

Response to questions from Suffolk Health Scrutiny Committee

Report of Norfolk and Suffolk Workforce Partnership, Health Education England

1. Who is responsible for workforce planning nationally and locally?

- 1.1. Health Education England, as an autonomous national body, provides system wide leadership and oversight of workforce planning, education, and training however those organisations which provide NHS services have a responsibility to plan for the workforce they need to deliver high-quality services.
- 1.2. Locally Workforce plans are submitted to Norfolk and Suffolk Workforce Partnership (HEE), where plans are then aggregated at a region and national level. Plans are subjected to review and challenge locally and benchmarked against regional and national trends.
- 1.3. This year, with the introduction of Sustainability Transformation Plans, to underpin the Governments 5 Year Forward View, further review will seek to ensure alignment between STPs and organisational plans.

2. To what extent is the supply of trained Nurses sufficient to fill vacant posts in the Suffolk Health and care system?

- 2.1. Current provider plans collected on 31 March 2016 show a 10% vacancy rate for NHS Nursing posts against establishment in Suffolk suggesting that supply currently does not meet demand. However our trusts are filling this gap through the use of agency and bank staff.
- 2.2. Additionally in Norfolk and Suffolk employers recognise that the solution to filling vacancies is not entirely dependent on the supply of newly qualifieds. Thus there is additional focus on:
 - o Ensuring our students have the best experience during their training to maximise the number we employ locally
 - o Developing new “Grow Your Own” opportunities to allow progression pathways for existing staff
 - o Improving recruitment and retention through attractive employment options

3. What reasons have been identified for this?

- 3.1. The shortfall of trained Nurses is the result of historic unrealistic efficiency targets which have led to reduced commissioning; in addition high course attrition, recruitment and retention issues have also contributed to under-supply.
- 3.2. HEE has increased the nursing pre-registration education commissions for Suffolk since the intake year 2012/13, which will help to meet future demands (see table below for details).

Output Year	Commissions				
	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Pre-registration Programmes by Intake Year (Suffolk)	2012/13 Actual	2013/14 Actual	2014/15 Actual	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Actual
Nursing & Midwifery	162	187	179	234	252

3.3. Course attrition rates from nursing pre-registration education programmes commissioned for Suffolk have reduced since output year 2012/13 and this trend is expected to continue over the coming years (see table below for details).

Output Year	%Attrition across whole programme							
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Non-medical Pre-registration Programmes by Intake Year (Suffolk)	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
Nursing & Midwifery	38%	23%	22%	17%	19%	19%	14%	13%

4. Are the recruitment and retention issues for Nursing consistent across all sectors of the Suffolk health and care system?

- 4.1. Based on recently submitted NHS vacancy data and qualitative intelligence, employers across all sectors are struggling to recruit and retain nurses.
- 4.2. Whilst there is a 10% vacancy rate in the health sector, social care have only reported an overall vacancy rate of 4% for their total workforce, including nurses. Thus the social care position, whilst compounded locally by high turnover, is less challenging than it is in the health care sector.
- 4.3. Recruitment issues are compounded by the rural nature of Suffolk with access to and from West Suffolk Hospital from the University a factor in recruiting nursing students. Under recruitment in West Suffolk Hospital is generally balanced by resultant over-recruitment in Ipswich Hospital.
- 4.4. It is well recognised that students who have a good practice experience tend to return on qualification to those areas, thus recruitment of newly qualifieds is more difficult for areas such as primary and social care where very few placement opportunities exist.
- 4.5. There are particular recruitment and retention issues within NSFT who continue to have CQC concerns.

5. How do these issues compare to the situation nationally?

- 5.1. The shortage of Nurses is a national issue – particularly in primary care where there tends to be an older workforce with fewer recruitment opportunities.
- 5.2. Regionally, many of our “hotspots” experiencing recruitment difficulties are rural district general hospitals rather than our two larger acute hospitals – Ipswich Hospital and Norfolk & Norwich University Hospital.
- 5.3. Nationally there are variable issues with over-reliance on overseas recruitment and agency staffing.

6. What attracts people into Nursing and why do they leave the profession?

- 6.1. According to the ‘Mind the gap’ report (HEE, 2015) the following areas are important to staff:
 - Clear structure for career development and progression pathway
 - Care and support (personally/professionally from leaders and team)
 - Team spiritedness – to be accepted, valued and appreciated

- Feedback, guidance and development support (including attractive preceptorship programme, mentorship, coaching and CPD)
 - Flexible working arrangements to achieve work-life balance
 - Supported and enabled to meet the expectations of the patients and public
 - Engaged in meaningful work that makes a difference
- 6.2. Based on 2014/15 NHS leaver data, the reasons why staff leave include:
- Retirement (15%)
 - End of fixed term contract (25%) or transfer (10%)
 - Voluntary resignation (47%), including relocation, promotion and work life balance
- 6.3 Most Trusts carry out exit interviews and are encouraged to explore retirement plans with staff as they approach retirement age. Retirement figures can be difficult to predict given the age range at which NHS staff can retire and with flexible retirement options available.

7. How is nurse education and training funded?

- 7.1. Currently HEE (East of England) commissions pre-registration training for nurses from 6 universities across the East of England, for Suffolk the majority of nursing students are trained by University Campus Suffolk (UCS). Therefore the commissioning process picks up the cost of university fees and student nurses also receive a means tested bursary.
- 7.2. From 1 August 2017, new pre-registration nursing students beginning their course will be funded through the standard student support system administered by the Student Loans Company, rather than through the NHS Bursary scheme. Therefore course fees and bursaries will no longer be paid but covered through the student loan scheme.
- 7.3. The government has stated that this change in funding will increase student opportunities by delivering more nurses, midwives and AHPs for the NHS: provide a better, more sustainable, funding system for nursing, midwifery and AHP students and enable a more sustainable funding model for universities.

