

Overview of Project SEARCH at London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust

What is it?

Project SEARCH is a supported internship programme for young people with learning disabilities and/or those on the autistic spectrum. It is a unique business led, one year education to work programme that takes place entirely in the workplace.

It is a partnership between a host employer (NWLU Healthcare NHS Trust), education establishments (Harrow College) and supported employment services (Kaleidoscope) and offers total workplace immersion, facilitates a seamless combination of employability skills instruction, career exploration and hands-on training through a series of job rotations within the host business.

There are now over 500 success stories achieved in partnership through Project SEARCH programmes all over the UK.

How does it work?

The programme runs five days a week, for a full academic year. Typically, interns complete three work placements between 10 – 12 weeks in length.

Those taking part will have learning disabilities and/or autistic spectrum conditions.

Interns are expected to travel independently to the workplace where possible and required to follow the NWLU Healthcare NHS Trust induction, new employee checks, Occupational Health guidelines as well as work to the Trusts visions, values and behaviours.

Follow the link to a short video of the programme at Whipps Cross Hospital: <https://youtu.be/0HU3jM0ppJE>

Benefits to London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust

- Access to a talent pool of enthusiastic, motivated and well trained prospective employees.
- Potential cost and efficiency savings in recruitment and overtime or agency staff payments.
- Enhanced business reputation as a disability confident organisation that actively supports equality and diversity in the workforce by giving a person with a disability a rewarding job and increased independence.

Typical Departments that are often involved

Catering Stores	Oral Surgery
Dental Training Laboratory	Patient Dining – Pick & Pack and Ward Hosts
Domestic Stores	Paediatric Department
Endoscopy	Pharmacy
Estates & Facilities	Physiotherapy and Outpatients Receptions
Linen & Laundry	Portering
Main Stores	Post Graduate Training & Development
Medical Engineering	Restaurant - Catering Assistants
Medical Records	T.S.D.U (Sterile Services)
	and any number of wards.

What has it achieved?

To put it into perspective, the national percentage of people with learning disabilities in paid employment in the UK is around 6.7%. Project SEARCH programmes across the UK now have over 1000 graduates in full time paid employment, many working for NHS organisations or in the wider community. This represents a national average of 66% over the last five years and the international average for employment outcomes stands at 73%.

For further information please contact a member of the Project SEARCH Team at Northwick Park Hospital
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