

INSPECTION REPORT

Gateshead Health NHS Trust

23 June 2003



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Grading

Inspectors use a seven-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of learning sessions. The descriptors for the seven grades are:

- *grade 1 - excellent*
- *grade 2 - very good*
- *grade 3 - good*
- *grade 4 - satisfactory*
- *grade 5 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 6 - poor*
- *grade 7 - very poor.*

Inspectors use a five-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of provision in occupational/curriculum areas and Jobcentre Plus programmes. The same scale is used to describe the quality of leadership and management, which includes quality assurance and equality of opportunity. The descriptors for the five grades are:

- *grade 1 - outstanding*
- *grade 2 - good*
- *grade 3 - satisfactory*
- *grade 4 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 5 - very weak.*

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

SEVEN-POINT SCALE	FIVE-POINT SCALE
grade 1	grade 1
grade 2	
grade 3	grade 2
grade 4	grade 3
grade 5	grade 4
grade 6	grade 5
grade 7	

Adult Learning Inspectorate

The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was established under the provisions of the *Learning and Skills Act 2000* to bring the inspection of all aspects of adult learning and work-based learning within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

- work-based learning for all people over 16
- provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- **learndirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- training funded by Jobcentre Plus
- education and training in prisons, at the invitation of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons.

Inspections are carried out in accordance with the *Common Inspection Framework* by teams of full-time inspectors and part-time associate inspectors who have knowledge of, and experience in, the work which they inspect. All providers are invited to nominate a senior member of their staff to participate in the inspection as a team member.

Overall judgement

Where the overall judgement is that the provision is adequate, only those aspects of the provision which are less than satisfactory will be reinspected.

Provision will normally be deemed to be inadequate where:

- more than one third of published grades for occupational/curriculum areas, **or**
- leadership and management are judged to be less than satisfactory.

This provision will be subject to a full reinspection.

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning. A statement as to whether the provision is adequate or not is included in the summary section of the inspection report.

INSPECTION REPORT

Gateshead Health NHS Trust

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Gateshead Health NHS Trust (the Trust) was established in April 1998, the result of a merger between Gateshead Healthcare and Gateshead Hospitals NHS Trust, to provide locally based community, mental health and acute care hospital services for people in Gateshead and the neighbouring areas. The Trust received a contract from Tyne and Wear Learning and Skills Council (LSC) in September 2001 to offer national vocational qualification- (NVQ) based nursing cadetships. All learners are employed, either at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, where the training team is based, or at the Bensham Hospital. The Trust also offers modern apprenticeships in business administration. There were too few learners in this area for it to be inspected separately. Some off-the-job learning is subcontracted to a local college, the remainder takes place at the Queen Elizabeth hospital. Assessment is carried out in the workplace. The Trust established its two-year programme for cadet nurses in September 2001, in line with local and national strategic priorities for nursing. The programme was designed jointly with the University of Northumbria, and cadets who complete the advanced modern apprenticeship are guaranteed a place on the second year of the university's nursing diploma.

2. Overall management of training rests with the director of nursing, who reports directly to the chief executive. The director of nursing oversees the work of the development facilitator, who takes day-to-day responsibility for work-based learning, supported by an assistant development facilitator and an administrator.

3. In May 2003, the unemployment rate for Gateshead was 3.3 per cent, compared with the national rate, which stands at 2.6 per cent. Within the region, there has been a shift away from traditional heavy industries, and nearly three quarters of all jobs are now in the service sector. The Trust is the second-largest single employer in the region. The Gateshead area, from where the Trust recruits its learners, has, according to the 2001 census, a minority ethnic representation of 0.8 per cent, significantly lower than the proportion of 6.2 per cent for England. The proportion of school leavers gaining five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C or above is, at 49.3 per cent, slightly higher than the national percentage of 47.9.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Health, social care & public services

4. There are 22 nurse cadets on the Trust's health, care and public service programmes. Twenty-one are advanced modern apprentices, working towards NVQs at level 2 and level 3 in care, key skills qualifications and the AS level in human biology. The other cadet is a foundation modern apprentice, working towards a level 2 NVQ and key skills qualifications. All learners are employed by the Trust, and work in clinical placements at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the Bensham Hospital. Learners attend off-the-job training for one day each week. This takes place at the Trust's education centre during

their first year, and at a local college during the second year. Key skills training and assessment are provided by the college. NVQ assessment is carried out in the workplace.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	2
Number of inspection days	8
Number of learner interviews	9
Number of staff interviews	11
Number of employer interviews	6
Number of subcontractor interviews	3
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	3
Number of visits	9

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

5. The quality of provision is inadequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. Training in health, social care and public services is unsatisfactory, as are the leadership and management of the nurse cadet programme, including quality assurance. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory.

