STUDENT NURSING TIMES AWARDS 2013

HOSPITAL PLACEMENT OF THE YEAR, SPONSORED BY NHS EMPLOYERS.
WINNERS AND FINALISTS

DECEMBER 2013
Winner
Stockport NHS Foundation Trust:
B3 - Surgery

What Stockport does is “just ordinary” according to Claire Stelfox, a band 6 junior sister on ward B3 who has been a mentor since 1992. “There is nothing dynamic about it – we just get to know the student really well and help them on their learning pathway.”

But there is nothing “ordinary” about this ward. The manager and the staff on B3 have provided exceptional support for the students who have been allocated to them. They are a caring team who understand the value of the future workforce and their role in clinical education.

B3 is a surgical ward specialising in bowel and gastric surgery within an extremely busy associate teaching FT. There are 22 beds and the ward has a fast turnover. The unit benefits from a forward thinking and motivated leader who innovates and inspires the staff. They accommodate up to five students at any one time, including elective and preparation for practice students. They aim to work one to one (mentor to student) with the students but sometimes have to work one to two. “We try really hard to keep it 1:1,” says Ms Stelfox. “I think that is imperative for quality mentoring”. The team also accommodates students from other programmes, for example return to practice and paramedics. The trust as a whole takes over 100 students a year across all disciplines.

Care and compassion

This placement demonstrates care and compassion for its learners. When the mentor is not available, all the staff are prepared to input to the students’ learning. It fosters mutual respect and motivates the students to learn. The ward manager is the key to this as he also fosters and supports his staff in an atmosphere that is positive and nurturing, allowing staff to feel respected, which directly transfers to the students. They are innovative in their outlook and give the students every chance to practise what they have learned in the classroom.

This placement establishes good relationships from the start. It builds assessment dates into the off duty and as far as is reasonably practical. Students work with their mentor with their off duty planned to this end. They have a specific learning pack for their area and a spoke model of appropriate areas for the student to visit while on placement.

Well thought out

The learning environment on this placement is well thought out. Their student board gives all the information a student may need during their time there. They are allocated a mentor before they start and the ward tries to have that mentor rostered on for the student’s first day to make them feel welcome and wanted. The whole team has learning through their core and want to give students the best experience they can. They understand the students’ curriculums and translate this into learning at the bedside so they can meet their learning outcomes. Nothing is too much trouble for any of the team making it a pleasant place for students to work and learn. Every opportunity is made into a learning opportunity.

“Everyone plays a part in the student’s development,” says Ms Stelfox. “The HCAs show them the massive part they play in the patients’ health, and everyone brings something different to the student.”

The whole multidisciplinary team is involved in giving students a quality experience of the patient journey. Students are always included in patient handovers and are encouraged to attend ward rounds and case conferences. This direct collaboration and interaction at all levels gives a quality patient care experience. The students gain an understanding of multidisciplinary working and effective communication and collaboration and how this complements and reinforces team working.
The staff are particularly good at recognising when outside factors impact on a student’s learning and will endeavour to find the cause and support them to resolve it. As mentors are always with students they tend to rely less on formal meetings, but continually debrief throughout the day.

Poor students are also recognised and contact made with the practice education facilitator and the student’s HEI so they can offer as much support as possible. They will fail students if they feel they are not meeting their learning outcomes, but do this in a positive and supportive way so the student knows where they need to improve and is given every opportunity to do so.

This placement offers students every opportunity to work on and improve their skills within the practice environment. The placement area undertakes the majority of skills a student may require and provides them with a safe environment in order to learn and build their confidence. Students can then undertake these skills under supervision in the placement area, allowing them to become competent practitioners. Students are encouraged to watch any unusual procedures and sometimes to assist, depending on their level of training.

Students are encouraged to discuss their expectations with their mentor on day one so their strengths and weaknesses can be explored. The team believes that students who are allowed to define their own learning goals will be more engaged in learning. The staff then meets and explores how that individual student’s learning needs are best met and a strategy is developed. This helps the student feel wanted and cared for. They are encouraged to write their own off duty so they can work with their mentor as much as possible while in placement.

Students have always given positive feedback about this placement and many students want to come back to this placement to work.

“We are so proud of winning this award,” says Ms Stelfox. “We know we do a good job, even though we don’t think we do anything spectacular, we are so so proud.”

**Top tips for providing a great placement**

- Involve all the multi-disciplinary team in the placement
- Don’t be afraid to fail poor students, but do it constructively and try to give them support early on if they are struggling
- Encourage students to discuss their objectives and determine their own learning objectives and desired outcomes
- Build in assessment dates from the first day
- Make sure your leader role models behaviour that encourages and supports learning
- Turn every opportunity into a learning opportunity
Finalists

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust: Ward 25, The James Cook University Hospital

Student nurses in Ward 25, a 20-bedded neurology unit, have two qualified mentors per student to facilitate their learning and development.

