

Yorkshire and the Humber
NHS Regional Employability Programme

WORK AND HEALTH CHANGING PEOPLE'S LIVES

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WORK AND HEALTH CHANGING PEOPLE'S LIVES

UNLEASHING THE POTENTIAL OF THE NHS TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO THE HEALTH, PROSPERITY AND WELL-BEING OF INDIVIDUALS AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES

This opportunity with the NHS has opened the door to my future.
A career, that's what I've got, a chance of a career and a pension.

REGIONAL EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAMME PARTICIPANT

The NHS...operates in areas of high unemployment, where poverty makes people more vulnerable to illness. For the NHS to realise its full potential as an employer, it must develop a more strategic approach, build alliances with other sectors and strengthen links with local communities.

ANNA COOTE, KINGS FUND, 2002

INTRODUCTION THIS REPORT IS AN EVALUATION OF 12 DIVERSE NHS EMPLOYABILITY PROJECTS BY AN EVALUATION TEAM FROM LEEDS UNIVERSITY

This is an evaluation of the Yorkshire and the Humber NHS Regional Employability Programme, supported by Yorkshire Forward, which has established projects for economically inactive people to access training and work placements in their local hospitals and facilities, with many entering substantive employment both in the NHS and other sectors of the economy. Employability programmes are intended to improve the skills and the employment potential of unemployed people and the way that employers approach recruitment, training and support.

The NHS employs more than 1.3 million people, and as such is the largest employer in the country. This gives it enormous potential to make a difference, not only as a provider of health care but also as a major employer in virtually every locality, contributing to the health, prosperity and well-being of individuals and communities.

The Yorkshire and the Humber Regional Employability Programme commenced in October 2004, with a pilot phase completed in March 2007. The programme was funded by Yorkshire Forward with the strategic support of other key organisations within the region, including the Regional Assembly, Job Centre Plus, Government Office and the Learning and Skills Council.

Twelve Employability sites were funded through the scheme, including projects in Leeds, Sheffield, Bradford, York, Scarborough, Halifax, Barnsley, Wakefield and Scunthorpe. The 12 NHS employers each adopted a different approach to reflect the diversity and characteristics of local labour markets and specific organisational priorities.

The Programme, the first of its type to be funded by a Regional Development Agency, illustrates how an ambitious and challenging policy agenda can be translated into practical action within the NHS. The Programme provided support for the 12 pilot sites to innovate, experiment and learn about the benefits and challenges of implementing Employability schemes in the NHS.



The evaluation was carried out by a team from the Centre for the Development of Healthcare Policy and Practice at the University of Leeds, and drew on evidence from taped and videoed interviews, meetings and workshops, and documentary research to identify the factors that make an Employability project successful.

This report summarises the main findings that came from the evaluation, but the full report of the University of Leeds evaluation team can be downloaded from:

www.cdhpp.leeds.ac.uk/downloads/WorkandHealth.pdf
(the full report)

www.cdhpp.leeds.ac.uk/downloads/WorkandHealth_summary.pdf
(the summary)

The 10 minute DVD in the back of this summary includes the views of a number of participants about their various experiences and the overall impact of the Programme from a personal point of view.

WORK AND HEALTH THE VALUE OF MEANINGFUL WORK AND THE ROLE OF THE NHS IN PULLING DOWN BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT IN YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER

It's not just getting the job. It's the difference it makes to their family life, to their health, just their whole well being really.

REGIONAL EMPLOYABILITY PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR

There is a strong evidence base showing that work is generally good for your health. Being without work, particularly for long periods of time, can be harmful to physical and mental health and entering or re-entering work is often accompanied by improvements in health and well-being, as well as income and socio-economic status.

For many of the participants on the various Employability schemes reported here, getting a job in the NHS was seen as a real turning point, something to celebrate and hold on to. The mobility of workers in an organisation such as the NHS opens up the possibility of a rich and varied career with one employer.

Very quickly life changed for the better. I have found myself experiencing real pride and job satisfaction of knowing you are working for an organisation that actually values its workforce whilst becoming an important team member. I now begin each day with a real sense of purpose and look forward to a future with pride.

