

Pilot Project Report Leader Funding

Powys Health and Care Skills Hwb



1 Introduction

NPTC Group of Colleges, in collaboration with the Powys Training Health Board (PTHB), submitted a request to Powys Council in 2021 through Arwain to seek approval via the Leader funding (part of the Rural Development Programme for Wales) to respond to the skills challenges experienced within the health and social care sector.

The outline proposal was to establish a Powys Health and Care Skills Hwb to work in partnership with the Joint Health and Care Academy to provide support to improve engagement and recruitment from the local community to strengthen the local workforce supply.

2 Context

The Powys Regional Partnership Board (RPB), incorporating the member organisations of Powys Teaching Health Board, Powys County Council and Powys Association of Voluntary Organisations, developed an integrated health and care strategy, 'A Healthy Caring Powys' for 2017-2027. As part of this strategy, a Workforce Future Strategic Framework was jointly approved to take forward key enabling activities in implementing the strategy. This document outlined the collective vision and ambition for the future of Education, Training and Development across health and care, in the form of a Health and Care Academy. It described a blueprint of a Health and Care Academy Model that will be truly integrated, and core to the delivery of the in-service education, training and development across the county that focuses on direct care, shared care and care delivered through digital, embracing the Welsh language. The ambition through the Health and Care Academy Model will support the health and care sector in Powys to become the sector of choice, by growing the workforce through local training and education, skills development, and leadership.

Overall, Powys is faced with significant workforce challenges, some of which are specific to the county, and some are common on a national level. Common national challenges include shortages in several professions, such as social care workers (particularly in children's services), nurses and doctors, which are likely to persist for some time to come, with some services relying heavily on agency staff, for example, medics, nursing and social workers. Other challenging areas include the domiciliary carer workforce. In social care, the current picture of the Welsh legislation and social care registration requirements, now diverging from English requirements, is reducing fluidity across the Wales/England border, and thereby increasing the urgency of 'growing our own' social care staff and retaining them.

Locally, many people working in health and care services are due to retire soon. Although this will not tell the whole story of future staffing level predictions, it is a concerning factor and one that needs consideration in the planned delivery of professional and clinical education, training and learning locally. Sixty five percent (65%) of unpaid carers are over 50 and 39% are retired. The number of young carers is also increasing, with most providing up to 19 hours of care. Some young carers, due to their responsibilities, are at risk of missing out on school time, affecting their education and prospects.

Evidence suggests that a large proportion of the working-age population access education, learning and development outside of county, given there is no 'brick university' within the footprint of Powys, with approximately 500 students each year going out of county to access higher level educational opportunities, equating to £2 million worth of educational funding moving to neighbouring counties and across the border into England.

Population changes mean there may be more older people and fewer younger people living in Powys in the future, and whilst people are living longer, these years are not always healthy. To meet future demand, there must be a change in the way services are delivered and how the workforce is secured and developed, so that both are affordable and sustainable.

Positively, developments in technology are changing how some health and care services and support are provided. For example, more people can access services in or closer to home, and the workforce is acquiring the ability to operate in a new digital world, supporting more of the communities to receive health and care services in this way. Growing our workforce to be aware of the latest thinking and digital advancements and able to drive forward improvements based on sound research will be essential to new ways of working.

The Health and Care Academy, heavily focused on integrated approaches, will be built around four conceptual 'schools', with each 'school' offering a collaborative portfolio of specialism underpinned by research, development, innovation, and strong leadership. One of the schools will focus on education pathways to ensure we are creating pathways into employment, we would see this project being a significant element of this work, enabling individuals to have the right preparation before applying for jobs across the sector and raising awareness of employment opportunities within the Health and Social Care sector with school pupils.

3 Aims and Outputs of the Project

Overall Aims:

- Set up a central Powys Health and Care Skills Hwb, located within the Powys Health and Care Academy to support the recruitment of individuals from within the Powys Region.
- To widely promote the Health and Social Care sector's employment opportunities to individuals and other stakeholders within the local community.
- To support the 'work-readiness' of individuals through mentoring, work-related and sector specific training.
- To manage a 'talent pool' where the Health and Social Care Sector will have immediate access to sector ready individuals.
- To participate in a School/Community Liaison Programme that will raise awareness of career opportunities within the Health and Social Care sector.

4 Project Performance

NPTC Group of Colleges and Powys Training Health Board established a Project Board to oversee the operational activities and key outputs of the project. The Project Board consisted of key members from:

- NPTC Group of Colleges.
- Powys Teaching Health Board.
- Powys County Council; and
- Powys Association Voluntary Organisation (PAVO).

The Project Board met every month to monitor the progress of the project. In addition, an Operational Group, involving key representatives from the College and the PTHB, was established to provide instant decision-making process to ensure the progress of the planned activities.

The project supported the employment of:

- Two Clinical Trainers.
- One Employability/Training Mentor.
- Two part-time Administration Assistants.
- Marketing Communication Officer (loaned from PTHB).
- Project Administration Officer.

