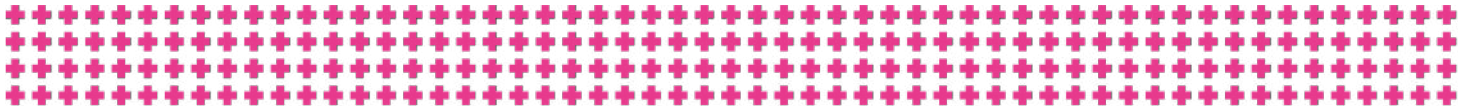


International Recruitment to the Community **CASE STUDY**

2022



An evaluation of a Virtual Careers Café as a model for supporting Internationally Educated Nurses (IENs) to progress in their career. Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board

What was the issue?

IENs not being promoted at the same rate as UK educated colleagues. Unclear whether IENs engaged in continued professional development (CPD) to progress their careers. ICS (Integrated Care System) development coaches held a virtual careers café to identify what was going on and what could be done.

What was the solution?

A development coach led Virtual Careers Café was held to:

- Engage with international recruits across the ICS
- Invite international recruits to take part in career conversations
- Identify any barriers that exist e.g., cultural or academic, that may prevent international recruits from choosing to progress
- Signpost individuals to continued professional development to support existing roles
- Support individuals to apply for alternative roles of interest through individual guidance. This may be via websites, recruitment processes and job opportunities across the Hertfordshire and West Essex integrated care system.

- To isolate specific themes which are highlighted as barriers to progression, or examples of good practice to inform staff retention and development programmes

What were the challenges?

Through discussions with the IENs, several challenges were identified which together have impacted their experience and progression in the NHS workforce:

- Lack of available and appropriate accommodation following their initial free provision. The region and individual trusts are looking at possible solutions to this.
- Access to ongoing professional development and further education. It's been noted that many IEN's want to develop academically. Appraisals and conversations with managers are encouraged to address this.
- Acknowledgement of prior experience gained overseas has been noted as a factor. Accelerated pathways / competencies are being reviewed in some areas and there is evidence that this has been successful.
- Unrealistic expectations from some IENs they will progress quickly and become frustrated when they have not. Career coaching has been effective in creating more

Challenges included unrealistic expectations from some IENs that they will progress quickly and become frustrated when they have not. Career coaching has been effective in creating more realistic expectations and identifying achievable career goals.



Above: Priscilla (left) with another staff member

realistic expectations and identifying achievable career goals.

- Some IEN's have voiced experience of repeated unsuccessful applications for promotions. This again has been addressed by the development coaches and is possibly related to cultural issues and understanding, for example cultural bias.

What were the results?

At the end of August 2022, in relation to the main aims of the project, there have been 100 individual contacts with internationally educated healthcare professionals from across the system where a blend of coaching, mentoring and signposting was provided. Support has involved looking at job applications, interview skills (including mock interviews), signposting for education, leadership development, diaspora groups and pastoral care, not just for settled IENs but for newly arrived IENs as well. Several nurses have successfully been promoted to Band 6 roles because of coaching. Opportunities



Above: Development coaches (left to right): Linda, Blenda and Priscilla

have been provided for IENs to shadow community and mental health nurses, based on interests or prior experience from their home country. One nurse has successfully been appointed as a band 5 community nurse and is being supported to pass her driving test.

The initial result of an online evaluation indicates 75% and 17% of responses respectively strongly agree and agree that the coaching / development discussion was helpful. In addition, 91% said they had developed professionally.

What were the learning points?

The role of the development coach has been valuable in supporting IENs, not only in career progression but settling in the UK. It would be valuable to be able to continue the provision of the role and thinking about having a more pastoral care role to provide that additional support required, particularly at the start of the IEN's journey to and early weeks in the UK.

Trusts are driving forward with recruiting internationally educated midwives and Allied Health Professionals (AHPs), and while the numbers are relatively small, the development coaches have had a few requests for support from AHPs and midwives. Therefore, coaches with experience in these fields would be beneficial in supporting their career progression.

Further exploration of the effects of different cultures in the workplace and development of cultural intelligence training / resources for managers and staff. Cultural bias is a possible cause for lack of progression for IENs.

Next steps and sustainability

It has been demonstrated that the role of development coaches has been pivotal in supporting IENs in their career progression, which in turn will contribute to the retention of this important group of staff.

To find out more:

To see the other case studies in this series: visit the NHS England and NHS Improvement website and the FutureNHS platform at:

- <https://www.england.nhs.uk/nursingmidwifery/international-recruitment/>
- <https://future.nhs.uk/InternationalRecruitment/grouphome>

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