Regional Employability Programme Participant

The value of participating in productive and meaningful activity is not confined to paid employment. There is an increasing awareness of the benefits of volunteering, both to the individuals who give up their time and to the development of more responsive health and social care services that are more connected to local communities. A number of the schemes did link Employability to the development of a more strategic and robust approach to increasing the participation of local volunteers in NHS organisations.

There are clear policy drivers that support the development of NHS Employability including NHS Corporate Social Responsibility and the launch in 2006 of the Health, Work and Well-Being Strategy. Employability also provides a very tangible way of supporting the ambition of the NHS to move away from a 'sickness' service, embracing illness prevention and also building more participative and active relationships with local communities. Employability schemes build on the assets and capability of individuals and communities

to contribute and make a difference by engaging in worthwhile work that makes a difference to others as well as themselves.

Building local solutions for local challenges

The NHS is one of the largest employers in Yorkshire and the Humber, with over 129,000 people employed in health care. Although the region has experienced above average economic growth there is something of a 'two-speed' economy and growth has not trickled down to all. Significant numbers of people are still living in relative poverty and low skills and higher rates of long term illness all contribute to the persistence of socio-economic divisions across the region. The employment rates of people with disabilities, people from black and ethnic minority groups, young people with low skills and people over 50 are all below the rest of the population. By targeting specific groups, the 12 schemes were able to actively address barriers to employment and provide opportunities for individuals facing real disadvantage.

I was on sick for ten years through a disability. I chose to come off the sick because that new thing came out where they help you back to work without any pressure.

Regional Employability Programme Participant

At my age you think "Oh, you're on the dog shelf. Nobody's going to want to give you that opportunity to go into a new career."

Regional Employability Programme Participant

FINDINGS OF THE EVALUATION THE PROGRAMME EXCEEDED TARGETS FOR BOTH JOB OUTPUTS AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

I had not been in a classroom environment for over 30 years and the course has shown me that there are new avenues opening up in my life.

REGIONAL EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAMME PARTICIPANT

Jobs and training places

The Programme aimed to provide 1,000 training places across the 12 sites and to position 65% of trainees into jobs either inside or outside the health service. It also had a target of placing 455 scheme graduates into substantive NHS posts.



FIGURE 1. Regional Employability Programme: job outputs and learning opportunities against targets, 2005-2007.

As Figure 1 indicates, the Programme exceeded its targets for both learning opportunities and job outcomes. The fact that these outputs were achieved against a challenging financial climate in the NHS, accompanied by a period of radical restructuring, is an important outcome in itself that says a great deal about the potential for change and innovation even during periods of turbulence. In addition, the quality of the training opportunities substantially exceeded the requirements of the Department of Trade and Industry and participants tended to rate the quality of the training very highly.

Entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity

A common aspect of all the projects evaluated was the way they evolved not only in response to changing circumstances, but also proactively as their co-ordinators looked for innovative solutions to problems, and applied creative thinking to extend and develop their work. Changes in funding streams and organisational restructuring meant that some of the schemes had to secure new sources of financial support in order to keep projects going. A number of projects were successful in finding new sources of funding and support and also connecting up with local, national and European initiatives designed to enable local development and regeneration.

When we were hit with that [recruitment ban] so soon into the project, then to have a look and say "well we've got an Employability project here, make sense of that," and then to persuade and change managers' views and employees, to see the advantages of the scheme even with a recruitment ban.

Regional Employability Project Co-ordinator

Now I've been through this scheme, through the Programme, I'm into my job, like I say I really like it, and I can see myself staying with the NHS until I retire, but not as a domestic, I'm going to be a support worker, or something like that, if not a support worker I'll be something else, I don't intend staying as this.

Regional Employability Programme Participant

We deliver care, but it's not just about that. If we employ people, our people who live with us, and we employ their sons and daughters and neighbours then we are making better communities.

REGIONAL EMPLOYABILITY PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR



Relationship building and partnership working

All the projects sat within a web of locally and regionally negotiated relationships both inside and outside their host organisations. Relationships developed over time, and often played a key role in the success of projects. The Programme provided an opportunity for key stakeholders, like Job Centre Plus, local community groups and training providers to develop their understanding of what the NHS has to offer and how NHS recruitment processes work. At the same time NHS based staff developed new understanding and insights into their local community and the role of other organisations in supporting and enabling people into work.

