality of the training. They have made good use of working with partner trusts to support them to establish robust quality assurance measures. However, processes to monitor the quality of that training are not yet fully effective. Leaders and managers do not yet have consistent plans in place to monitor the quality of teaching and learning or to standardise the approach assessors use for apprentices' action plans.

Leaders and managers have developed appropriate and useful training and guidance materials to support assessors and trainers to give feedback and support apprentices in developing their clinical skills and knowledge in the workplace.

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