

Northern Care Alliance NHS Group Oldham Care Organisation

Update on employment support and local recruitment.

1. Introduction

“ We at the NCA know we cannot deliver on our potential without the expertise, experience and support of our partners in place. But our potential to make a difference to people’s lives beyond our normal caring services is significant. At this time of national crisis the NHS must stand up and do more than its brilliant work in caring for the sick”

Raj Jain, Chief Executive Northern Care Alliance NHS Group 30th October 2020.

The NCA is the largest employer in Oldham. In January 21 an update was provided to the Oldham Overview and Scrutiny Committee on employment support and local recruitment. The committee asked for an update to its September meeting. This report therefore shows progress since January with particular focus on what we are doing to support young people. There is a strong link between decent work and good health. We need to use our significant social, economic and human capital to tackle the inequalities within Oldham. Which we have summarized into our social value ambitions through the

5 pillars of social value; environment, place, people, purchasing and to anchor or influence.



This update will focus on the people pillar and provide an update to Oldham Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the range of initiatives which are being put in place to provide local employment opportunities with particular focus on young people who during times of economic downturn have historically been disadvantaged in obtaining meaningful paid work. In recent times, the world, particularly of work has changed significantly and like the disease

the economic impact of COVID will fall disproportionately on low income communities. Oldham has been identified as in the top 10 localities in the country in danger of seeing the highest economic impact and associated increase in health inequalities.

NCA has agreed by 2025 the following ambitions:

- Create 1000 pre-employment opportunities across the NCA for those furthest away from the employment from a baseline of 320. Approximately 210 will be created in Oldham, from a baseline of 17 (2019-20).
- 85% of pre-employment learners will be supported into paid work from NCA baseline of 55% and 31% in Oldham.
- 60% of those employed by the NCA to be local resident of Oldham from 45% (based on NCA configuration of Oct 2019) which is approximately 80 jobs each year in Oldham.
- Support 1000 staff to become NHS Career Ambassadors by 2023 of which 155 will be in Oldham.

The NCA has secured non recurrent over £100k to support people into work and to provide young people with experience of the NHS. This is from the Oldham opportunity area and Greater Manchester Combined Authority. The COVID pandemic whilst accelerating the importance and significance of this work has presented some challenges and plans have had to be modified for example, the NHS has had to limit visitors to its site and face to face interactions including work experience was initially suspended and is slowly coming back in a limited way in line with national guidance. N.B whilst the national lockdown rules have reduced there is still limits on non-essential visits into healthcare environments and employment COVID risk assessments on all learners.

2. Work with Oldham Schools

In an ideal world we would inspire children and young people about NHS careers and job opportunities much earlier. The evidence is compelling: a young person who has four or more encounters with an employer is 86% less likely to be unemployed or not in education or training and can earn up to 22% more during their career. Importantly the earlier these encounters take place the better because research shows that:

- Children at age 6 see jobs and future pathways as gendered
- Almost half of children age 7 base their career aspirations on people they know.
- Children at age 9 they are becoming more aware of potential constraints on their futures based on perceptions of social class, perceived intelligence and social mobility.

The NHS Career Ambassadors Programme is a national programme which relies on NHS staff volunteering and then acts as a broker with schools. This has been hugely successful with over 100 staff in Oldham registered as NHS Career Ambassadors in June 21 compared to 72 in Jan 21. The NCA has brought forward our ambition to have 1000 NHS Career Ambassadors from 2025 to 2023.

Obviously going into schools has been limited due to the pandemic. Any Oldham school who is interested are encouraged to register with NHS Career Ambassador Programme and utilise this national resource which is in place rather than set up a unique infrastructure for Oldham. The pick up with schools has not been very forthcoming and we are in danger of having staff willing to volunteer and no tasks for them. The NCA therefore requests a dedicated officer within the council who can work with us to improve uptake.

Action: Oldham Council to identify an officer who can promote this to schools particularly those who work with the most disadvantaged young people.

3. Work with Oldham College.

The government is bringing in changes to technical education. In the last report the OSC were updated on our joint work with Oldham College to influence the design of the new T levels. This has been completed and we will be welcoming 20 health care cadets in adult nursing, therapy and healthcare science and 5 digital students this autumn.

Through this work with Oldham College we have been recognised as being one of the leading NHS organisations within this space and have been awarded a grant from the Gatsby Foundation to share our experiences, tools and techniques through a written report, Pod Casts and Webinars.

We have taken this learning from Oldham and developed the Northern Care College Alliance which brings together Oldham College, Bury College, Salford City College and Hopwood Hall College to share learning and T level design. This vehicle enables us to develop curriculums quicker and be in the position to respond to additional opportunities.

