

Training, Career development and professionalisation

Recommendation 12: The Secretary of State has committed to increasing the alignment between the training of NHS and social care staff and his stated ambition being to make it easier for a registered nurse, for example, to move between the NHS and social care is an important one. We await more detail about how this increased alignment will be achieved. It is important that this increase in alignment of training is not focused solely on nurses and other social care workers with a registered qualification, or allowing care staff to more easily move to higher paying roles in the NHS. Establishing a clear career path with substantial training opportunities, more effectively aligned with the NHS is vital for all entrants to the social care workforce.

Response:

- 7.11 Ensuring we have a workforce with the right skills, knowledge and with real prospects for career progression is vital to the current and future state of adult social care.
- 7.12 Investment in training and qualifications provides opportunities for career progression within the sector and raises the status of social care as a skilled and attractive career option, both of which are crucial to attracting and retaining new entrants into the sector, particularly given the high vacancy and turnover rate across all roles.
- 7.13 We have continued to commission and fund a range of training opportunities and other programmes to help recruit people into the sector and to support staff that want to progress to management and leadership roles to undertake learning and development.

Our current programmes include:

- 7.14 Providing £27 million to expand the Think Ahead programme to train 360 graduates and career switchers to become mental health social workers – the programme has already taken on over 400 participants since its launch. Those that have completed the programme have moved into NHS and social care roles.
- 7.15 Funding Skills for Care to deliver leadership development programmes for the sector, with over 1,200 participants in the last five years.
- 7.16 The Workforce Development Fund which distributes about £11 million a year (2019-20) through which employers can bid for funding to pay for their staff to gain training and qualifications at all levels. The 2020-21 fund will continue to focus on key sector priorities which includes enhanced funding for completion of leadership