NELFT is leading the way with innovative nursing project

The Trust is pioneering an exciting new programme to combine both physical and mental health training for nurses. The project involves giving nurses the opportunity to experience working in both hospital and community settings through four separate innovative nursing programmes.

The plan is to give nurses the opportunity to experience different clinical or care environments, and will see them rotating their training by spending six-month placements in various clinical areas - such as A&E, community nursing, mental health, children’s acute inpatients and children’s mental health.

The objectives are to improve the ability of nurses to use holistic nursing skills and enhance the quality of care of the patients, regardless of whether their primary health issue is a mental or physical health one. NELFT Chief Nurse Stephanie Dawe is keen for all nurses to be ‘dual-competent’ in both mental and physical health within the next five to ten years.

The Trust is currently involved with two rotational nurse programmes, with two further new programmes commencing soon.

The NELFT Rotational Nursing project sees newly qualified nurses follow an 18-month developmental programme for both mental health and physical health nursing. These nurses rotate between mental health inpatients, community health inpatients and district nursing.

The second programme is working in collaboration with Basildon and Thurrock Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (BTUH) and sees nurses following a 24-month programme, rotating between A&E and Acute Medical Unit (AMU) in Basildon Hospital, Integrated Care Teams in Basildon and Wickford, and Brentwood, and mental health in the Memory Service and the Home Treatment Teams.

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The newly developed Paediatric Rotational Programme will work in collaboration with Barts Health and will see qualified nurses following an 18-month programme, rotating between Children’s Acute Inpatient, Children’s Mental Health Inpatient and Children’s A&E.

The fourth programme is being developed for adult nurses and will work in collaboration with Barts Health and will see these nurses rotating between Primary Care, Adult Inpatients and Adult Mental Health. They will follow an 18-month programme.

The pioneering programmes are being led by NELFT Rotational Nurse Lead Paul Chesnaye. When he first carried out research among nursing students, Paul discovered that most of the Mental Health nurses would receive a six-week physical health placement in the first year of their course, whereas adult nurses received no insight into mental health at all.

Paul said: “The rotational programme offers a complete holistic approach to nursing care. The nurses will develop a much better understanding of caring for patients with different nursing needs, and of the importance of considering physical and mental health as well as social wellbeing.”

Posts are advertised via NHS Jobs. For further information about these innovative nursing programmes, email: NurseRotation@nelft.nhs.uk
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