

CASE STUDY

Select



EMPLOYERS NETWORK

#militaryisgoodforbusiness

OA
OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION

The Case of NHS

Background

Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital (NNUH) Trust were taking part in a very productive Prince's Trust Get into Hospital Services programme, which aims to get young people between the ages of 16-24 into work experience leading to jobs. In 2014, a discussion between NNUH and Walking with the Wounded resulted in the Trust deciding to trial a similar programme for service leavers.

The Trust worked in partnership with Walking With The Wounded, the Royal Foundation, and the Career Transition Partnership (CTP) to trial the Step into Health programme. The rationale for this programme was the alignment of NHS and military values, skills and attitudes. The aim was also to promote awareness of over 300 career options within the NHS to military personnel leaving the service.

The Process

Although initially the project was designed to replicate the Prince's Trust programme with two intakes planned for each year, it soon became clear that this format would not be very effective for service leavers. This was because each service leaver was at a different

stage of his or her military career and came from different services with varied expertise. Hence, a more personal approach was needed for them. A modified format was developed for the specific purpose of service leavers as outlined below:



The Outcomes & Benefits

The overall benefit of this programme for NHS is the recruitment of highly skilled individuals with the values and attitudes that are well aligned with NHS. There is also the added benefit of providing potential employees the opportunity to understand whether working for NHS and the potential career path is right for them. This can provide long term benefits of reduced staff turnover.

Outcomes from the programme are varied. The initial pilot carried out by NNUH had a success rate of 78%. This success enabled the programme to be extended to other parts of the country. This extended national scheme has also had some significant outcomes. The data for the first quarter of 2016 showed that 278 service leavers have attended the 18 Information Days held across various trusts in different locations. Following from the Information Days, 132 requests were made for placements with 5 service leavers deciding to apply directly for job roles. In addition to this, on completing their placements, some service leavers have decided that NHS or the specific career path was not the right one for them. Others have decided to pursue further education or training to help them enter a specific career within the NHS.

Furthermore, as a result of the Step into Health programme, an informal buddying system has evolved within the Trust where staff with a military background have come forward to offer mentoring, advice and support to those undertaking placements and starting jobs in NHS. There has been great interest in the programme throughout the NNUH as well as other NHS trusts.

The Costs & Challenges

The basic costs of the programme relate to organising the Information Days and obtaining regulatory disclosures and clearances required by NHS. However, the major costs are time and productivity. Allocating work placement opportunities will require assigning supervisors to oversee the placements which have associated costs and time dedicated to this by supervisors.

There are various challenges associated with implementing a programme such as this. One of these is the logistical challenge of getting various people together to make success of the Information Days, hospital tours and placements. Another challenge is to ensure that various departments are not saturated with work placement requests and posts. As NHS offer various work placements including school leavers, graduates as well as service leavers, it is important to find the right balance between these various groups.

A further challenge is the availability of only a small number of senior roles within NHS and this can provide very limited opportunities for senior officers leaving the service. In addition to this, potential service leavers need to accept that they may need to apply for a job role that provides a lower salary when they start at NHS until they have established themselves within the organisation and can progress further. These expectations needed to be made clear from the outset to all service leavers.

“staff with a military background have come forward to offer mentoring, advice and support to those undertaking placements and starting jobs in NHS”
Julia Watling, NNUH

Moving Forward

Julia Watling (Programme Manager – Workforce Development, NNUH) explains that it is important to get the whole organisation on board. Sometimes this may require starting on a small scale so that the benefits and outcomes are clearly established in order that other parts of the organisation will be encouraged to get involved. She also advises organisations looking to pursue a similar programme, to have a job role dedicated to managing it in order to obtain maximum impact.

Following the success at NNUH Trust, Step into Health programme has been rolled out across various other trusts including Northumbria, Hampshire, London and Sheffield. The aim is to expand the programme to further locations across the UK in order to provide a wider, national access to service leavers.

