

FINANCE COMMITTEE

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

SUBMISSION FROM NHS BORDERS

Focus on age 16-19 and unemployed

1. NHS Borders is responding to future workforce demography challenges such as population changes, a growing older population, a reduced pool of younger workers from which to recruit and significant staff shortages in some key clinical areas. The collaborative 'We Care' pre-employment programme between NHS Borders, Scottish Borders Council and Borders College of Further Education has provided a support route to enable school leavers, unemployed or those who have been made redundant to work in Health and Care sectors. Five successful pre-employment courses have resulted in;

- 60 people recruited in health and social care sectors
- 54 sustained course places (90%)

42 progressed after the course (70% of course stats):-

- 1 into further education
- 2 into higher education
- 39 into employment

2. NHS Borders is now working with Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and Borders College of Further Education to provide school leavers with both training for work opportunities and clinical and non-clinical placements as part of the 'Get Ready for Work' (GRFW) scheme. It has been agreed that we will run a pilot of the scheme for 6 individuals in 4 Clinical and 2 non-clinical placements. Job descriptions have been sent to Borders College where all candidates for the GRFW programme have to be referred by a Careers Adviser. The details of the opportunities and relevant Job descriptions have been sent to the named contact and the SDS Contract Manager by Borders College and we are hopeful that SDS staff will refer interested young people soon.

3. In addition recent discussions have been held with Job Centre Plus colleagues to explore further opportunities for collaboration to support people into employment with NHS Borders. We are exploring further the new Job Centre Plus sector based work Academy scheme with Estates and Facilities who are facing particular aging workforce demography challenges. The new Modern Apprenticeships in Health will provide further opportunities for the 16-19 and unemployed in health and social care.

Workplace Experience

4. NHS Borders HR Department has an agreed process in place (Workplace Tours Guidance) to facilitate requests from young people who are looking to gain an insight into careers in health. This process is currently available to:

- School pupils in their 4th year – this is usually for a period of one week. Each of the Borders school has an allocated week of the year when their pupils undertake this. This experience allows the young people to identify what careers they would like to pursue and to make informed subject choices at school.
- School pupils in 5th or 6th year – these pupils also usually come for one week with some requesting to come for a couple of days at a time. These requests can be for any week of the year with an increase in request during school holidays. Many pupils at this stage have to demonstrate that they have had this type of experience in order to secure a place at university.
- Individual out with the Borders education system – requests are occasionally received from young people outwith the area or from individuals who have left education and are now considering a change of career direction.

Work with Schools

5. NHS Borders proactively works with schools across the region to ensure pupils are aware of career and vocational pathways that may be available to them within the NHS. The most recent session with a local high school focused on employability skills for S5 pupils (120 in total). This included:

- Short presentation on NHS Borders as an employer
- Activity looking at what skills employers like NHS Borders are looking for
- Self-assessment – whereby pupils were asked to look at what skills they had and what they would like to improve
- Short discussion on how they were going to gather the experience they needed to make these improvements
- Activity looking at different professions and guessing the key skills required in those professions

Work and Well-being

6. NHS Borders has a 'one-stop-one-shop' approach to the work and health agenda through a coordinated, co-located Work Place Health Services (WPHS) team. The aim of the team is to lead and support improvement in the health of the working age population of the Scottish Borders. Getting people into work, keeping them there and keeping them healthy is of vital importance to reducing health inequalities.

7. Anyone coming into NHS Borders via the above initiatives has open access to support from the range of WPHS services available either on a pro-active or re-active basis.

Skills Development through Volunteering

8. The Borders Healthy Living Network (HLN) takes an active approach to building capacity and developing skills in the more deprived communities in Borders, to

improve health and wellbeing. HLN provides opportunities for community members to participate in a range of health improvement programmes and develop skills knowledge that directly and indirectly enhances employability. This include the recruitment of volunteers for defined roles, for example a cohort of women were recently recruited volunteer peer supporters to promote breastfeeding; in other instances a small number of programme participants have move on to become volunteers in delivering programmes.