Students are welcomed, encouraged to challenge and referred to by name – never as “the student”. The student nurse induction pack incorporates all the relevant information that students need to know initially about the ward and they are encouraged to visit the ward before starting to gain an overview and to discuss any fears or anxieties. A team nursing philosophy is adopted and students are invited to ward meetings, case conferences and multi-disciplinary team meetings as this helps to integrate students into the ward team.

The guiding philosophy is that staff remember how it felt to be a student nurse and provide emotional and clinical or educational support, either themselves or through practice placement facilitators and the university link tutor.

They acknowledge that student nurses all learn differently and make sure they are flexible in their approach to learning and teaching. Fundamentally, they want to make the experience of learning fun as well as being appropriate to the student nurse and actively encourage them to be as involved in all aspects of patient care within their scope of practice. All clinical mentors are up to date with their knowledge and skills and hold a recognised NMC accredited mentoring qualification.

Top tips for providing a great placement

- Remember how it felt to be a student and see things from their perspective
- Invite students to ward meetings and training
- Encourage them to come to the ward before the placement starts to alleviate stress
- Try and make the learning experience fun
- Be flexible about how students like to learn, and try and make your approach bespoke
- Ensure students spend break time with mentors to help build the relationship
East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust: Marlowe Ward

Marlowe ward has a palpable and pervasive atmosphere of quality and professionalism. The ward never fails to be calm, organised and welcoming and there is always a friendly face to greet you. The education of students is seen as important and there is a discernible learning culture. The nurses demonstrate a keen interest in their students by always making time to discuss their progress with them. Mentors regularly receive positive feedback from university evaluations and they make sure one of their link nurses is always at the study days - even attending on their days off.

The 39-bedded nephrology ward cares for people with established renal failure and acute kidney injury. The ward is made up of a high-impact bay and a day-case bay, with the remaining beds available for a variety of inpatient renal conditions. A maximum of six students are allocated a mentor and associate mentor and the aim is to roster them to work with their mentor 100 per cent of the time.

The ward offers students a wide range of experiences, including acute and chronic care of renal patients, dialysis, day surgery and outpatients. Students experience genuine person-centred care from a multi-professional team including experienced health care workers, specialist therapists and renal consultants, who provide a seamless service.

First name terms

Everyone is on first name terms, which helps to create a non-hierarchical and effective team. On Marlowe, there is no such thing as "too posh to wash"; every grade of nurse is directly involved with patients, from essential care to the psychological health of people suffering from long-term, life-changing illnesses.

The team are encouraged to both support and challenge students as well as each other.

Information is uploaded onto CLIC, the university website, which students can access before they start their placement. When they ring in for their off duty, they are told who their mentor will be and they are invited to come and visit beforehand. This is a good opportunity for them to be introduced to the team and to ask questions or express any concerns. After a friendly greeting on their first day, a settling period is agreed. A realistic learning contract is drawn up and ground rules are established.

Approachable

Mentors ensure they are approachable and encourage students to come to them with any worries. The Marlowe team has a healthy social life and the students are all encouraged to get involved. Students are asked for feedback before they leave, any information given is used to help the team work with future students. Students are encouraged to keep in contact after they have left, in fact a number of them have returned as trained nurses to work on Marlowe.

As they are rostered to work with their mentors, students spend 100 per cent of their time being mentored. There is a tangibly positive learning culture and all learning opportunities are made available to students. They are always able to observe or get involved with learning opportunities without feeling uncomfortable. The majority of patients are experts in their own illnesses and are well known to the team, some of them almost becoming mentors in their own right. They are therefore comfortable and familiar with the hospital environment, which has a positive effect on students.

“Students are welcomed into the team even before they start their placement.”
Top tips for providing a great placement

- Involve the patient in the mentoring process, particularly if they are experts
- Integrate students into the social life of the placement team
- Encourage them to come back or keep in touch to ask questions
- Roster the students with the mentors so they spend 100 per cent of their time being mentored
- Ask students for feedback and act on it for next time
- Keep the team non-hierarchical and encourage a culture that challenges everyone’s practice
South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust: Ward 26 - The James Cook University Hospital

This ward describes many of its students as being like “rabbits in headlights”, but it works hard to relax them and alleviate stress.

South Tees Hospital covers a diverse patient group. Ward 26 is a regional neurological rehabilitation ward, which focuses on patients with brain injuries and a variety of neurological conditions. Working with this diverse patient group with specific neurological needs can be a challenge, but students are encouraged to gain hands on experience and learn back-to-basics care. They also work with a wider multi-disciplinary team.

