

**Nursing Associate Apprenticeship Pilot- Update and Clarification**

I know some of you have expressed an interest in training your HCAs to be Nursing Associates and have expected them to be enrolling this year. I thought it helpful to remind you all of the background to the programme and to clarify the current positon.

The Nursing Associate programme was a pilot commencing in April 2016 and started with hospital HCAs and Health Care Workers only. They are beginning their second year of the two year apprenticeship programme.

A second cohort of trainees is starting now in June and these will again only be staff from Taunton & Somerset, Somerset Partnership and Yeovil Foundation Trusts and are referred to as ‘Internal’ trainees. The plan is for a third cohort to start at the end of September and for a possible fourth cohort in January 2019, which should both be open to GP practice and Care Home staff if confirmed.

Ten places have been offered to GP practices in cohort 3 and trainees will be known as ‘External’ trainees. The programme is a specific Health Education England funded pilot and therefore subject to strict criteria and contracting arrangements between the University (UWE) who hold the overall contract and Bridgwater and Taunton College who are delivering the training. They were not in a positon to open the course to external trainees until now.

We are working with UWE, the college and the three Trusts to develop the programme to include GP practice staff in September. They have to agree who is accepted on to the course and determine that the placements are suitable, as these are again subject to strict Regulations and Standards. We are also clarifying the exact costs to practices as the programme, being an apprenticeship, is funded by the levy and therefore practices will be expected to make a contribution (10%) to the education fees and also meet the trainee’s expenses.

This programme must not be confused with other apprenticeship programmes currently being delivered, such as the level 5 Assistant Practitioner course.

More detailed information will be sent shortly to practices who have expressed an interest and further information can be obtained by email to: carol.hobbs4@nhs.net or Paula.messenger1@nhs.net

**Carol Hobbs, Education Facilitator, Somerset CEPN**