



Innovative Podiatry student placement

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Our situation

North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS Trust Podiatry Department has, over a number of years, failed to attract podiatry students.

According to workforce data the Department has an aging workforce with 5.66 WTE over 55 years of age.

The Leadership Team are developing a workforce plan to support recruitment and retention.

Our Challenges

There is a distinct lack of local universities offering podiatry degree courses. Our most westerly population are **over 200 miles round-trip** from the nearest university.

We live in a beautiful but large, remote geographical area yet remain unable to attract new recruits.

Our Solution

Having thought about how to attract universities and engage students in different ways we worked collaboratively with the Clinical Lead for North Cumbria from the NENC EELE Team, HEE Regional Learning Lead and Placement Co-ordinators at New College Durham.

This virtual placement model was adopted and the Podiatry Team was able to attract and support more learners from out of the area.

Our Plan

Pilot the placement with 25 level 5 students who attended two, 2 day virtual sessions via MStTeams and were supported by Podiatry's Clinical Educator who was their main point of contact. An introductory session prior to the placement was attended by both students and lecturers so all were aware of the parameters and expectations of the placement.

Regular remote check-ins were scheduled throughout the day by the Podiatry Team providing an opportunity for the students to ask questions.

At the end the placement day all students were asked to present their work to a panel.

Service improvements

12 podiatry patient education leaflets updated
30 podiatry episodes of care updated
Reduction in environmental impacts of placements by using technology

Success

Departmentally this work has **freed-up clinical time** to treat patients and ensure we are working to current evidence based practice.

Future plans

To host **more** virtual placements

Student Feedback

'the ladies that ran the virtual placement made sure we could contact them at any time and asked on many occasions if we were managing with the task they had set for us.'

'as we are being taught the importance of Evidence Based Practice and the activity enabled us to see this as it could be put into practice for our future development and exposure to how a different NHS trust works.'

'I enjoyed the presentations at the end of Day 2, as it did feel like feeding back to colleagues rather than giving a formal presentation. Meeting staff from Cumbria was enjoyable also.'

'I wasn't aware of what a care package was until doing this virtual placement.'

What did you enjoy least about the placement? –*'Nothing, I enjoyed it all.'*