Being part of the Regional Programme was identified as an important source of support for many of the projects and regular meetings and informal networking across the 12 schemes helped to promote sharing and the development of reciprocal relationships.

Without the Regional Employability Programme we would still have some employability-type provision but I think the support has facilitated greater acceptance with the community groups we work with. It's kind of saying to them, 'look there is a big regional programme focusing on helping people into employment'...it shows real commitment.

Regional Employability Project Co-ordinator

Building relationships with the local community

All the projects have been on a journey which has allowed far greater understanding of local communities and how the NHS can work to remove barriers that may prevent local people accessing jobs in the health service. For some projects this has involved directing effort and resources into breaking down barriers and reaching out into local communities, rather than waiting inside their host organisations; for others it has meant utilising community links and relationships that were already in place.

BENEFITS FOR THE NHS DEVELOPING THE BUSINESS CASE – HOW EMPLOYABILITY CONTRIBUTES TO THE CORE BUSINESS OF THE NHS

The NHS that I've come across in the past is mainly hospitals and doctors, sort of thing, not in the training sense that they are doing here, which I think they're doing a marvellous job.

REGIONAL EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAMME PARTICIPANT

Presenting an economic case for investing in Employability is not straightforward. All 12 schemes were funded differently, most often combining external sources of funding, including the support from the Yorkshire Forward Funding, with varying amounts of core funding from within. However, it is possible to identify a number of core benefits that support a business case for Employability.

Impact on standard Human Resources (HR) approaches and processes

The schemes provided an opportunity for organisations to make a critical assessment and review of standard HR practices and how processes including application forms, job adverts and job specifications can both support and hinder recruitment. A number of schemes have introduced simplified application forms and have been able to develop more accessible ways of advertising vacancies within the local community.

...in terms of our HR colleagues, to move them and re-engineer their processes away from stuffing envelopes to actually getting out there into communities and working with people is an interesting challenge.

Regional Employability Project Co-ordinator

Reduced recruitment costs through greater retention

The training period and job placements give candidates the chance to determine whether a healthcare setting is right for them, and managers can assess their suitability for work. This trial period contributes to enhanced retention rates from schemes. Retention rates exceeding 90% after six months' employment are quite normal in these projects. The participant stories also highlighted that for many, working in the NHS was really valued. The freshly discovered (or rediscovered) self-confidence of the Employability participants interviewed as part of this evaluation had clearly translated into a constructive and positive anticipation of the future.

I am really looking forward to taking up my post... I hope that I am going to be with the Trust for a very long time.

Regional Employability Programme Participant

Changing perceptions of the NHS

Participants expressed almost universal approval of the NHS as both an employer and as the host for the Employability Programme. When asked to rate the NHS as an employer on a scale of one to five, one participant said: "Five. I've never known anyone treat me as respectful or helpful ever, or known even if I put a foot or both feet wrong, there's a safety net to help me back on. Five, definitely."

Reduced training costs and training time

Mandatory training for participants, such as food hygiene and moving and handling, can be provided by external partners accessing funds from outside the NHS. This means that participants come 'job ready', trained to the specification outlined by work areas within the Trust, significantly reducing training costs and lost time when in employment.



Quality of scheme recruits

High levels of satisfaction were expressed in relation to the quality and commitment of the people who came through the various schemes. For many participants, getting a job in the NHS was seen as a fantastic personal achievement, and something that would have been unattainable without the support of the Programme. Participants and co-ordinators both spoke about the value of being able to make a difference, and for some who had been served by the NHS, there was a sense of being able to 'give something back.'

I enjoy being in the part of the NHS where I'm actually interacting with the patients, because for me that's what the NHS is about. No matter what job we do they're the important ones, they're the ones we're working for.

Regional Employability Programme Participant

Flexibility and innovation

Employability allowed organisations to develop more flexible approaches to training, designed around the needs of the Trust and also the introduction of the Knowledge and Skills Framework. So in one organisation, for example, the Employability scheme initially provided a vehicle for recruitment into domestic and cleaning roles where there were vacancies and high turnover. With increased retention of Employability scheme candidates this area was no longer a priority, so the focus of the scheme has been able to shift to target new areas, including developing the role of radiography assistant.