4. Support to Young People to gain skills and experience by volunteering

For many, volunteering is a great way of gaining experience and an understanding of the world of work. During the COVID crisis we have seen an increase in the number of volunteers support the NHS and wider communities. Funded through the Oldham Opportunity Area we have commissioned Barnado's to evaluate our volunteer offer for young people. Three workshops were held with existing young volunteers and students from Oldham Sixth Form College. We have adapted our offer and seen an increase in applications (33). There are 16 new volunteers to support our dining companion project (supporting people at meal times) and 14 more in other areas.

The recommendations from the students are listed below together with our response.

Recommendations from students	Action taken or planned
Higher levels of engagement in volunteering when interacting face to face	Identify and seek out opportunities to speak to young people in their own environments about the benefits of volunteering.
A newsletter and mailing list approach would be preferable to keep young people up to date with changes to their volunteer placement, new roles available and possible a place to showcase job roles that young volunteers could apply to	We have a new volunteer management system that allows us to communicate with volunteers more effectively. We can also advertise new roles with more information for the volunteers to consider.
Advertise volunteer roles within the NCA on their social media timelines – such as Instagram	Look into the viability of this with our communications team
In terms of the time young people want to commit to, it was clear they wanted this to be in blocks over especially over the summer holidays	Identify roles which support this type of volunteering – look at completing a test of change over the winter holidays to plan ahead for summer 2022
Learning new skills was really important to the young people. Opening them up to experiences they're likely to face is really important if they were to go into a job on a ward	Ensure young people are matched up to suitable volunteering roles that will give them the experience they will need to support their studies or plans to gain employment. Identify what those requirements are at interview stage and manage expectations or offer other guidance if necessary.
A chance for the volunteers to socialise with each other would also be beneficial in allowing young people to share their experiences, vent, solidify their loyalty to their role and help each other problem solve, as well as reward they're commitment to an unpaid role	We aim to establish a youth volunteer forum starting in September. From this we will give volunteers the opportunity to express how they would like to connect with their peers (WhatsApp, face to face, team building exercise etc.)

5. Support to young people to gain work experience

The original plan with Oldham Opportunity Board was to hold two Open Days for 100 young people in the spring and summer of last year, which was not possible then and in the foreseeable future. Therefore, we are creating a digital knowledge hub which will be accessible to all young people interested in a career with the NHS it will sit underneath the NCA recruitment and be linked to the Oldham College website. This also includes opportunities for volunteering and our pre employment programmes. This is going live later this month.

On site work experience remains suspended due to COVID and is likely to recommence until full visiting is also allowed. However, we have delivered some work experience virtually. More information is available in this presentation which was given by the NCA at the beginning of July:

[Learning from the NHS Live Event 2: The Northern Care Alliance NHS Group - YouTube](#)

6. Support into Employment for Young People with Learning Disability

The NCA already supports a “bridging the gap” which is a supported internship programme for young people from New Bridge School taking place over an academic year. This has been in existence for a number of years, although suspended during COVID there are plans to recommence this in autumn with COVID risk assessments in place.

7. Providing Pre-employment opportunities

The NCA in partnership with the Prince's Trust supports the "Get into Hospitals" employability programme which supports young disadvantaged people 16-30 years old (NEETs, care leavers, careers, those with mental health or physical health conditions and those with learning disability). We also deliver a Pennine Pre employment programme. There have been two dedicated programmes in Oldham (alongside our Group wide programmes). In the last update we committed to support 20 learners in Oldham we have actually supported 27 with the following outcomes:

Entered substantive role (clinical): 6

Obtained substantive role- waiting start date: 3

Entered substantive role (admin): 1

Entered NHS P (flexible contract) 2

Unsuccessful at completing the course 6

Still on placement:7 (will be offered roles on completion)

Turned down role (non NCA): 1

Returned to education: 1

8. Kickstart

This is a government initiative whereby employers provide a 6-month learning opportunity for young people in receipt of universal credit and at risk of long term unemployment. The government backfills employers with 25 hours of minimum wage. The NCA has been approved as a Kickstart employer and our first two cohort of 27 learners are in post and settling in well with 5 learners in Oldham. We are currently liaising with DWP to fill our remaining post as we have the identified capacity to increase to 90 Kickstart learners.

9. Apprenticeships.

The NCA offers a range of apprenticeships (nurse associates, catering, estates, business administration and healthcare science for example) and there are currently 105 within Oldham. These range from level 2 to level 7 indicating that apprenticeship is not just about accessing jobs but ensuring career progression.