GRADES

grade 1 = outstanding, grade 2 = good, grade 3 = satisfactory, grade 4 = unsatisfactory, grade 5 = very weak

Leadership and management	4
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	3
Quality assurance	4

Health, social care & public services	4
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	4

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

6. **Retention rates are good.** Seventy-three per cent of learners who started their training in 2001 are still on programme; the rate among 2002 starters is 83 per cent. It is too early to make a judgement about achievement rates, as no nurse cadets have so far completed the programme.

7. Learners develop a wide range of valuable practical skills while in work placements.

They demonstrate a good level of competence. The practical training increases their confidence, motivation and maturity.

8. There is some slow progress among learners. Six of the 12 learners who started in 2002 have completed only three units of their level 2 NVQ.

Quality of education and training

9. Learners with the Trust have good progression opportunities. Completion of the modern apprenticeship framework exempts them from the first year of a higher education nurse training programme provided by a local university. This clear, accessible progression route is valued by nurse cadets. It increases their motivation and their desire to complete the qualification.

10. Learners receive satisfactory individual support. In particular, any problems they experience with their work placements are effectively resolved. Those learners identified as having literacy and numeracy needs receive adequate support.

11. The range and quality of learning resources is satisfactory. Library facilities are good, and learners have adequate access to the Internet, and to the Trust's intranet system.

12. Learning is poorly planned, both on and off the job. The outcomes of initial assessment are not used to plan an individual learning programme for each learner. Workplace supervisors are not given sufficient information about the requirements of the learning programme, and are not informed of the content of off-the-job learning sessions. On- and off-the-job learning are poorly co-ordinated.

13. Key skills training is poor. It is are not introduced until late into the programme, and are not sufficiently integrated with NVQ training. The key skills evidence is based on assignments, and not evidence from the workplace.

14. Assessment practice is weak, with an over-reliance on learners' reflective accounts, and insufficient observation of performance. Some assessment is carried out by unqualified assessors. This is poor practice.

15. Learners' progress reviews are not used to set effective short-term targets. Workplace supervisors are not fully involved in the process, and neither they nor learners receive a copy of the review details.

16. Learners' individual learning plans do not have detailed long-term targets. They are not updated to reflect each cadet's progress.

Leadership and management

17. **The Trust has productive partnerships with a range of local and national organisations**, including local higher and further education institutions, local training providers and professional bodies.

18. **Strategic planning is clear, detailed and focused on the needs of learners.** Strategic objectives and recruitment and retention targets are effectively shared with staff, and well understood by them.

19. Arrangements for staff appraisal and professional development are satisfactory. Employees' performances are regularly and appropriately discussed, and they have access to a wide range of in-house and external staff development.

20. Lines of accountability for staff involved in training are clear and well understood.

21. Resources are satisfactory, and appropriately deployed. The Trust gives appropriate consideration to providing best value.

22. Both learners and tutors carry out useful evaluation of individual learning sessions. The evaluations are analysed, and lead to improvements, such as the development of a more interactive approach by trainers.

23. Equality of opportunity is adequately managed and monitored. Learners' understanding of their rights and responsibilities is satisfactory. The Trust is taking appropriate steps to promote the nurse cadet programme to under-represented groups.

24. **The day-to-day management of training and assessment is poor.** Key aspects of training, such as the planning of learning programmes, the arrangements for key skills training, and carrying out progress reviews, are inadequate. Communications with workplace supervisors are weak. Supervisors are poorly informed about their learners' programmes and progress.

25. **The arrangements for quality assuring work-based learning are inadequate.** There are no formal observations of training, or of the learning which takes place on the job. Documents such as individual learning plans and progress reviews are not audited to ensure accurate completion. Subcontractors' have internal quality assurance arrangements, which are not effectively monitored by the Trust.