Reputation and publicity

Good publicity demonstrates moral/community responsibility of the organisation.

Senior HR Director

Many of the projects have won local and national awards for their work, generating positive media coverage and presenting health care organisations in a different light, as part of local communities and not only as providers of healthcare.

Corporate citizenship

Employability provides a way of translating policy objectives around corporate citizenship into practical action. Employability also cuts across organisational boundaries and supports a more co-ordinated response and rational interface with external organisations and networks.

Equality and diversity

Changes in equality legislation, policy and practice have significant implications for all NHS organisations. The schemes provided a vehicle for organisations to develop practical strategies for increasing diversity, and developing a workforce more representative of the communities they serve. Many of the schemes were able to report significant successes in recruiting people from under-represented groups. Importantly, learning about the barriers faced by people in terms of access to meaningful work and also increased understanding about the devastating impact that unemployment can have on people's confidence and feelings of self-worth, were all elements in the development of more effective and sensitive approaches to increasing diversity.

BENEFITS FOR EMPLOYABILITY PARTICIPANTS

EMPLOYABILITY AS A PRACTICAL WAY OF TACKLING ECONOMIC INACTIVITY IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES



One common experience shared by all the participants interviewed, of course, was a period of economic inactivity before entry onto the scheme. The duration of this varied from one participant to the next, with some reporting periods of months and others years. Two participants had experienced much longer periods of inactivity, at 10 and 17 years. Causes of economic activity fell into a number of broad areas:

- Bereavement
- Caring, including child care
- Disability
- General economic inactivity, including redundancy
- Language/cultural barriers.

After losing my Sister, Brother, Father and Mother over an eighteen month period, all to cancer, I found myself plunged deep into depression spending ten weeks in bed before seeking help. On being accepted for the course it gave me a huge boost. It gave me a chance of a new start, in a new career and a chance to feel useful again. Rising like a phoenix from the ashes, gaining something positive from a very bad period in my life.

Regional Employability Programme Participant

There were remarkable benefits for the participants who accessed the various schemes. The key benefits for the participants are described below.

Building social networks through employment

I have met some lifelong friends on the course, which I enjoyed immensely.

Regional Employability Programme Participant

From the perspective of participants Employability often had a big impact on their social relationships and networks. Where participants were asked about the training programme, friends and friendship figured prominently. Getting back into the workforce and all the social contact that entails was identified as an important benefit in contrast to the isolation and lack of self-worth associated with unemployment.

It's a community. We are supporting each other. Emotionally we become friends.

Regional Employability Programme Participant

The best bit is actually getting back into the workforce, because that has made the most difference...I've got a better relationship with my family, my friends...I want to go out more, you know my skills, my social skills are getting better, I've been able to communicate better.

REGIONAL EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAMME PARTICIPANT

Participants' feelings about a caring role and patient contact

For many participants interviewed during the evaluation, Employability was their first experience of a caring role, and it often had a profound impact. "I know I work in the laundry," one participant said, "but you can see for yourself, if you go into the canteen, patients being wheeled about. Your mind is totally different about caring."

I'm starting to understand better what it takes to work on the wards. A lot of people say you should cut off, sometimes, I don't think so, not any more, really. I'm part of their getting better.

Regional Employability Programme Participant

How participants feel their lives have changed as the result of Employability

The impact of Employability on participants as individuals, all of whom entered the scheme as people who felt effectively barred from employment, and most of whom passed through it as highly employable and capable workers, was a significant finding of the evaluation.

The transformation described by interviewees was consistently one from low levels of self-respect to a state of self-confidence and belief, with some evidence this impacted not just on them as individuals, but at times on their broader families as well.

Evidence of the Programme impacting on its participants' self-confidence and self-respect was abundant, and certainly far more prevalent than any other tangible indicator of 'employability.' "Very quickly life changed for the better resulting in an increased sense of purpose," one participant said, and another added: "Through the Programme my confidence has grown immensely and I feel as though my life has changed 100% for the better."

