

Establishing a Higher Trainee Post in Addiction Psychiatry in a Third Sector Organisation

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Aims and Objectives

- Create an interesting and stimulating training opportunity which would enable psychiatric trainees to gain experience and meet curriculum objectives for an endorsement in addiction psychiatry.
- Add value to the Change Grow Live team by bringing in additional skills, increasing capacity to see patients, stimulating learning within and across teams, and improving communication and relationships with local mental health teams.
- Invest in the future workforce as per local and national goals of increasing the number of skilled professionals in substance use disorder services and forging closer links with mental health services.
- Pilot the establishment of addictions higher training posts in psychiatry across Change Grow Live and NHS Trusts.

Background

There has been a significant reduction in opportunities for trainee psychiatrists to gain experience in addiction psychiatry in the UK. This means that psychiatrists may not be able to provide the best care to patients presenting to other psychiatric teams with co-occurring substance use disorders. Addiction services also suffer a loss of skills and expertise as current consultants age out of the workforce and are not replaced.

Many addiction services are run by third sector organisations which creates additional challenges for approval of training posts. In underfunded addiction services, service delivery is prioritised over training, and Health Education England (HEE) have a lack of knowledge of third sector providers. There was no higher trainee post available in our local Wessex Deanery having been lost when local providers changed.



Royal College of Psychiatrists, Workforce Strategy for Addiction Psychiatry Training, 2016

Methods

- We collaborated with our local mental health trust, Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust, and Wessex Deanery, to agree a higher trainee post based in Change Grow Live, Southampton.
- Funding was negotiated between Change Grow Live and Southern Health.
- A secondment contract was agreed honouring all national trainee doctors' terms and conditions.
- The trainee had an educational supervisor in Southern Health and a clinical supervisor in Change Grow Live, with weekly supervision sessions timetabled.
- Before the role commenced, the trainee and clinical supervisor agreed objectives and a job plan.
- The clinical supervisor had relevant training and was recognised by the GMC and HHE.
- Service staff completed trainee assessments, with an Annual Review of Competence Progression (ARCP) completed at the end of the post.
- Formal feedback was gathered from the trainee and members of staff at the end of the post.

Results

We successfully recruited a higher trainee psychiatrist who worked in Change Grow Live, Southampton for a year.

- She worked in core and specialist services for homeless and criminal justice populations, liaison addiction at the general hospital, and visited an inpatient detox unit.
- She became a group facilitator of self-management and recovery training (SMART).
- She provided educational sessions for other trainees and the local authority approved mental health practitioner (AMHP) service and presented cases at the local academic meeting.
- She completed a quality improvement project which benefitted the way we run our MDT meetings.
- She assisted other trainee psychiatrists to pursue an interest in addictions through taster days and information sharing between peers.
- There was considerable interest in the following placement, with 5 trainees seeking the post.

"I think the best thing about this placement was the variety of work, opportunities and flexibility to attend certain activities that were not only necessary for my curriculum, but also part of my special interest" – Dr Cosmina Cross, higher trainee psychiatrist

Conclusions

Positive outcomes of the creation of the higher trainee post included trainee, team and patient satisfaction, the development of positive relationships and better communication with the local mental health trust and extra capacity, particularly with mental health expertise, to see patients.

"the service user felt more heard, taken seriously, and confident in his treatment." Carl Nightingale, Care Co-ordinator.

Key challenges are funding, logistics (parking, IT access and cross organisation interfaces) and time management; the role is partially funded through the service budget, and the trainee's capacity is impacted by on-call rotas and annual and study leave, which can be difficult for administrative staff.

"Having trainees coming to CGL to learn from all of our experiences can help to shape the next generation of psychiatrists and contribute to the ongoing development of the field. This helps to improve the overall quality of care for patients" – Mo Arahji, Pharmacist NMP