26. Internal verification does not take place frequently enough. Internal verifiers' feedback is insufficiently detailed and does not concentrate on the quality of assessment. **Internal verification has failed to highlight the weaknesses in assessment practice.**

27. The self-assessment process does not involve sufficient consultation with learners, workplace supervisors and the Trust's staff. Self-assessment is not sufficiently accurate or

objective.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good external partnerships
- well-focused strategic planning

Weaknesses

- weak management of training and assessment
- insufficient quality assurance of learning programmes
- poor internal verification
- inaccurate self-assessment report

Health, social care & public services

Strengths

- good progression routes for learners
- effective practical skills development for learners
- good retention rates of learners

Weaknesses

- poor planning of learning
- weak assessment practice
- inadequate arrangements for key skills training
- inadequate progress reviews

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT GATESHEAD HEALTH NHS TRUST:

- 'hands-on experience is fantastic!'
- the clear progression route into higher education
- supportive, approachable training staff
- good support from colleagues on the wards
- readily available help with the NVQ programme

WHAT LEARNERS THINK GATESHEAD HEALTH NHS TRUST COULD IMPROVE:

- the timetable for teaching sessions – learners do not receive a copy of this
- the speed at which staff to step in to resolve issues in the workplace – problems could sometimes be dealt with more quickly
- there is no course handbook – learners think one would be useful
- there is no NVQ textbook – learners would like one

KEY CHALLENGES FOR GATESHEAD HEALTH NHS TRUST:

- link on- and off-the-job training, and match these to the requirements of the NVQ
- integrate key skills training and assessment with the rest of the learning programme
- ensure that all assessors are appropriately qualified, and that they clearly understand the assessment requirements of the NVQ
- ensure that workplace supervisors are well informed about all aspects of their learner's programme
- improve progress reviews
- introduce a more effective and wide-ranging quality assurance system
- improve internal verification
- introduce a more thorough, consultative and objective self-assessment process

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 4

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good external partnerships
- well-focused strategic planning

Weaknesses

- weak management of training and assessment
- insufficient quality assurance of learning programmes
- poor internal verification
- inaccurate self-assessment report

28. Staff at the Trust have developed productive partnerships with external organisations, in particular a local university and a college of further education. These directly benefit learners by widening the range of learning opportunities available to them, and providing them with a progression route into higher education. Training staff also attend a range of useful networking meetings given by relevant professional bodies, and by the LSC.

29. The Trust's strategic approach to work-based learning is thoughtful and well-focused. Good progress has been made towards meeting the initial strategic objectives of the introduction of the nursing cadetship, which involved widening access to nursing training, especially for Gateshead residents, and developing loyalty to the Trust among learners. Work-based learning is a recurring theme within the Trust's strategic plan, and the departmental action plans which support this. The dated objectives relate strongly to improving the experience of the learner. Success indicators are appropriate and clearly defined. The Trust sets itself a challenging target of 90 per cent for the retention of all employees, including nursing cadets.

30. The Trust's management of financial and physical resources is sound, and appropriate consideration is given to the provision of best value. The management of information is satisfactory, and staff and managers involved in training clearly understand the state of progress of their learners.

31. All Trust employees are appraised twice a year, a useful process which gives them the opportunity to reflect on their strengths, achievements and areas for improvement. There is a comprehensive programme of in-house and external staff development, to which most staff have access. Some employees are progressing slowly towards achievement of their training and assessment qualifications, including a few who are already acting as workplace supervisors.

32. The Trust has a satisfactory strategy for the provision of literacy and numeracy support. Learners identified as needing such support are referred to the local college, where they receive appropriate additional training, either in small groups or individually.