I'd been unemployed for more than 10 years when I joined the Employability Programme. I'd tried other schemes and things, but it just didn't work. The placement that I'm on at the moment is really working for me, I'm learning lots of new skills and I'm really thrown into the job.

Regional Employability Programme Participant

Participants' views about their own employability

The high numbers of participants passing through the Programme and into work is a testament in itself to the fact that it was successful in its central objective of developing capable and employable people. Participants who successfully gained a job recognised this, and discussed it frequently during the evaluation. Participants who did not go on to get employment in the NHS, at least straight away also reported feeling satisfied with their experiences and often expressed hope for the future. For some people the experience and particularly the job placement helped to inform decisions about the suitability and 'fit' of a specific role that appeared to contribute to higher retention rates.

Through being on the Programme I have improved my job prospects and developed more confidence within myself to achieve more and do well within the NHS.

Regional Employability Programme Participant

I have had a real taste of the NHS which has whet my appetite to continue in my efforts of securing other more appropriate employment, hopefully still within the NHS.

Regional Employability Programme Participant



WHAT WORKS? FACTORS THAT SUPPORT SUCCESSFUL AND SUSTAINABLE APPROACHES TO EMPLOYABILITY

You know, our Project Co-ordinator has always been there for us, answering questions, helping with forms etc...One guy wasn't happy with his placement, but rather than quitting they moved him onto another placement, and he absolutely loves it.

REGIONAL EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAMME PARTICIPANT

A striking aspect of the Employability Programme is the way that projects evolved and changed over time. These changes and adjustments partly reflect the fluid and at times challenging environment in the NHS, most notably the introduction of restrictions on recruitment. But the incremental and developmental way the projects evolved also reflects the learning that went on and how the projects were able to build on success. Looking across all 12 projects a number of core themes stand out as contributing to success and positive outcomes.

Dedicated and expert leadership

You have to believe in what you're doing.

Regional Employability Project Co-ordinator

The drive, entrepreneurial skills and expertise of the project co-ordinators were clearly key factors in supporting positive outcomes. Co-ordinators acted as passionate advocates for Employability both within and outside their organisations and provided visible leadership and a focus for activity.

The management of the 'entry gate' and selection of participants

By the end of the Programme many of the co-ordinators had developed astute skills in assessing suitable candidates for Employability schemes. Co-ordinators were also able to signpost candidates who they did not consider to be ready or suitable for employment in the NHS on to alternative sources of training. Having control over the 'entry gate' was seen as a central aspect of maintaining the quality of the Programme. A key issue related to the conditions under which JCP filtered participants to the Employability schemes. While a pragmatic approach was taken to the realities of the JCP agenda around Welfare to Work and mandatory training there was a strong view that the NHS needed to keep control over the 'front-end' of the recruitment process. This meant being able to take a more flexible approach, offering opportunities to people who did not fit the eligibility criteria of JCP targets and also being realistic about the problems that can accompany people who are 'sent' on to schemes.

Understanding the local community and Employability participants

Understanding the challenges and realities facing individuals who may not have much experience of work, may be starting from a low skill base and or lost confidence through long term illness was seen as an essential skill. This awareness and insight came over time and helped project leaders to develop training and support that took account of these realities.

Support and connectivity at all levels of the organisation

Active support and 'buy in' from senior managers and the executive team was identified as a critical success factor. This high level support was seen as giving the scheme credibility within the organisation. Awards ceremonies involving senior members of the organisation were seen as a visible sign of high level support. For example at the award ceremony in one Trust the Chief Executive shared his own story of entering the NHS as a clerical officer and this was viewed as a significant mark of support for the principles of Employability.

Good support from heads of departments, middle managers and clinical leaders in a position to support Employability participants in their work areas was also identified as an important supporting factor both in day to day running and in terms of 'selling' and promoting schemes.

Ongoing support

There was agreement regarding the need for ongoing support for graduates from the Programme. A number of projects had developed mentoring schemes that enabled participants to access ongoing support as they began working. This was particularly important in terms of supporting people who had continuing health problems and disabilities. Getting involved in mentoring also provided a good way of engaging the wider workforce with the Employability schemes.

