Lancashire & South Cumbria
PRIMARY CARE TRAINING HUB

Queensway Medical Centre
Assistant Practitioner Apprenticeship

Started Programme	Duration	Education Provider
September 2025	24 months	University of Lancashire

Benefits to the organisation

The apprenticeship has been a very positive investment for the practice. It provides a structured way of developing skills in the workplace while strengthening our team and supporting the delivery of high-quality patient care.

- **Workforce development:** The programme provides a structured development pathway which supports the growth of skills and knowledge that can be applied within the practice.
- **Increased confidence:** The combination of learning and practical workplace experience has helped build confidence, encouraging greater involvement in day-to-day work and the wider team.
- **Applying learning in practice:** The apprenticeship allows new knowledge to be put into practice within a real primary care environment, helping to strengthen existing processes and ways of working.
- **Supporting service delivery:** Developing additional skills within our workforce increases our capacity and helps us make better use of the different roles within the multidisciplinary practice team.
- **Benefits for patients:** Greater knowledge, confidence and capability within the team supports a responsive and efficient service for patients, while ensuring appropriate support remains available from the wider clinical team.
- **Staff retention and career development:** Offering an apprenticeship pathway demonstrates our commitment to investing in our staff and providing opportunities for them to develop their careers within primary care.

Tailoring the programme

Nursing pathway with a diabetes theme

We selected diabetes because we have an experienced nurse within the practice with extensive knowledge of diabetes management. This gave us an ideal opportunity to develop additional expertise within the team while making good use of the knowledge and experience we already have.

A major benefit of this is workforce succession planning. The apprenticeship enables us to develop skills from within, share specialist knowledge and build greater resilience into our diabetes service. This supports continuity for patients and helps ensure that the practice has the skills and capacity needed to continue delivering a high-quality diabetes service in the future.

Planning for success

As this is our second apprenticeship, one of our biggest advantages was being able to learn from our experience the first time around. We recognised that successfully supporting an apprentice requires significant planning, particularly around protected learning time, clinical supervision and balancing study requirements with the demands of a busy general practice.

For our second apprentice, we therefore put a robust structure in place from the outset, including dedicated clinical input, regular supervision, protected development time and clear practice oversight. We have also been able to utilise the knowledge and experience of our existing clinical team, including our specialist diabetes nurse, to support learning in the workplace.

The lessons from our first apprenticeship have helped us to anticipate potential challenges rather than react to them, resulting in a much more structured and sustainable approach.

Please rate the education provider

Induction	4/5 (Good)
Ability to tailor the learning to meet employer needs	4/5 (Good)
Keeping you informed of your apprentice's progress	4/5 (Good)
Did the education provider explain what structures and systems they have in place to support apprentices – including those who are struggling?	Yes
Did the education provider explain how they expect you to support the apprentice with their learning?	Yes

Would you recommend apprenticeships to other primary care organisations?

Absolutely. We would have no hesitation in recommending the Training Hub Apprenticeships Team to other Primary Care organisations. Congratulations to the Training hub for providing a great service and good support.

Why invest in apprenticeships?

- **Success:** Having already supported one apprentice who successfully progressed through the pathway and went on to achieve their nursing qualification, we have seen first-hand the opportunities that an apprenticeship can provide. We are hopeful that our current apprentice will have the same opportunity to achieve their own career ambitions.
- **Development and retention:** For us as a practice, apprenticeships provide an excellent way of developing and retaining our workforce, supporting succession planning and growing the skills we need for the future. However, the benefits go much further than the organisation itself. The apprenticeship route gives individuals the opportunity to earn while they learn, develop professionally and work towards a recognised qualification without having to step away from employment. It can open doors for people who may otherwise find it difficult to follow a traditional education route.
- **Rewarding:** Seeing someone develop their confidence, knowledge and skills and ultimately achieve an ambition they have worked hard for is incredibly rewarding. We would definitely encourage other Primary Care organisations to consider apprenticeships as an investment both in their workforce and, importantly, in their people.