8. What is being done to address issues with recruitment and retention of Nurses in Suffolk in the short term?

- 8.1. All employers will have a recruitment and retention strategy and therefore they will be able to provide you with further information regarding this.
- 8.2. Short-term measures include overseas recruitment and temporary cover via bank and agency staff, although it is recognised that Trusts have 'capped' agency figures to work towards in order to reduce agency spend.
- 8.3. Actions to address recruitment and retention issues over the coming year include:
- The Norfolk & Suffolk Recruitment Task & Finish Group is developing a coordinated approach to the recruitment of newly qualified nursing graduates to attract as many as possible to Norfolk and Suffolk.
 - Norfolk & Suffolk Directors of Nursing have agreed a Newly Qualified Minimum Offer which will help to increase attractiveness of local employment – this includes a structured support package (preceptorship) and guaranteed opportunities for Continuing Professional Development.
 - HEE has increased pre-registration nursing commissions with University Campus Suffolk (UCS) and developed accelerated routes into nursing through the following approaches:

- APEL of existing foundation degree for employed health care assistants to access an 18 month work based learning approach to nurse registration with UCS
 - a 2 year Masters pre-registration nursing programme with University of East Anglia (UEA) for students with an existing honours degree.
 - Suffolk employers (including Primary Care) have traditionally delivered beyond targeted numbers for apprenticeships and Foundation Degrees for Bands 1-4 staff. Whilst not all these staff are in clinical roles, there is a drive from employers to create a supply pipeline of Healthcare Assistants and Assistant Practitioners to support nursing teams and access the “Grow Your Own” routes into nursing.
- 8.4. Return to Practice – Suffolk organisations have actively supported our National and Regional Return to Practice Campaign. Average candidates take approximately 6 months to complete the course (compared with 3 years for traditional nursing programmes). While numbers recruited have been smaller than anticipated (there is no valid measure of level of interest from returners) over the last 18 months we have recruited the following (see table below):

	Course Numbers 2015/16	Recruited programme qualification 2015/16	from on	Course Numbers 2016/17 (to date)	Comments
Ipswich Hospital	9	6		5	Those not employed were seeking community nursing posts
West Suffolk Hospital	9	6		2	Those not employed were seeking community posts (1) or declined for personal reasons (2)
Suffolk Community	5	3		0	1 did not complete the course
Totals:	23	15		7	Further course to run in September

9. What will be done to address issues of recruitment and retention of Nursing staff in Suffolk in the medium and long term?

- 9.1. Health Education England has been working with UCS, UEA and local employers to address the medium to long term nursing supply shortfall:
- **Increasing capacity and quality of practice learning environment** – The quality of practice placements is key to retention. Those students who receive good placements are more likely to apply for posts on qualification. HEE is responsible for monitoring and improving the quality of practice placements to ensure the workforce is trained to a high quality. We have tested out a new practice based learning model in Suffolk (PEBLS) which is based on the Norfolk Amsterdam Project (CLiP) identified in the Shape of Caring Review (Lord Willis 2015). This is already evaluating well and leading to improved capability of students, improved student satisfaction and increased capacity to support more students in practice.

- **Increase supply through employability** – HEE, Ipswich Hospital, West Suffolk Hospital and the community work very closely with UCS to recruit students onto the nursing programme. Collaborative work is undertaken with local FE colleges and schools to provide information on careers within healthcare for all grades of nursing staff.
- **Increase retention and flexibility through staff development, leadership and talent management** – HEE is working with local employers to improve retention of the existing nursing workforce and explore skill-mix measures to overcome the supply shortages. Good practice examples include Connect Work Shadowing Scheme in Suffolk, Band 5 Nursing Development at Suffolk Community Healthcare and Building Resilient Teams and Team Leaders in Norfolk and Suffolk.
- **Revalidation** – the introduction of revalidation has caused concern locally around the numbers of nurses who may choose not to revalidate and thus will be lost to the workforce. HEE ran a number of local workshops to support staff across Suffolk (including Primary and Social Care) which were well attended and well evaluated. HEE is also about to launch a Revalidation e-learning package accessible to all nurses to support revalidation for nurses and those supporting revalidation.
- **Sponsored training routes** –
 - Ipswich Hospital are offering a sponsorship model which provides a £3,000 sponsorship to candidates, bank contracts and pre-nursing experience (if needed). In return the student will sign-up for 3 years post-qualification with the Trust. This will promote a sense of belonging for the student (a recognised retention factor). Numbers will be very small initially but may increase over time.
 - Norfolk and Suffolk Directors of Nursing are leading on work seeking to identify potential sponsorship/scholarship options for recruiting students' post-2017. This work is in its infancy but could well improve recruitment and retention opportunities.

10. What can be done to ensure that Suffolk is an attractive place for Nursing staff to train and establish a career?

- 10.1. The Norfolk and Suffolk system, supported by the Norfolk and Suffolk Workforce Partnership, are working collaboratively to deliver improvements to recruitment and retention and increase employability. In addition to those actions already identified, further examples include:
- Addressing local employer access issues to rural areas
 - Developing clear education and career pathways for nurses
 - Being explicit at recruitment around career progression and earning potential for nurses
- 10.2. It is anticipated that the emergent STP will lead to increased collaboration and the input of wider local authority to support health and social care workforce issues (such as affordable housing, improved transport, joint employment opportunities)

10.3. HEE is working with the Norfolk and Suffolk Local Enterprise Partnership to improve attractiveness of the whole health and social care sector for Nursing staff to support recruitment and retention of staff.

For further information on this report contact:
Mr Ross Collett
Head of Norfolk & Suffolk Workforce Partnership
Ross.Collett@nhs.net