33. The management of training and assessment is poor. Learning programmes are not individually planned, and do not utilise the results of initial assessment. Key skills training does not start until late in the programme, and the key skills evidence gathered is assignment-based, rather than taken from the workplace. Progress reviews are poor and do not set useful, short-term targets. Assessment and internal verification are weak, and do not provide either learners or workplace supervisors with detailed, helpful feedback. Workplace supervisors are not given sufficient information about the NVQ programme. Many do not know what stage their learners have reached in their training programme. On- and off-the-job learning are poorly co-ordinated. Workplace supervisors are not given a schedule for off-the-job learning, and do not have the necessary information to ensure that the work on the wards complements and builds on learners' background knowledge training. Regular meetings are held for workplace supervisors, to update them and enable them to discuss their role, but most are too busy to attend.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

34. The Trust has comprehensive policies for equal opportunities, bullying and harassment, supplemented by appropriate procedures for learners' complaints, and appeals against assessment decisions. The policies are clearly explained to learners during their induction, at which stage they also receive training on discrimination and related issues. Learners attended a useful and well-designed updating session on equal opportunities just before the inspection. Their understanding of equality is briefly checked during progress reviews. Most learners have a satisfactory awareness of the issues. Training staff do not check or reinforce workplace supervisors' understanding of equal opportunities. However, workplace supervisors receive regular updates on equality from the human resources directorate, and have access to good in-house equal opportunities training, which takes place several times each year.

35. Men, and people from minority ethnic groups, are under-represented on the nurse cadet programme. The Trust has recognised this issue, and is proactively working to resolve the problems, although with no effect so far. Links have been made with community leaders from minority ethnic groups, who receive regular information about job vacancies and training programmes within the Trust. Trust staff work through the Connexions service to ensure that young men are made aware of the nurse cadet programme. The marketing materials designed for the programme do not carry an equal opportunities statement, and do not contain enough positive images.

36. The Trust has made a particularly strong commitment to the national 'Improving Working Lives' (IWL) initiative, and takes into consideration employees' requirements for flexible working hours, professional development, support with childcare responsibilities and a range of other issues. As employees of the Trust, learners gain full benefit from IWL, and their individual needs and circumstances are taken into account. Access to

Trust premises and facilities is generally satisfactory, and work is under way to ensure compliance with the requirements of the 'Disability Discrimination Act 1995'.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 4

37. Training sessions are regularly and effectively evaluated by learners and trainers. Useful feedback is provided, which has resulted in clear improvements to training sessions, in particular through the adoption of a more interactive approach by trainers. Other than this, the arrangements for quality assuring learning and assessment are inadequate. There are no formal observations of off-the-job training, and no system for observing or evaluating on-the-job training. No checks are made on the quality of progress reviews, induction or initial assessment. The training provided by subcontractors is not sufficiently quality assured. The training sessions provided by subcontractors are not observed, external verifier reports are not requested, and the Trust does not request or receive sufficient information about learners' progress.

38. Internal verification is weak. There is no clear system to ensure that, where insufficient NVQ or key skills evidence is provided, the situation is satisfactorily resolved. It takes place only when the learner has completed part of their qualification (such as an NVQ unit, or key skills element). This is too late to identify significant shortfalls in evidence. The feedback provided by internal verifiers relates to the standard of work provided by the learner, rather than the quality of assessment. It is not effective in enabling an assessor to improve their performance. There is insufficient observation of assessment, and when this does take place, the written feedback resulting from it is brief and unhelpful.

39. The self-assessment report does not take sufficient account of the views of learners, workplace supervisors, and those involved in providing training. Self-assessment is not used to contribute to improvement in the programme. The self-assessment report is not objective enough, and is inaccurate in many respects. Inspectors' judgement on most strengths did not match those of the self-assessment report. Most of the grades given are overgenerous. Few weaknesses were identified through self-assessment, and those given are written as recommendations, rather than weaknesses. The report does not identify any of the weaknesses found by inspectors. The action plan does not focus on issues which might improve the quality of training.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Health, social care & public services

Grade 4

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	22	4

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good progression routes for learners
- effective practical skills development for learners
- good retention rates of learners

Weaknesses

- poor planning of learning
- weak assessment practice
- inadequate arrangements for key skills training
- inadequate progress reviews

Achievement and standards

40. The retention rate for learners is good. This strength is recognised in the self-assessment report. Of the 28 learners who have started a programme of training since 2001, 78 per cent are still in learning. The 11 learners who completed the first year of the programme have all achieved an NVQ at level 2 in care, and relevant key skills units. They are making good progress towards achieving their qualification. Of the 12 learners who started training in 2002-03, six are making slow progress towards their qualification, having completed only three NVQ units in nine months.