The team produced a student resource file that included contributions from every staff member, including RNs and HCAs. The HCAs completed a piece of work around the early warning observation score and RNs developed work on a neurological/ neurosurgical condition. Students are encouraged to spend time with each member of the multi-disciplinary team. Other opportunities available to the students include theatre, neuro radiology and time with specialist nurses.

Students spend one-to-one time with their mentor to update their competencies and review their progress. The ward offers clinical skill development, but more importantly helps students develop their communication skills – an essential skill for this placement area as so many patients have varying communication levels.

“Students are encouraged to spend time with each member of the multi-disciplinary team.”

Top tips for providing a great placement

- Try to calm the student from the moment they arrive, especially if it is a busy or challenging environment
- Involve all the team in developing the student guide book, which can give key clinical information as well as orientation information
- Focus on communication skills
- Don’t forget essential care, and get students to focus on the basics
- Promote research and staff development to deliver evidence-based care
The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre

The centre introduced an induction day for student nurses on placement to educate, inform and prepare students for their placements, giving them information on the fundamental nursing requirements for patients and an overview of the care they will be expected to be involved in. Scenarios and experiences they may encounter are discussed. The induction consists of presentations by enthusiastic and experienced staff from the various wards within the unit. The presentations take the format of short PowerPoints and handouts are provided.

The innovation of a student induction was devised by the nurses on the ward who provide the clinical support to the students. It has been their desire to provide a welcoming, encouraging and supportive environment to the students.

Educate and inform

The induction programme provides the student with designated time away from the ward environment to educate and inform them of the essential care that is provided to the patients with a cancer diagnosis.

The students are provided with information that has been collaborated by experienced staff. As students are away from the ward and sessions are not disturbed by the busy ward environment, the students are able and encouraged to discuss issues that may or may not be covered within the induction programme. Students provide feedback at the end of the induction programme and the practice education facilitator within the clinical education department is instrumental in the running of the placement and arranges spoke placements to every student nurse. Regular meetings with the team are held and the feedback is responded to quickly and the programme is adapted to meet the student needs. The programme has been adapted since it was started in 2012 to include pharmacists, radiographers and physicists all providing presentations to the nursing student to further expand on the learning experience.

The current programme exposes the student who is new to this environment to ward nurses, research nurses, pharmacists, radiographers and physicists all of which provide an integral role in the patient care and therefore the aim is that the students will feel integrated to the environment quickly as they are able to recognise and become familiar with the various members of the team and an appreciation of their role.

Oncological nursing may be an emotive experience for the student and the team recognises that the student as an individual may come to the placement with their own experiences, or lack of experience, either in a professional or personal manner. The induction programme provides the students with an opportunity to address and discuss any concerns they may have with staff experienced in a wide spectrum of cancer care. The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre also provides support by the mentors and the role of the PEF. The PEF introduces the induction programme and explains the role as well as providing an opportunity for questions and support.

The induction programme provides the student with education and support to provide a high standard of care to the patient. Open discussion and debate is encouraged during presentations and further reading is encouraged to further explore areas of interest.
Best possible care
The team is passionate about providing the best possible care for the patient and have voluntarily provided their time because of their desire to provide the best possible placement to nursing students. The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre provides every student nurse with an induction programme during the early part of the placement. The Practice Education Facilitator arranges for every student to attend bespoke placements that will further enhance the experience such as radiotherapy treatment sets, outpatients departments and brachytherapy treatments. The individual wards support the student with further experiences within the ward environment so that the student nurse will gain an understanding of the patients’ cancer treatment trajectory.

Top tips for providing a great placement
- Think about how to welcome your student on their first day
- Arrange lectures and presentations by experienced staff to give students another perspective
- Ensure there is time away from the ward to discuss issues that may arise
- Give designated time to discuss feedback from students while they are still in placement
- Encourage open discussion and debate within a safe learning environment
Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust: Meadowfield Hospital

Meadowfield is a purpose-built hospital for people with acute mental health needs based in Worthing as part of Sussex Partnership FT. It comprises three wards. Maple and Rowan Wards support adults of working age and each has 16 bedrooms, all with en-suite facilities. Larch Ward supports older adults and comprises 18 bedrooms and en-suite facilities. Each ward has a team base, clinic, laundry room, patients’ kitchen, dining area, TV lounges and quiet rooms including a women’s lounge. There is also a range of therapy rooms including art room, pottery room and gymnasium. There are approximately 100 staff working onsite and up to two Brighton University nursing students allocated to placement on each ward. The team also provides learning opportunities to occupational therapy, psychology and medical staff. There are seven mentors working across the wards and clinical areas are able to accept pre-registration and return to practice nursing students.

