**what’s new**

The latest updates from South Central and across the country

**Patients to be trainee mentors**

Patients with long-term conditions are receiving training to act as mentors to students on a new two-year degree course. The Health and Social Care Foundation Degree: Long-term Conditions Pathway encourages patients with conditions such as diabetes and coronary heart disease to become mentors to the students. The project was initially developed as a pilot sponsored by Foundation Degree Forward, which promotes the qualifications among employers. All mentors are users of services for long-term conditions. The idea is that the mentors will increase the students’ understanding of what it is like to live with such health issues. NESC is working with the Expert Patients Programme Community Interest Company, which recruits, trains and supports the service user mentors. Volunteers attend a six-week expert patient programme course and a two-day mentor skills preparation training course. The foundation degree appeals primarily to healthcare assistants and other Band 3 NHS staff. Students spend one day a week at university and a second day learning in their practice setting. Students and mentors will meet regularly to discuss the students’ development. NESC is also working with the University of Southampton, Thames Valley University, local trusts and primary care trusts to support development of the degree course. Emma Wilton, Widening Participation Manager at NESC, said: “Service user mentors provide students with a first-hand insight into what it is like to live with a long-term condition today. By adopting such an innovative method to educate and train our workforce we will enable growth of staff in Bands 1 to 4 who have an insightful, accurate understanding of the needs of our patients. We hope this model of mentorship could work across NHS South Central and nationally.”

**New horizon for NESC newsletter**

NESC’s monthly e-newsletter is receiving training to act as mentors to students on a new two-year degree course. The Health and Social Care Foundation Degree: Long-term Conditions Pathway encourages patients with conditions such as diabetes and coronary heart disease to become mentors to the students. The project was initially developed as a pilot sponsored by Foundation Degree Forward, which promotes the qualifications among employers. All mentors are users of services for long-term conditions. The idea is that the mentors will increase the students’ understanding of what it is like to live with such health issues. NESC is working with the Expert Patients Programme Community Interest Company, which recruits, trains and supports the service user mentors. Volunteers attend a six-week expert patient programme course and a two-day mentor skills preparation training course. The foundation degree appeals primarily to healthcare assistants and other Band 3 NHS staff. Students spend one day a week at university and a second day learning in their practice setting. Students and mentors will meet regularly to discuss the students’ development. NESC is also working with the University of Southampton, Thames Valley University, local trusts and primary care trusts to support development of the degree course. Emma Wilton, Widening Participation Manager at NESC, said: “Service user mentors provide students with a first-hand insight into what it is like to live with a long-term condition today. By adopting such an innovative method to educate and train our workforce we will enable growth of staff in Bands 1 to 4 who have an insightful, accurate understanding of the needs of our patients. We hope this model of mentorship could work across NHS South Central and nationally.”

**Training passport to help transfer skills across region**

The NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency (PASA) has issued a questionnaire to all trusts and strategic health authorities about the transferability of statutory and mandatory training. The research project aims to develop a “training passport” to enable people with skills to use them anywhere. The research will identify areas for cost savings and greater consistency in training procurement and provision. NESC is working in partnership with NHS PASA to influence this national research. Five trust-based learning and development experts have been appointed to collect data. Emma Wilton, Widening Participation Manager at NESC, said: “The aim is to enhance the outcomes of training and development offered to staff for statutory and mandatory training to be recognised by all trusts and PCTs across NHS South Central and nationally.”

**NESC bursary scheme now open**

NESC is inviting applicants to its Education Bursary Scheme. Until 27 March, staff and trainees across NHS South Central can apply for funding for any kind of learning activity. The maximum annual award is £5,000 towards fees, travel and books or a staff replacement to release the learner. “The chosen learning activity doesn’t just have to be a course,” said Fleur Kitsell, Head of Innovation, Development and Workforce, “it could be a visit to an expert centre, a programme or any kind of learning experience. However, there must be clear outcomes which develop skills relevant to the individual’s planned career in the health and social sector and must be relevant to their job role.”

Bursaries are open to all staff employed by the NHS and staff in public health roles who are employed by the health and social care sector within NHS South Central. Staff can be in any role, but must have worked within health and social care for four years and have support from their employer and their immediate line manager. NESC developed the scheme to support personal and professional development where there are no other routes of funding. It replaces four previous bursary schemes. “We really are hoping to support people who have real aspirations to develop a career within the health and social care sector,” said Ms Kitsell. To apply visit www.nesc.nhs.uk or email bursary.scheme@nesc.nhs.uk. Deadline for applications is 27 March. Successful applicants will be notified by the end of May.

**NESC carries out CPD review**

NESC is reviewing continuing professional development (CPD) provision across NHS South Central. The review is designed to ensure the correct post-qualifying training is available for staff to enable the development of the workforce, provide added value and improve the quality of patient care.

Most CPD provision in NHS South Central has been delivered through multi-professional post-qualifying education contracts in higher education institutions (HEIs). The NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency (PASA) has issued a questionnaire to all trusts and strategic health authorities about the transferability of statutory and mandatory training. The research project aims to develop a “training passport” to enable people with skills to use them anywhere. The research will identify areas for cost savings and greater consistency in training procurement and provision. NESC is working in partnership with NHS PASA to influence this national research. Five trust-based learning and development experts have been appointed to collect data. Emma Wilton, Widening Participation Manager at NESC, said: “The aim is to enhance the outcomes of training and development offered to staff for statutory and mandatory training to be recognised by all trusts and PCTs across NHS South Central and nationally.”

See page 24 for our feature on statutory and mandatory training.

**Bursary on offer to NHS South Central staff and trainees**

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