KEY ISSUES AND FUTURE POTENTIAL FROM SHORT-TERMISM TO TRANSFORMATION – ESTABLISHING SUPPORTIVE CULTURES AND PRACTICES

You come somewhere like this and realise that you do have a brain.

REGIONAL EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAMME PARTICIPANT

At the end of the Programme there are a number of issues to consider.

Mainstreaming and sustainability

Eleven of the projects are continuing to operate, although with varying degrees of certainty in relation to sources of funding. Changes in the NHS jobs market represent a challenge but not necessarily a barrier to the ability of NHS organisations to contribute to the employability of local people, even if that means that work is taken up in other organisations.

Relationships and joined up working

Employability schemes sit within a complex web of relationships and strategic partnerships both within and outside the NHS. Employability provides a visible and practical vehicle for NHS organisations to develop different relationships with local communities and other service providers including JCP and voluntary sector groups.

Benefits to wider economy

The reality that scheme recruits access jobs beyond the NHS raises important questions about the responsibility of the NHS in relation to paying for training and ongoing support. The health service has the capability to produce good quality and 'job ready' candidates but how much of the bill it should shoulder is open for debate.

We've had very good candidates going through the scheme, and unfortunately we've not been able to take them into positions...however, they've been fortunate enough and worked hard enough to actually go into employment in other areas.

Regional Employability Project Co-ordinator

The NHS as provider of learning and developmental opportunities

A notable finding of the evaluation is the way in which the scheme's participants acquired knowledge, understanding and skills which are valuable to them and make a marked difference to their lives independently of getting a job. Adult learning opportunities have benefits to individuals independently of preparation for

employment. How to develop organisational cultures that value learning and go beyond day to day pressures of service delivery remains a significant challenge for the NHS.

Supporting the workforce to understand the goals and impact of Employability

Although the evaluation revealed many examples of enthusiastic and active support for Employability within organisations, there is still some lack of understanding and resistance. There were suggestions that input about Employability and the link between work and health should be included in the curriculum of undergraduate health professionals as well as be part of in-service training and development.

More understanding of the long term impact of Employability

Although the evaluation captured evidence about the short term impact of Employability on the lives of participants, longer term studies would be required to provide more robust evidence of the long term impact on health outcomes for both individuals and their families and communities.

Changing established culture and practices

Given the backdrop of challenges surrounding change, the NHS faces more uncertainties than many private and other public sector organisations who have embraced Employability as part of Corporate Social Responsibility. Mainly due to scale and a lack of a comprehensive and rigorous evidence base about the costs and benefits of Employability schemes, the NHS, while embracing small waves of change and innovation, has yet to build up a momentum that will make significant and sustainable in-roads into long established cultures and employment practices. A step change transformation is still to happen and the road map is as yet unclear. However, the learning and significant successes of the Regional Programme indicate that change is possible.



THE 12 PROJECTS IN THE YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER NHS REGIONAL EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAMME

BARNSELY PRIMARY CARE TRUST: HEALTH EMPLOYING LOCAL PEOPLE (HELP)

Give people a foot in the door and they can develop. We need to look at the competency of the individual not lots of qualifications.
Regional Employability Co-ordinator

This scheme has concentrated on longer term unemployed people returning to the labour market and people with long term health problems. The project reflects employment challenges in Barnsley and the reality that the NHS is an important employer within the area. The aim is for the PCT to be able to 'grow our own staff.' Successful innovations include removing barriers to the employment of ex-offenders and the development of a mentoring scheme.

BRADFORD DISTRICT CARE TRUST: CREATING OPPORTUNITIES AND OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT FOR SERVICE USERS AND BME COMMUNITY MEMBERS

This scheme concentrates on three specific client groups; mental health service users, learning disability service users and people from BME communities. The project has increased understanding of how to overcome barriers to employment by working closely with local communities and developing new approaches to recruitment and ongoing support. The project has been recognised by local awards and a successful application for Mindful Employer status. The scheme has also attracted additional funding from the Fair Cities Programme.