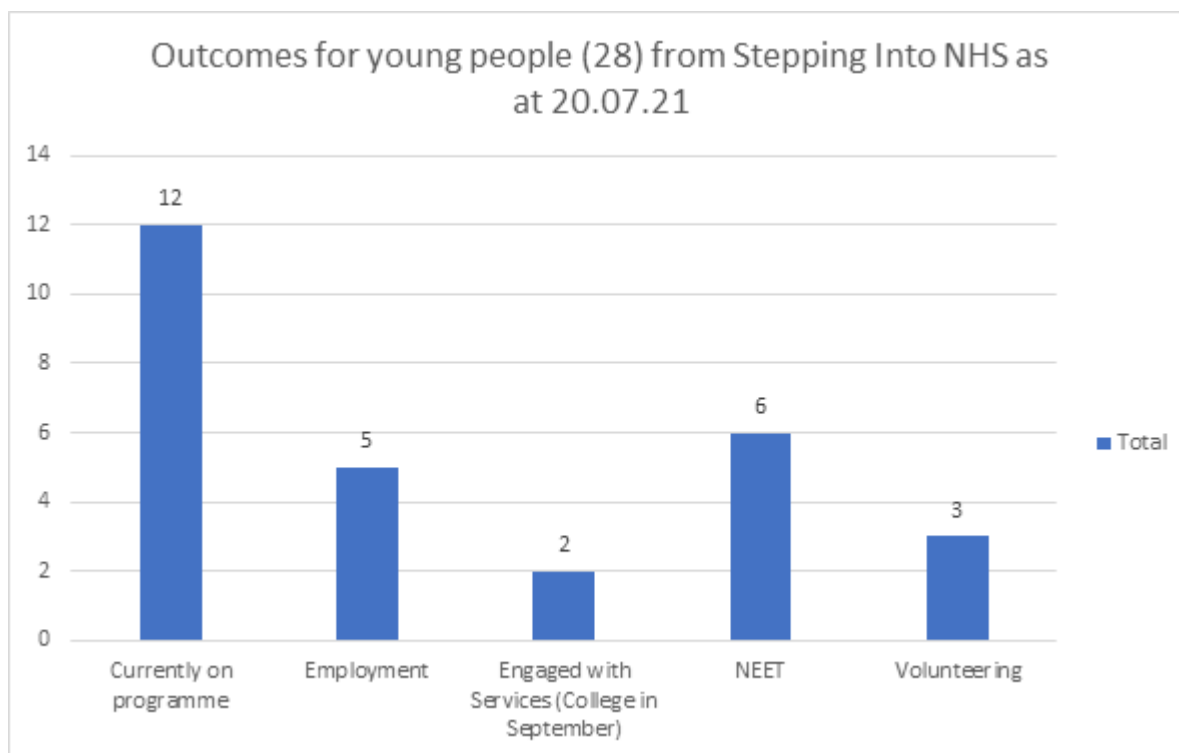
Level	Number
2	26
3	14
4	6
5	32
6	15
7	12

However, it is recognised that there are barriers for some people to obtain apprenticeship positions and therefore we also offer pre-apprenticeship opportunities.

10. GMCA Removing Barriers to Apprenticeships – Young People

This project is held jointly with Positive Steps and Oldham Council. This will create pre-employment opportunities for Young People who will be supported initially by

Positive Steps until a work place experience can be created on the Royal Oldham Site or Oldham Community Health services. The outcome for 28 learners is below with one more cohort starting next week.



Bar charts underplay the significance of gaining work particularly for young people at the moment so here is what three of the young people have to say:

Social Value – in action



Despite COVID restrictions we have managed to launch a new programme in Oldham, joint with Positive Steps funded by GMCA barriers to apprenticeship programme. Three young people have managed to complete this programme and gain paid work with us. Here are their stories:

“The first day that the programme started, I was excited but nervous because I didn’t know what to expect. Before I went into the building, I remember feeling sick, scared, and anxious because it was the first step towards doing something for myself. I also remember shaking and trembling in the car, telling my mum and dad that I didn’t want to go in. All these intense feelings quickly disappeared as I was welcomed by such friendly and kind staff. I was feeling somewhat relieved after meeting everyone, but at the same time nervous because it made me realise that since leaving school in 2018, and not doing anything since then, due to helping my dad taking care of my mother.....My time on this pre apprenticeship has benefited me tremendously as I have gained a great deal of knowledge and understanding about what it’s like to work in a hospital – like environment. I am very appreciative of the opportunity that has been given to me and I am also thankful to the people that helped make this programme happen as I would not be where I am today without you. I am also thankful for the relationships and friendships that I have made throughout this time as it made me realise how far I’ve come from being the young girl who believed that I couldn’t accomplish anything. My will power, confidence and determination are far greater than it was before this programme had started. I can see the massive change in myself and how far I’ve come from being the shy and insecure individual.”

