

FINANCE COMMITTEE

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

SUBMISSION FROM NHS HIGHLAND

1. NHS Highland is an active partner with the Highland Council Education Department through *Determined to Succeed* and with both Highland and Argyll and Bute Councils on the *More Choices / More Chances* Strategy. Through these partnerships, a number of activities are delivered to meet the employment needs of young people:

- Work experience for school pupils from the age of 15 onwards, in a number of areas across the health system. In North Highland Health and Social care Partnership, a minimum 72 places per year in the following areas: Porterage, Estates, Radiotherapy, Speech and Language Therapy, Catering and Medical. Argyll and Bute CHP offer placements in all clinical areas, Hotel Services and Estates.
- Health care careers events delivered in partnership with primary care and private partners, for example, primary care pharmacy and Lifescan (Inverness);
- Focused employment market information and school pupil preparation with particular emphasis on the diversity of NHS careers and career development.
- Work placements for school teachers to support the matching of school curriculum to industry requirements and school pupil preparation;
- Focused *Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM)* events in partnership with further and higher education partners and Highland and Islands Enterprise;
- The development of in-house STEM ambassadors at NHS Highland;
- The Board is an active partner for the *Lab in a Lorry* project, which has visited secondary schools across the NHS Highland Board area, including to remote and rural areas. NHS Highland scientists and pharmacists staff the lorry and provide interactive learning for school pupils. There have also been a number of local science events, for example, in Inverness and Caithness.
- The Board is also working with Stirling University to ensure Remote & Rural areas have equal access to opportunities to pursue Nursing Careers.

2. These work streams are embedded in the school/work transition activities of the Highland Council, Argyll and Bute Council and partner organisations. NHS Highland is committed to the continued delivery of these work streams through other initiatives such as the *Curriculum for Excellence* with Highland Council, which has a particular focus on skills for Life, Work and Learning.

3. Whilst many of the above work streams are geared towards school pupils, the benefits realisation of this approach is the promotion of the diversity of NHS jobs, careers and career pathways and development to young people in order that they are fully informed and can consider the NHS as a future employer.

4. Other initiatives include:

- *Modern Apprenticeships* - NHS Highland recruited four Apprentices who were recently made redundant from a local construction company
- Plans are being developed to recruit new Apprentices in administration and clerical and health care science disciplines.
- Work experience placements for
 - for those young people who have already left school and would like to find out more about a specific health care career;
 - for students or where entry to health care careers require work experience as part of the application criteria, e.g. medicine, radiography
- Ongoing work with Job Centre Plus to identify work placements and work trials for the young unemployed under the *Get Britain Working Scheme* and *NEET* (those not in Education, Employment, or Training) focused.
- Ongoing work with organisations including the Shirlie Project and Barnardo's offering work experience placements and opportunities.
- Volunteering opportunities across NHS Highland.

5. As you will see from the above, the onus is largely on work experience. However, we are committed on expanding the work experience opportunities available, develop the use of modern apprenticeships and engage with Job Centre Plus to maximise employment opportunities in health and social care for young people.

6. NHS Highland is committed to supporting individuals furthest from the employment market, which illustrates its contribution to growing the economy; and I trust you will find this information useful.