CALDERDALE AND HUDDERSFIELD NHS ACUTE TRUST

Employability in Calderdale and Huddersfield has been linked to Corporate Social Responsibility since 2004 and actively involves Foundation Trust Council members. The project targets disadvantaged young people, and has identified a total of 26 referral agencies that meet on a monthly basis in an Employability Stakeholders Group, which also includes key people from the Acute Trust. Participants have the opportunity to build up experience and confidence through work placements and skills training and the numbers entering substantive employment continue to increase. The project is now hoping to catch youngsters even earlier, and possibly provide work experience for 14 to 16-year-olds as part of specialist diplomas in health and social care, which will be coming on line in 2008.

SOUTH YORKSHIRE SHA: HIGHLY SKILLED MIGRANT HEALTH PROFESSIONALS PROJECT REFUGEE HEALTH PROFESSIONALS – PART OF THE SOLUTION

This project was based in the South Yorkshire Strategic Health Authority and was the only one of the 12 projects not to be located in a provider organisation. The project targeted highly skilled migrant workers living in South Yorkshire, including refugees, asylum seekers and visa dependents. Participants could access a range of support including help with exam preparation and fees, English language courses, and job placements. The project increased understanding of the barriers facing skilled migrants looking to resume their profession in the UK and the importance of supportive networks in overcoming the barriers and isolation facing many migrant health professionals.

LEEDS TEACHING HOSPITALS NHS TRUST: LOCAL JOBS FOR LOCAL PEOPLE

This Employability initiative was established in 1999 and has acted as an exemplar to other organisations demonstrating what can be achieved by successful partnership working and high level support and leadership that values the principles as well as the practice of Employability. So far the scheme has taken over 600 local people out of unemployment and the scheme has made a substantial contribution to improved diversity figures across the Trust. The retention rates of Employability graduates has been consistently over 91%. The initiative is supported by Leeds City Council's jobs and skills department and a growing network of local organisations and community groups are now connected to the project. The programme has been recognised by a number of awards including the Big Difference Award.

THE MID YORKSHIRE HOSPITALS NHS TRUST: HEALTH LEARNING WORKS

The Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust project was based on the Health Learning Works model, which was largely developed and piloted in the North West of England. The Regional Employability Programme pays for the salary costs of the project co-ordinator alone and the project has been successful in attracting co-financing through Objective 3, the Action 2 Employment and Deprived Area Funding schemes and other initiatives. The project has generated great publicity for the Trust with articles about successful participants appearing in the local media. The project is seen as a valuable driver to effective partnership working. In 2006 the project won a Remploy award for Contributing to Diversity in Employment (North of England Business Individual category).



**NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE AND GOOLE HOSPITALS NHS TRUST:
MAINSTREAMING EMPLOYABILITY**

This project, based in Scunthorpe General Hospital, was established in July 2002, and as such was one of the more established schemes joining Employability; its main target was to develop a business case for mainstreaming, which it successfully achieved. Most areas of the Trust now accept Employability placements, and the total number of training vacancies has risen to 300. The project includes a focus on younger people and lone parents. The age limit for Employability has been reduced from 18 to 16 and support with childcare costs helps lone parents back to work. The success of the scheme at Scunthorpe General Hospital has supported roll out to other hospitals in the Trust at Goole and Grimsby, and encouraged partnership working with local schools to offer taster sessions leading to apprenticeships. Over the five years of its existence, the project has calculated that its recruits have an 82% retention rate, far higher than that for the Trust overall.

SCARBOROUGH AND NE YORKSHIRE HEALTHCARE TRUST

One of the primary aims of this project was to raise the qualification level of the workforce by streaming Employability recruits through the NVQ Support Services in Healthcare programme. The idea for the project came from a senior level, and the co-ordinator (and the project itself) are based in the Trust's NVQ department. The project does not operate a job guarantee scheme, but does guarantee interviews for vacancies relevant to their placement role, whilst they are on the six months' training programme. If the candidate is successful, they are then asked to choose four job-specific modules from a list. Feed-back and mentoring systems have helped to increase understanding of difficulties facing people on incapacity benefit and how to support people stay in work.

