

## Case study Investing in talent

For Spire Healthcare, attracting, retaining and developing the most talented people to our business is a high priority. This is especially important in light of the shortage of clinical staff across the healthcare sector, and we are committed to providing opportunities for all colleagues to develop their skills and experience. Our twin achievements in 2021 have been to formalise our Learning and Development strategy – to really understand what colleagues need and deliver programmes to empower them – and to build a ground-breaking, sustainable initiative for apprentice nurses.

### Learning and Development

Our GROW learning framework includes our new Step Up Leadership Programme and Stretch Leadership Programme, both launched in July 2021. They offer a virtual leadership journey for talented future leaders and senior leaders in our business, and are designed to ensure we have a strong succession pipeline. The framework is moving us towards more self-directed learning – digital learning where colleagues monitor their own development and make time for it, alongside more formal classroom or webinar sessions.

We also offer our unique leadership development apprenticeship programme, LEAP, for new managers, or leaders coming into a leadership role. The unique way the programme is designed allows participants to gain all the benefit of an externally recognised qualification-based programme without the unnecessary pressure on them to complete long academic essay-based work.

Towards the end of the year, we were delighted when we were named Best Workplace for Learning and Development for employers with over 1,500 nurses at the annual Nursing Times Workforce Awards.

### Nurse degree apprenticeship

The most significant development during the year was a major expansion of our nurse degree apprenticeship programme in England. Faced with a national shortage of nursing staff, exacerbated by many people leaving the profession as a result of the pandemic, we wanted to play our part in developing the pipeline of nurses for the future. In past years we consistently took on nurse apprentices, but in 2021, we expanded our intake to 165 new nurses, making ours one of the largest, if not the largest, nurse apprenticeship programme run by a single organisation in England.

### Apprentices in training

544

### Of which, in clinical roles

346

The programme is run in partnership with the University of Sunderland, and combines study and assessments with on-site placements to gain practical knowledge. The apprenticeship lasts between two and five years, depending on the individual's prior experience, and apprentices gain a BSc degree on completion. It is open to applicants at all stages of life, including school leavers, university graduates, working parents and part-qualified nurse associates.

More than 5,000 people initially applied to the programme, and of those offered roles, 15% of them already worked at Spire Healthcare.

These new recruits will benefit the entire healthcare system as they could go on to work in the NHS, either at the end of their apprenticeship or a later part of their career.

Making full use of the government's apprenticeship levy, we also launched a new development programme for Operating Department Practitioners and Assistant Practitioners with the University of Derby in September. With around 500 apprentices across the business, we offer apprenticeships in a wide range of clinical areas, such as biomedical science, physiotherapy, medical laboratory technicians. We also offer a number of other apprenticeships for our non-clinical colleagues in disciplines such as marketing, human resources, engineering and business administration.

165

people offered roles on our new nurse degree apprenticeship programme in England

### Board oversight and decision-making

Succession planning and meeting our recruitment challenges are major focuses for the Board. Our internal development strategy is helping to create a more robust infrastructure and building a pipeline of future leaders, both in clinical and non-clinical areas of the business.

### Stakeholders impacted

- Colleagues and potential recruits
- The wider health sector

“

The 165 nurse degree apprentices have been with Spire now for over six months and in that time have already become invaluable Spire colleagues. Our partnership with University of Sunderland has meant that the apprentices are receiving first class academic learning combined with real hands on experience within our hospitals. Their enthusiasm and appetite for learning is a joy to witness and it is a pleasure to watch them grow on their journey to become Spire Healthcare nurses of the future.

Alys Reeves

Apprenticeship Manager

“

I've been inspired by the amazing work that everyone in healthcare has done during the pandemic, and this made me want to become a nurse myself. I have had a fantastic welcome from everyone here at Spire and am really looking forward to getting stuck in with my apprenticeship.

Leon Cheung

One of Spire Healthcare's new apprentices