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**To: Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5)**

**Date: 13<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

**Subject: Health Sector Skills Development**

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## **1 Purpose of the Note**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) with an update by the Coventry & Warwickshire Integrated Care System on the work in progress and the work planned on the future skills in health and social care.

## **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) are recommended to:
- a) Note the current progress and future plans and to make any further recommendations.

## **3 Background and Information**

- 3.1 Since 2022 providers across Coventry & Warwickshire Integrated Care System (ICS) have collaborated to focus on adult nursing recruitment and retention through a project call Project 1000 (P1K).
- 3.2 Through the P1K project we have overhauled recruitment processes for newly qualified nurses to improve the recruitment experience and to remove blockers for candidates applying for roles in our organisations.
- 3.3 As part of the project, we have also introduced flexible rostering and legacy mentors to improve the experience our colleagues face.
- 3.4 As a result, we have reduced adult nursing vacancies from 13.7% at the end of 2022/23 to 8.8% in July 2024. We have also reduced the nursing leavers from 9.1% in March 2023 to 8.2% in July 2024.
- 3.5 During 2024/25 and 2025/26 we will be taking the learnings from P1K and focus on improving retention strategies across wider health and care workforce.
- 3.6 The NHS long term workforce plan and the Adult Social Care workforce strategy both set out the significant recruitment, retention and education challenges facing our current and future workforce linked to increased demand for services and an increasingly growing and ageing population with complex health needs.
- 3.7 We have established our Future Skills Board to take a strategic approach to ensuring Coventry & Warwickshire can grow it's health and care workforce of the future, in sufficient numbers and with the right skills to provide services that meet the needs of the population.

- 3.8 The Future Skills Board is made up of ICS partner members along with further and high education institutions, Department of Work & Pensions, Coventry City Council and West Midlands Combined Authority.
- 3.9 Through data analysis the Future Skills Board have identified the four areas we will focus on:
- Recruitment and retention of support workers
  - Pipelines into Nursing, Midwifery, Podiatry, and Operating Department Practitioner.
  - Estates and Facilities role.
  - Digital, data and technology skills.
- 3.10 The recruitment and retention of health and care support workers will link into our health and social care employability academy programme where we have a vision to create meaningful and accessible education, employment and training opportunities to ensure diversity and inclusivity for care leavers; people with disabilities; people with refugee status; and disadvantaged people across the Coventry and Warwickshire Integrated Care System.
- 3.11 With the changing attitudes of students moving away from traditional education routes, in particular with the removal of bursary and introduction in tuition fees we are seeing a reduction in the number of applications to undergraduate programmes. We have partnered with Coventry University on a successful bid from Office for Student Funding to support an increase in level 6 apprenticeships.
- 3.12 The funding will enable us to create an infrastructure to support the expansion of apprenticeship programmes across Health and Social Care. The following Level 6 apprenticeships will be the focus.
- Registered Nurse Degree
  - Occupational Therapist
  - Biomedical Scientist
  - Podiatrist
  - Diagnostic Radiographer
  - Registered Midwife Degree
  - Operating Department Practitioner
- 3.13 The programme will focus on developing our apprenticeship eco system; building strategic pathways into Further Education; building pathways from Further to Higher Education; and developing apprenticeship curricula.

#### **4 Health Inequalities Impact**

- 4.1 Ensuring we continue to develop health and care skills from within our existing workforce and to create pipelines from our local community into health and care roles will help reduce our workforce gaps and meet our commitment to social value having a positive impact on local employment and widening health inequalities.

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