**SHEFFIELD TEACHING HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST:
MULTI-AGENCY PARTNERSHIP WORKING TOGETHER**

Employability in the Sheffield Teaching Hospitals Trust targeted unemployed people in Objective 1 areas of the City, which contain some of the most deprived wards in the country. Headlines from the first two years of the project include providing learning opportunities for 43 people, of whom 14 were from BME backgrounds; managing 31 students into full time substantive entry level jobs; achieving a retention rate, after 2 years, of 95% for those employed; and five students have been promoted into new roles since graduating from the programme. Senior managers represent the Trust on several community initiatives, and the project works with a range of community-based organisations and agencies.

**SOUTH EAST SHEFFIELD PRIMARY CARE TRUST IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE
MANOR AND CASTLE DEVELOPMENT TRUST:
WORKING FOR HEALTH**

This training plays a key role in capacity building within these communities whilst the confidence building, skills development and raising of self esteem increases (if appropriate) the employability of individuals taking part.
Community Development Manager

This project has a strong community focus and provides an innovative example of partnership working between a PCT, a community based organisation and other partners as part of a wider approach to regeneration in the disadvantaged area served by the project. The support from the Regional Programme has enabled the development of new approaches to supporting local people into pre-employment training with the help of community mentors and community ambassadors with the skills to understand local needs.

**TEES, EAST & NORTH YORKSHIRE AMBULANCE SERVICE NHS TRUST (TENYAS):
OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT IN THE AMBULANCE SERVICE**

This scheme now covers the whole of the Yorkshire Ambulance NHS Trust and offers training and support for individuals considering entry level posts in the ambulance service. Although started at a time when TENYAS faced recruitment and retention challenges, the scheme has had to adapt to a changing business environment. The scheme offers potential for unemployed people to secure employment by changing their career. The training package offers a range of different learning and development opportunities, raising the skill level of participants who can use their experience as a springboard into employment outside as well as within the ambulance service.

**YORK HOSPITALS NHS TRUST:
PROMOTING SOCIAL INCLUSION IN A TIGHT LABOUR MARKET**

This project reflects the need to develop innovative recruitment strategies in the context of a tight labour market in York and below average numbers of people on both incapacity benefit and Job Seekers Allowance. An inclusive approach was taken to the target population including 'anyone who is economically inactive' and might include lone parents, people with limited qualifications or limited prior educational attainment. Participants are offered voluntary placements for 6 months duration, and a flexible approach supports participants to progress at their own pace. Retention rates for those who have gone on to employment within the Trusts are currently 100%.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The evaluation team would like to thank all the project co-ordinators for sharing their insights and learning with us. Thanks are also due to all the participants who gave their time in focus groups and interviews to describe their own experiences of the schemes. Many participants were willing to contribute to the content of the DVD and also to having their photograph included in this report. David Felber and Mark Smith in Leeds University Media Services supported the making of the DVD and thanks also to Susan Hamer and the CDHPP team. The Programme Director Roger French gave strategic support to the evaluation and Ellen Palmer – the Programme Administrator – acted as an invaluable link between the evaluation team and the Programme.

Leeds University Evaluation Team
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FURTHER INFORMATION

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FURTHER COPIES

The summary report can be downloaded as a PDF from www.cdhpp.leeds.ac.uk/downloads/WorkandHealth_summary.pdf

The full report can be downloaded from www.cdhpp.leeds.ac.uk/downloads/WorkandHealth.pdf

Further printed copies and more information can be requested from Ellen Palmer at ellen.palmer@yorksandhumber.nhs.uk
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DESIGN AND PHOTOGRAPHY

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WORK AND HEALTH CHANGING PEOPLE'S LIVES

The high numbers of participants passing through the Programme and into work is a testament in itself to the fact that it was successful in its central objective of developing capable and employable people.

The energy, vision and entrepreneurialism of all involved in running and supporting NHS Employability schemes shone out of this evaluation. In the end, it is the remarkable impact that entering schemes has had on individuals facing real difficulties finding meaningful, worthwhile and local work, that at the same time, contributes to the core mission of the NHS, that provides the most enduring outcomes of this Programme.

LEEDS UNIVERSITY EVALUATION TEAM

I'm really happy and proud to be putting something back into the area I live in and I've really enjoyed it on the Programme – but it hasn't been right for everyone, and they have left. I feel a bit, not smug, but proud of myself for sticking with it, staying with it, toughing it out, if you like and putting something back.

REGIONAL EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAMME PARTICIPANT