41. Learners demonstrate good practical caring skills. They work in a variety of different clinical areas, and gain experience in a range of clinical specialities. Learners receive close supervision from experienced and appropriately qualified staff who themselves demonstrate good care skills. Workplace supervisors show confidence in their learners, and give them responsibility appropriate to their competence and experience, gradually allowing them to extend their range of activities without direct supervision.

The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

LSC funded work-based learning																
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)																
	2002-03		2001-02													
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	12		15													
Retained*	0		0	0												
Successfully completed	0		0	0												
Still in learning	10		11	73												

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

LSC funded work-based learning																
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)																
	2002-03															
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	1															
Retained*	0															
Successfully completed	0															
Still in learning	1															

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

Quality of education and training

42. The Trust has established a clear progression route for learners. The self-assessment report recognises this strength. All advanced modern apprentices who complete their programme are guaranteed entry to the second year of the University of Northumbria's nursing diploma programme. This prospect provides them with considerable motivation to succeed. As part of the modern apprenticeship framework, learners work towards a range of qualifications, including NVQs at level 2 and 3 in care, key skills units, and an AS level in human biology. In addition to these formal qualifications, learners gain a wide range of workplace experience and develop high levels of confidence.

43. Learners receive good pastoral support from the Trust's staff, which effectively prepares them for the emotional and physical demands of the nursing profession. Learners value the guidance provided by their workplace supervisor, and from other ward staff. Learners also benefit from weekly meetings with the assistant development facilitator, during which they are encouraged to discuss welfare and workplace issues. There are good relationships between learners and the Trust's staff. The arrangements for recruiting, selecting and inducting learners are satisfactory. There are appropriate arrangements for supporting those learners who need help in developing their literacy

and numeracy skills. There are no learners currently identified as requiring such support.

44. The range and quality of learning resources are satisfactory. There are good library facilities at one of the hospital sites and at the college, and an adequate choice of textbooks and professional journals in clinical placement areas. Learners have access to computers in most clinical areas. However, they consider their use of these to be restricted, as the computers are frequently used by nursing and medical staff to access the results of clinical investigations.

45. Assessment practice is poor. Approximately one-third of work-based assessors do not have assessor qualifications. Their assessment decisions are not being checked or countersigned by qualified assessors. The process of assessment planning is not sufficiently systematic. Assessment plans are sometimes completed by the learner, without adequate guidance from their assessor. Some plans are not sufficiently detailed, for example, there is not enough information about when learner's progress against the plan will be reviewed. The range of evidence in portfolios is not diverse enough. There is an over-reliance on learners' reflective accounts as an evidence source. There is not enough observation of the learner's performance, and when observations do take place, they are not recorded in sufficient detail. The written feedback provided to learners during and after assessment is too brief. It does not give enough guidance to learners as to how they can improve. The internal verification system is poor, and has not identified the weaknesses in assessment practice.

46. Learners do not begin key skills training until very late in their programme, half way through their second year. They do not develop their confidence and ability with regard to key skills as much as is possible. Key skills training is not integrated with the NVQ programme, or with workplace activities. It involves the completion of an assignment which, although comprehensive, is not sufficiently occupationally relevant. The importance of key skills, and their relevance to work, are not adequately explained to learners. Workplace supervisors are unfamiliar with key skills requirements, and do not consider them to be part of the nurse cadet programme.

47. Learners' progress reviews do not provide clear, short-term targets. Workplace supervisors are rarely involved in progress reviews, and cannot add their perspective on the learners' progress, or find out about the learner's off-the-job activities. Individual learning plans are not used during the reviews, and are not updated afterwards. Learning plans do not provide an accurate record of the learner's progress.

Leadership and management

48. Training is poorly planned and co-ordinated. Learners receive a thorough initial assessment, but the outcomes of this are not used to plan a learning programme which takes account of their individual needs and aspirations. The schedule for off-the-job learning is built around the availability of training staff, rather than the requirements of the NVQ. The Trust's staff decide on the order which learners will work through NVQ units, but there is no attempt to relate the content of off-the-job learning sessions to NVQ units currently being worked on. Neither workplace supervisors nor learners receive a

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schedule for off-the-job learning. Workplace supervisors do not co-ordinate the learners' experience on the wards with what is being covered in off-the-job learning.