

Royal Berkshire



NHS Foundation Trust

“Partnership in Practice”

Royal Berkshire Foundation Trust
& Job Centre Plus

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Background - Meeting July 7th 2009

- Largest local employer (over 4000 employees) committed to sourcing as many appropriately qualified staff from the local population
- Experience from Trust Open Day in January 2009 – 1000+ visitors
- Centralising the selection of Health Care Assistants - generic advertising & assessment centre philosophy to reduce waste of resources and improve quality of applicants
- Recognition of the “transferable skills” sets of people who would previously not have seen themselves as suitable for clinical jobs/careers
- End of meeting plan to do open day & gauge interest

What happened ?

- 21st July held open day in Job Centre Plus building staff by RB FT and Job Centre Plus staff
 - 175 people attended the open day
 - 206 people applied for health care assistant jobs
 - 60 people were short listed & offered places on a assessment day
 - 4th August and 1st Sept

Experience

Focus

- very short timeframe
- little time to develop trust in our joint working relationship
- regular discussion, e-mail, face to face and by phone
- clarity on each organisations requirements – clear, timely and measurable outcomes for both Job Centre Plus and RB FT

Support

- mutual support of both organisations & the candidates
- involve other organisations e.g. Action for Employment, Newbury College, Reading University

Lesson's Learnt

- Be prepared to share information
- IT skills training for candidates make a difference – NHS application process is on-line via NHS Jobs
- Encouraging candidates to think of transferable skills
- At short listing stage – short listers do not know if candidates are Job Centre Plus clients
- Post interview analysis shows 30% of the first 2 assessment centre candidates who were offered posts were Job Centre Plus clients [new deal & recruitment subsidies]
- NHS senior clinical and managerial staff more aware of Job Centre Plus and what it can offer

Way forward

- Support and development of candidates who are not short listed due to poor application or fail assessments
 - IT skills
 - numeracy
 - literacy
- Joint working across the organisations to support understanding of opportunities to source staff from the local community via Job Centre Plus
- Training – skills for health packages

Recommendation

- Do NOT do this type of change from start to end in less than 4 weeks unless you are MAD but
- I do recommend other NHS employers to do it and use our model if it will work for you