



Building a system to transfer apprenticeship levy

For over a decade, a network of colleagues across NHS and health and social care organisations in Nottinghamshire, meet to discuss apprenticeships and pre-employment. The network is a space to share documents, lean on member expertise and work together on projects including a mutually agreed minimum apprenticeship wage.

Since the introduction of the apprenticeship levy, this network has been instrumental in reviewing levy transfer requests from other organisations in the health and care sector. The network created an application form to facilitate levy transfer across the sector in the Nottinghamshire region. The Nottinghamshire Alliance Training Hub, a local GP collaboration, currently holds the form and manages the process with support from other members.

The network received numerous applications for levy transfer. Through the support and vetting of contributing levy payers, the network has not yet had to reject any applicants who wish to promote apprenticeships within their organisations. These organisations, both public and private, span GP surgeries, community care, hospices, and third-sector organisations, with many applicants using the levy transfer process multiple times to facilitate apprenticeship recruitment.

The network intentionally ensured the levy transfer form they created was like the national transfer form. This enabled the organisations to easily transfer information across should transfer limits be reached, or to smooth the process for applicants who apply from outside the region and need redirecting to the national form.

Initially, significant support was given by the network to support organisations in creating an apprenticeship service account, with

guidance provided on how to create the account and what is needed for the transfer of funds.

Given the success of the programme, many applicants have previously created accounts and requested levy transfers or are able to be guided by the helpful support of the Education and Skills Funding Agency reducing the amount of support the network needed to provide directly.

This process has supported local organisations to increase their apprenticeship offering and implement a local-first philosophy within the region. The sector is working collaboratively to support and enable other organisations to provide apprenticeship opportunities to their local communities.

"I am very supportive of our efforts to increase the number of apprentices trained by the NHS, not only will this encourage a supply of trained and skilled recruits to meet the increasing needs of our population but supporting smaller organisations like GP practices will extend opportunities, particularly for younger people in some of the most deprived areas of our region."

Richard Barker, Regional Director, NHS England, North East, Yorkshire and North West regions.

Top tips for employers

1. Be conscious of the amount of administration required to successfully implement a levy transfer process, by establishing a network of colleagues in similar roles the burden can be shared.
2. Ensure local initiatives are closely aligned to national initiatives to prevent rework and support colleagues on a wider scale.

3. Ask colleagues to be mindful of the full cost of apprenticeship recruitment prior to placing a levy transfer application, apprenticeship wages and administrative costs will need to be considered.
4. Working at a network level ensures consistency and supports local communities.