Opportunities and experiences

As a purpose-built environment and specialist team, Meadowfield provides a range of opportunities and experiences for students. The unit has strong leadership, which has a positive impact on learning and student experience.

Learning at Meadowfield is viewed as a two-way process because each interaction is a potential learning experience. As part of this process students are supported to question and engage in discussion with mentors about the role of the nurse, current practice and clinical guidelines. Students are encouraged to take an active part in planning their experience and identifying learning outcomes. They are also given dedicated study time to support their learning, reflection and clinical understanding. One-to-one time with mentors and senior staff is built into the week to ensure the student is given the opportunity to talk through progress in terms of their agreed objectives. Staff are aware of maintaining their own CPD and are active participants at mentor update sessions where discussion often revolves around how the team can make the learning experience even better for students of all disciplines.

Team ethos

Working in acute services requires a strong multidisciplinary team ethos where all members of the team, including students, are valued and contributing to care. To help this process students are asked to make contact in advance of their first day. The aim of this is to introduce them to their mentor, help them feel welcomed, and reassure in terms of the team and environment they will be working in. A full induction is undertaken incorporating the role and remit of the unit as well as protocols in relation to safety and working. Students will also be given access to a resource folder, which includes a team profile, individual staff biographies and protocols and policies to guide their working. From then on students will work alongside team members, be allocated people to support and be fully involved in all aspects of working life on the ward.
The team is mindful of the wellbeing of all students, ensuring they are supported and encouraged to reflect upon all aspects of care they take part in. There can sometimes be occasions where people in their care experience high level of distress and staff will be engaged in helping people feel safe and supported. It is therefore important that rapport is established between student and mentor and that strong links are maintained with tutors. As part of this process, at the initial meeting the mentor discusses any anxieties or concerns and talks through the need to be open and honest throughout the learning experience should they arise. The organisation has robust governance structures incorporating health and safety.

Reflect on learning style

Students are encouraged to reflect on their own learning style with their mentor to ensure they get the best from the opportunities the placement provides. Within the initial stages of the student/mentor relationship a learning contract and objectives are developed to guide learning, which gives measurable outcomes and stages along the way. In addition to working with their mentor, students are encouraged to work with a range of allied health and support staff to observe and reflect upon the different skills and approaches held across the wider team. Ongoing supervision and reflection has an important part within the students’ learning. This is key to supporting students to encourage development of decision-making skills and competence in the delivery of nursing interventions.

Students join the team with very different backgrounds and life experiences. It is therefore important that the team provides a flexible learning experience to meet their needs as they move towards their professional qualification. As part of their ongoing review, each student has weekly meetings scheduled with their mentor or staff member to personalise their learning and set objectives for the week ahead. There are opportunities for those more experienced to take charge of the ward with support and supervision, and a range of opportunities exist within the team and onsite to enable the student and mentor to tailor the placement to support the student’s learning objectives. Students are therefore encouraged to take charge of their own learning and in collaboration with their mentor, decide what is appropriate for them and what opportunities they most want to experience.

Top tips for providing a great placement

- Discuss concerns and anxieties that students have ahead of the placement, particularly if students are working in an unfamiliar or unusual environment
- Work on building a rapport with the students from day one
- Encourage the student to think about their own learning practice and what opportunities they want to experience
- Work on objectives to guide learning
- Provide ongoing support to encourage decision-making skills
NHS Employers

The NHS Employers organisation is the voice of employers in the NHS, supporting them to put patients first. Our vision is to be the authoritative voice of workforce leaders, experts in HR, negotiating fairly to get the best deal for patients.

We help employers make sense of current and emerging healthcare issues to ensure that their voice is front and centre of health policy and practice. We keep them up to date with the latest workforce thinking and expert opinion, providing practical advice and information, and generating opportunities to network and share knowledge and best practice.

We work with employers in the NHS to reflect their views and act on their behalf in four priority areas:
- pay and negotiations
- recruitment and planning the workforce
- healthy and productive workplaces
- employment policy and practice.

The NHS Employers organisation is part of the NHS Confederation.

Contact us

For more information on how to get involved in our work, email getinvolved@nhsemployers.org
www.nhsemployers.org
enquiries@nhsemployers.org

@nhsemployers
NHS Employers
www.youtube.com/nhsemployers

NHS Employers
4th Floor, 50 Broadway
SW1H 0DB

2 Brewery Wharf
Kendell Street
Leeds LS10 1JR

This document is available in pdf format at www.nhsemployers.org/publications
Published December 2013. © NHS Employers 2013.
This document may not be reproduced in whole or in part without permission.
Company limited by guarantee: number 5252407
Ref: EINF32201