A. left school without English and Maths GCSEs and since 2018 has spent relatively little time outside the family home. In March she has secured full time work in Health Records after work experience in the Vaccination Hub. In addition to obtaining employment she has also gone back to College to gain Maths and English qualifications.

This programme is run in partnership with Positive Steps who provided a youth work and job coach who provided individual support to the young people as described by C mum:

"My daughter left school at the age of 16 and I was at a loss as to what her next steps would be. She was not ready for employment and due to her lack of confidence and shyness I chose a smaller more intimate college thinking this would be more suitable. Unfortunately, C received very little support and left me at a loss as to how next to support her. I contacted colleges, various organisations and departments but I did not feel any could offer the support I was looking for.... I knew she would be fine once she finally obtained employment but felt she required the support of a mentor within a smaller more focused environment, and she needed the stepping stone of a placement before entering the work environment. Despite such difficult times Cynthia did everything in her power to include the children in this program and secure work experience. She would contact C on a regular basis to check on her and her progress, often out of her normal working hours. She also regularly contacted me to up date me and discuss any extra support I could provide C at home. As a result of this on-going support C has come on tremendously in both her confidence and her ability and is now ready to make the step in to the working environment. C was given the opportunity to apply for a permanent position within the NHS and Cynthia arranged for Peter to assist her with the job application. Again this was a great help of which I am grateful for. Then both Peter and Cynthia did mock interview's with C which gave her the confidence for the job interview, a confidence she would never have had without this 121 support. Without this program, the efficiency of Peter and the on-going support by Cynthia I feel my daughter would have struggled to secure employment. ..Thank you for all the support we have received"

C is now employed by the NCA in Oldham.

E did not engage well at school, struggled with mental health issues and left without doing any exams. She is the sole carer for her dad who has several severe medical problems. Prior to starting the programme she had no digital device and was not really motivated to do anything for herself.

Within 12 weeks E has passed her written driving test, started college to gain English and Maths qualifications and secured paid work with the NCA in health records.

"I have gained a lot more confident since starting the programme, especially during the placement and I have learnt a lot about the NHS and am continuing to learn new things. I am very proud of myself and so is my dad"

The funding for this programme runs out in Dec 21. However we have secured funding from the Prince Trust to continue and expand this programme for an additional 66 young people focusing carer leavers and those on the edge of care, during 2022.

Action: Committee Members are asked to consider potential recurrent funding options to develop this programme into 2023.

11.Support within communities

Oldham has a rich diverse population and the NCA is committed to inclusivity to ensure that our workforce reflects the communities we serve.

The NCA through Director of Social Value Creation and the Associate Director of Equality and Inclusion have made significant progress in reaching out to Coldhust community, given that the hospital is located in this ward. This has included listening and insight work as to the perception of the NCA as an employer. As a consequence of this relationship we have managed to secure a grant from the GMCA with Get Oldham Working and Oldham Council. This will create 20 pre-employment opportunities for the BAME community in Coldhurst who will be supported initially by Get Oldham Working until a work place experience can be created on the Royal Oldham Site or Oldham Community Health services. This programme is on-going and outcomes are not yet available.

It has however been very well received by the community in that one community group has obtained further funding via small grants scheme to commission and additional cohort. Get Oldham Working has approached us to run a similar programme in Limeside. All funding is currently due to cease in March 22. We are actively trying to secure additional funding. Any support in finding recurrent funding will be grateful received

Action: Committee Members are asked to consider potential recurrent funding options to enable this programme to continue beyond March 2022.

11. Outcomes

Fundamentally this is about the NCA employing more local people. In July 19 45% of our people lived within the borough's of Bury, Rochdale, Oldham or Salford. In June 21 this is 58%. 48% (1,593) of our people working at Royal Oldham Hospital and Oldham Community Services also live in Oldham with a further 33.5% (1,113) employed elsewhere within the

NCA family an increase of approximately 6% since 2019.¹ Or £59 million contribution to Oldham households.

12. Moving Forward

We will be launching in the next few weeks a microsite which will list all of our pre-employment programmes, apprenticeships, work experience and career advice in a dedicated website. This will be kept regularly updated on opportunities as we continue to expand our programmes in order to ensure we achieve the NCA objective of 1000 pre-employment learners by 2025.

Donna McLaughlin

Director of Social Value Creation

9th September 2021

¹ Direct comparisons within localities is difficult due to transfer of community services into the NCA from Pennine Care.