



**Birmingham and Solihull
Mental Health**
NHS Foundation Trust

2018-19 Growing Apprenticeships Widening Participation



Introduction



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The Trust is investing in developing its future workforce through the use of the Apprenticeship Levy. This Levy was introduced by the government to reach its goal of 3 million apprenticeship starts by 2020.

The annual target is that 2.3% of the Trust's total workforce are in apprenticeship training which will bring the Trust in line with the private sector.

Delivering this target would maximise the return on government funding through the employment of the Apprenticeship Levy meaning that any shortfall in spending would not be lost.

Use it or lose it!



Meeting the Challenge



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The Apprenticeships, Work experience and Volunteering were brought together under the Widening Participation portfolio in 2015/16. This was followed by the introduction of the levy in 2017 that created a lot of transformation and change.

The Trust is invested in developing the future workforce through the use of the Apprentice Levy. However, the understanding of the significance of the levy, across the Trust, as “the Trust Training Fund”- specifically in terms of all levels of apprenticeships, needs to be fully developed.

This will be met by engagement with all managers to regularly promote apprenticeships through the enhancement of managers training, and also supporting refreshed cohorts of recruitment, resulting in increased responsiveness to service planning and redesign.



Meeting the Challenge



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Reporting Figures

Number of apprentices who were working in England on 31 March 2018	33
Number of apprentices who were working in England on 31 March 2019	94
Number of new apprentices in England between 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 (includes both new hires and existing employees who started an apprenticeship)	94

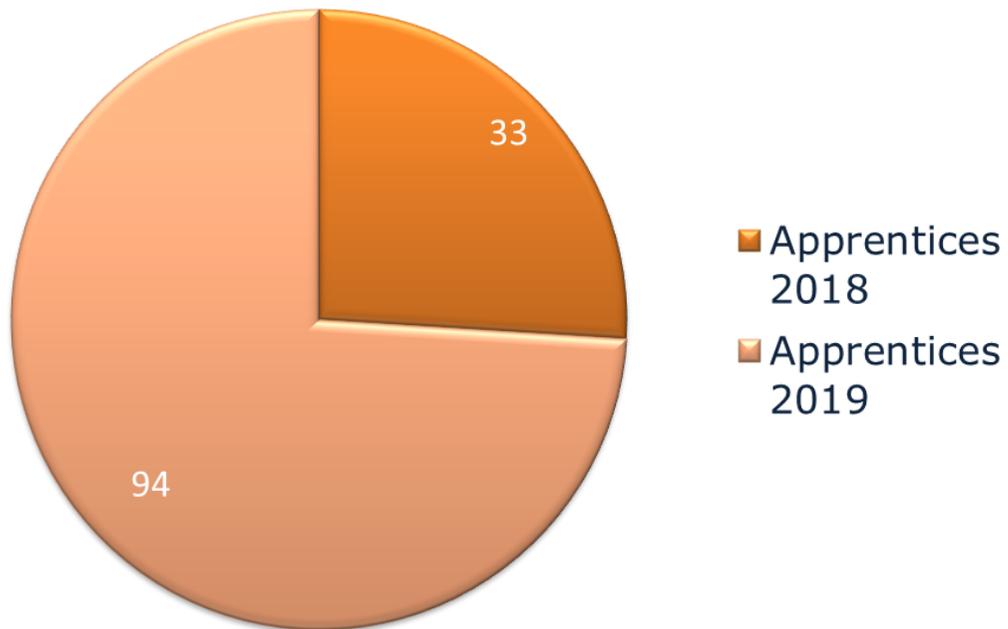


Meeting the Challenge



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**BSMHFT Apprenticeship Growth
2018/19**



Meeting the Challenge



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Reporting Percentages

Percentage of apprenticeship starts (both new hires and existing employees who started an apprenticeship) as a proportion of employment starts between 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019	162.07%
Percentage of total headcount that were apprentices on 31 March 2019	2.57%
Percentage of apprenticeship starts (both new hires and existing employees who started an apprenticeship) between 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 as a proportion of total headcount on 31 March 2018	2.61%



Planning, Structure & Development



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There is a need to have a consistent Trust-wide system of engagement with the managers to regularly promote apprenticeships. The proposal is that in time we further develop managers training, and also support refreshed cohorts of recruitment (where groups of managers recruit an apprentice) therefore, being much more responsive to service planning and redesign.

There are now a series of meetings designed to support managers. The Quarterly Management Meetings create an opportunity to support 'the development of apprenticeships' at all levels with corporate and clinical teams. The Apprentice Network is now a regular monthly shared support mechanism particularly for new apprentices. This Apprentice Guidance has been in development for managers to provide a recognisable structure to underpin apprenticeships. This will lead to future policy development.