The Project Board agreed the following operational activities:

- Promote the local employment opportunities identified within the Health and Social Care Sector, including, clinical and non-clinical posts to individuals and other key stakeholders within the Powys region.
- Engage with individuals that express an interest in current and future vacancies, including, organisational/role awareness presentations and screening activities.
- Undertake a skills analysis with individuals to identify transferrable skills that match job vacancies and will also recognise barriers to employment.
- Provide job preparation activities for individuals to support them during the recruitment and selection process, including the production of a CV, completion of application forms and interview skills development.
- Provide appropriate training to support a more effective referral process and remove unnecessary barriers, including, the Health and Social Care Foundation programme, designed for social care workers and healthcare support workers, manual handling, and clinical core units where appropriate.
- Link up with other stakeholders that support unemployed individuals, including, Jobcentre Plus, Communities for Work and Remploy to promote the job vacancies and increase applications, including, those from under-represented groups.

- Manage a 'talent pool' where the Health and Social Care Sector will have immediate access to sector ready individuals.

5 Training Programme

A targeted health and social care employment skills, including enhanced mentoring and training was developed. This included:

CLINICAL SKILLS (3 Day Programme)

Day One – Importance of Communication and person-Centred Care. Supporting people to stay well.

Day Two – Understanding ill health and its impact on people.

Day Three – Practical skills to support a person.

HOW TO SAVE A LIFE (3 hours Programme)

Practical experience of performing lifesaving Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation.

SECTOR AWARENESS (1 Day Programme)

Introduction to Powys Teaching Health Board and the various roles of the Health Care Support Worker.

EMPLOY (5 Day Programme)

Day One – Sector Awareness PTHB. Value, health and Care in Powys.

Day Two – Interpersonal skills and career planning.

Day Three – Planning for success in health and care careers.

Day Four – Importance of interviews.

Day Five – Interview preparation, reflection and action planning.

MENTOR 4 U (Half Day Programme)

Icebreaker.

Introduction to Arwain.

Purpose of the Training Mentor.

The Important of You.

Contacts and Ways to Reach Out.

Participants were able to attend all of the sessions or choose the most appropriate to their individual needs and requirements.

6 Marketing of the Programme

All key stakeholders of the project supported the promotion of the employability programme and also raised awareness of this project through their own networks. An example of the activities included:

- Advertising on social media via Facebook/Messenger/Instagram (English and Welsh);
- Targeted adverts - Powys-wide advert 40km of Newtown, Llandrindod & Brecon and 25km of Llanfyllin, Machynlleth & Knighton areas;
- Data source: WordStream via The Social Shepherd;
- Site tenancy adverts on all devices for one week, on the County Times website;

- A range of digital adverts, including skins, with Newsquest (County Times, Oswestry Advertiser & South Wales Guardian);
- Digital adverts with Tindle (Brecon & Radnor, Cambrian News & Abergavenny Chronicle);
- Side banner adverts on MyWelshpool and MyNewtown websites with MyTown Media;
- Petrol pump nozzle and poster advertising at Ashton's Garages at Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain and Four Crosses (for three months) and Dafarn Newydd Stores at Llanwddyn (for six months);
- Advertising in papur bro and local newsletters in the Llanfyllin area, half page in each edition over six months – The Chronicle, Yr Ysgub and Plu'r Gweunydd.

7 Monitoring the Project

During the monthly Project Board meetings, a Project Report Card was utilised which provided members with easy access to oversee progress and monitor the operational activities of the project.

8 Participant Feedback

Regular participant feedback was obtained throughout the project to continually make improvements to the training and support provided and to capture the impact the programme was having on individuals attending. Here are some examples of participant comments:

“Thank you for all your help, I have been offered the post”.

“I didn't realise how many options were out there for me really until I started looking into it after our mentor session.”

“It's really good to know that I am not on my own. The lockdowns we had hurt my confidence, this training has really helped me with my direction for a career in health.”

“I am so shy; this training has really help me.”

“It was really good getting your support particularly the practice with the teams calls.”

“I have been successful and been offered a place. Thank you.”

9 Project Outputs and Outcomes

The Project Board are pleased to report that the project has successfully achieved all the agreed project outputs. The actual performance data can be found within the table below.

Performance Data

Outputs and Outcomes	Agreed Output	Actual Output
No of Networks Established	1	3
No of Jobs Safeguarded	2	1.24
No of Pilot Activities Undertaken/Supported	1	1
No of Stakeholders Engaged	18	8

No of Participants Supported (Awareness Events only)	50	19
No of Communities Benefitting	6	0
No of Businesses Benefitting	6	0
No of Delegates	50	52

10 Lessons Learned

What worked well:

- Collaboration and partnership working with Powys Health Board, third sector and the College.
- Positive candidate feedback on the courses they undertook and the support they received.
- The achievement of the project KPIs.
- Networking with key stakeholders to raise awareness of the health and social care sector and the potential career/employment opportunities available locally.

Areas for Improvement:

- Even though there was engagement with a wide range of referral agencies and a focused marketing campaign, candidate referrals to the project were lower than expected.
- More focused could have been given to engaging with private social care organisations.

11 Continuity of Provision

NPTC Group of Colleges and Powys Training Health Board are currently in discussions to agree a way in which many aspects of the activities offered under this project can continue. These discussions are looking at including an integrated approach linking into the development of a Powys Health Board Apprenticeship Academy and exploring the potential other funding opportunities via the Shared Prosperity Fund.