

Segment One

Sector: Health and Social Care

Executive summary:

As people live longer and often with long-term health conditions, there is a heavy increase in the demand for healthcare and with that comes a demand for skilled practitioners at all levels, across all disciplines. At the same time, the workforce is changing; millennials have new expectations on work-life balance and reward schemes through flexible careers - the combination of which is not generally associated with work in the health care sector. This presents two major challenges: a lack of appetite from new entrants to join the sector and constraints on those active in the sector that have developed the necessary competencies and skills to progress (44% of whom are aged 45+). The vast scale in terms of size and specialisms within health and social care inevitably means that skills gaps are persistent and can be found to some degree at virtually all areas of work. The breadth of courses delivered at various levels by FE, HE providers and private providers across the city region demonstrates that the capacity and capability of providers is strong. Delivery includes mix of accredited and non-accredited provision from level 2 as well as apprenticeship delivery.

The purpose of this work is to provide an assessment of the skills system for the health and social care sector, specifically health and care provision infrastructure as a whole. Provided within is an evidence base from which further work can be developed and realised in line with the overall aim of Let's Talk Real Skills which is to improve skills provision through collaborative links between FE, HE and key sector representatives.

Key findings/conclusions:

Main challenges

Allowing access to training therefore effective delivery needs to be flexible and accessible.

Funding towards training is a well-documented issue, funding for training in the sector has not increased adequately in line with demand for both current staff and training resources for the pipeline of new staff which is problematic for every aspect of provision.

Leadership and management, as with many other sectors, leadership skills are cited as a skills gap for many and essential to progression yet increasingly it is access to and flexibility of contextualised delivery that is most sought after.

Clinical training and on the job training - whilst NHS Trusts, general practices, local authorities, community organisations and the independent sector are intended to have an enhanced role in funding and attracting trainees, the provision of high quality clinical placements and on the job training are needed to reshape existing roles which in turn will contribute towards making the many different jobs rewarding and fulfilling.

Recommendations for consideration

Identifying 'priority' area/sub-sector/functions to concentrate further work on based on the diverse range of occupational skills needs and requirements the sector as a whole has, and agree the overarching parameters of future work.

Where can existing provision be enhanced with the addition of input/lecturers/seminars from practitioners in order to fulfil the need for contextualised learning?

Showcasing and spotlighting of career options to be explored in order to support growing supply/demand factors.

Improving digital literacy is a huge and continued focus of attention across all workforces.

Digital delivery trends show there a need to move to more innovative online learning in order to satisfy demand for flexible learning.

As the key findings state, there's no shortage of FE, HE and apprenticeship courses for the sector delivered by colleges, universities and providers across the city region. Future work will draw on what employers tell us they need, particularly in light of COVID-19 and emerging trends that present short and medium requirements.

Find out more about the Health and Social Care Collaborative Skills Partnership and get in touch through - <https://www.westyorkshirecolleges.co.uk/contracted-projects/lets-talk-real-skills/health-and-social-care>