

Supporting NHS Scotland's first clinical graduate apprenticeship through stakeholder led project oversight and evaluation

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Introduction

The first cohort of the new pilot Operating Department Practitioner Graduate Apprenticeship Programme (ODP GA) successfully launched in September 2024.

As a test of change, the pilot allows exploration of the proposed benefits associated with GA programmes as they apply to ODPs, including the opportunity to earn and learn, and an improved educational foundation to support career development and workforce retention[1], while retaining an essential focus on the clinical skills required of the role.

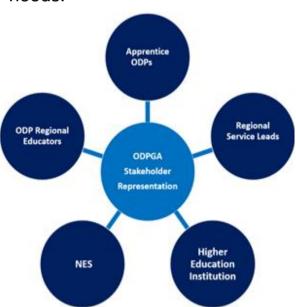
The implementation of this new programme requires vigilance and support to ensure a seamless transition between models of delivery. Below details our approach and the progress made.

Methods

A leadership oversight group was established with diverse stakeholder representation from higher education, learners, ODP regional educators, perioperative service leads and NHS Education for Scotland.

Its aim is to provide a collaborative forum that draws on the experience and expertise of members to proactively support, facilitate and evaluate the implementation of the new programme. Bi-monthly meetings were set during which stakeholders provide short update reports on progress, impact, areas of focus, challenges and potential solutions.

The Context, Input, Process, Product (CIPP) evaluation model was adopted with stakeholders mapping key performance indicators of value to their speciality, including bespoke needs of the profession, educational standards, the quality of the practice learning environment, workforce and service priorities, and learner needs.



Discussion

Stakeholder engagement remains strong, and early feedback suggests that the collaborative approach from the oversight group is fostering ownership and investment in the pilot's success. Partnership on data gathering has the potential to reduce workload while ensuring consistency across regions and institutions. Short update reports promote discourse and continuous evaluation, refining and improving delivery by identifying and addressing challenges in a responsive way while gathering the data required to support formal evaluation in future.

References

1. Smith, S., Caddell, M., Taylor-Smith, E., Smith, C. and Varey, A., 2021. Degree apprenticeships-a win-win model? A comparison of policy aims with the expectations and experiences of apprentices. *Journal of Vocational Education & Training*, 73(4), pp.505-525.



Evaluation components identified as important by the stakeholder group as applied to the CIPP model

Context Evaluation

Examines the objectives, missions and goals of a project. When employed retrospectively, it considers the extent to which the programme's intended outcomes accurately represented the assessed needs of its stakeholders.

Input Evaluation

Examines the resources, infrastructure, curriculum and content to answer the question: Was a defensible design employed?

Project History

Programme Development and GA approval process

Apprenticeship design

Teaching and learning strategy

Tendering

Targets/ Objectives for the pilot

Drivers for change- Cultural/ Political/ Regulatory

Policies/ Academic Standards/ Quality Assurance

Module content, structure and educational design

Assessment Process

Process Evaluation

Describes the teaching-learning process and co-curricular activities, answering the question: was the design well executed?

Product Evaluation

Describes skills, values, attitudes and results answering the question: Did the effort succeed?

Service Impact of the training process

Satisfaction with content/ structure/ design and implementation

Trainee Numbers, Completion vs. Attrition. Regional distribution. Pre-degree/ Post degree

Service impact of additional workforce

Quality of learning environment

Quality of skills training

Stakeholder Satisfaction

Service projections