Planning, Structure & Development



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The WP Team also undertake monthly contract meetings with the Learning Providers. These are contract management meetings to ensure the quality of delivery and accountability. This is now part of an audit process which did not exist before, and enables management of a number of Learning Providers. Therefore, any concerns are captured at a much earlier point. This also allows the Trust to challenge poor practice in a more robust way.

These developments have supported a significant uptake of training by staff at band 2-7. These more formal structures have a method and approach. The earlier approaches were lacking in structure, purpose and continuity. The awareness of widening participation needs to progress the narrative of raising the quality of training and access to higher level training, to enable utilising the levy for all staff. The biggest ongoing change is that the recruitment process is no longer centralised and apprentices 'allocated' to a team.



Planning, Structure & Development



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The Widening participation team's work in identifying vacancies that can be offered at entry level and extending the range of staff apprenticeships is a key piece of work.

The team works actively with managers to recruit and select their own apprentice whilst facilitating the relationship with the learning provider. Managers now feel more empowered given that a system has neither been imposed or is compulsory.

We have established work experience schools based on the different professions at different points through the year. These will encourage applications from local schools. It will also connect the Trust in a positive way with the local communities and increase engagement with apprenticeship training. These will become a more viable option for students as the choice of qualifications on offer and new roles are developed. One of the ambitions is that students will gain insights into applying for apprenticeships through the summer school.



Challenges



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We have had significant staffing concerns around capacity due to illness and this has caused us some concerns. Continuity of team staffing has had an impact. There still seems to be a dearth of knowledge, or any real appreciation of how the Levy fund can be released.

A piece of training designed specifically around the levy funding needs to be developed and rolled out. We still need managers to proactively seek to access the levy fund to utilize and support the development of training for all existing staff especially in the areas of organisational change. The aforementioned future planned training would help this.

We have seen some significant improvements with Learning Providers, however, there is still more to be done to improve levels of engagement with managers, and to fully support apprentices.



Challenges



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The aforementioned future planned training would help this. We have seen some significant improvements with Learning Providers, however, there is still more to be done to improve levels of engagement with managers, and to fully support apprentices. In many cases the delays in sign up and not sharing information quickly, has led to problems. This leaves managers feeling disengaged or unsupported.

The policy development and the quarterly forum for managers is up and running as is a monthly network meeting for apprentices, these will build and encourage proactive working relationships to support Learners.



Moving Forward



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Like many NHS services, BSMHFT are going through challenging times due to current well known recruitment shortfalls. The challenge for mental health is in managing the risk around work placements. Traditional HR management methodologies and organisational philosophies appear entrenched, the very idea of culture change, succession planning, dynamic organisational or workforce development, slow to embed.

The understanding of safely delivering change is a work in progress. Growing Widening Participation requires a much more robust approach. The Kings College report, Futureproofing our NHS: A generational shift, identified an important change in attitude is needed. "The workforce can be given the freedom to achieve work-life balance by introducing flexible, adaptable rotas and the ability to change careers, empowering staff to have more autonomy over their work. By redesigning the workforce, the NHS can better meet increasing demand, while maintaining patient safety".



Moving Forward



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The NHS is working on improving workplace cultures and making shift systems more responsive. The development of new team structures with empowered staff, flexible working, a supported willing workforce that is well trained and can flexibly move between careers is a process that will take some time.

The delivery, quality and attainment needs to consistently improve to grow the staff and Apprenticeships reputation of the Trust. The widening participation objective is for all who want to, to have the ability to benefit from access to higher education qualifications.

Many individuals are likely to pursue a portfolio of careers in the future. They need to feel an apprenticeship is not only a good choice, but that it offers the adaptability and flexibility to switch pathways.



Moving Forward



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1. We plan to continue forward planning quarterly through 2019/2020 recruitment in cohorts and Widening Participation
2. We plan to liaise with local Schools through 'Profession specific' Summer schools to raise awareness
3. An apprentice celebration and training event and a digital marketing campaign trust wide to make access to information much easier
4. Much more forward planning to get to a point where there are more entry level apprenticeships across the Trust
5. Apprenticeship vacancies are dependent on the team being fully staffed in order to accommodate training places
6. The organisational development needs to reach a point where design of vacancies at band 2 and band 3 levels will become automatic.
7. The marketing of apprenticeships to internal staff needs to be clearer

Addressing service redesign through existing staff apprenticeships should have essential elements of plasticity, creativity, more self-government and autonomy that ensures patient safety.

