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PRESS RELEASE

Trust 'growing its own' nurses

Dudley's NHS Trust is beating the national nursing shortage by training up to 100 of its own nurses after a pilot project proved a huge success.

The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust is partnering with the universities of Wolverhampton and Worcester to train nursing associates. This is a new national initiative and Dudley has already served as a pilot site, with six former clinical support workers now working in the Trust as nurse associates.

Nurse associates study for two years through a mixture of taught education days, in-work training and placements. Once qualified, they deliver hands-on, person-centred care for patients and service users. This stand-alone role also provides a progression route into graduate level nursing and the Trust's six trailblazers are now studying for a further 18 months to become registered nurses.

Mary Sexton, interim chief nurse with the Trust, said: "This is a wonderful route into nursing and we are excited to be extending this high quality and innovative opportunity. The national difficulties recruiting nurses is well known and this enables us to grow our workforce ourselves.

"Nurse associates support registered nurses in the care of patients in hospital and the community, but it is also a great stepping stone into a nursing career for those who wish to go further."

One of the first to qualify as a nurse associate was Jenny Breeze, who works on B2 hip suite at Russells Hall Hospital. She said: "I felt comfortable in my role as a support worker but I felt I had come as far as I could and there was so much more I wanted to give. I was jumping for joy when this opportunity came.

"I really enjoyed it because it has been work based. I have always loved my job and I was happy that I could do it here at the Trust and stay on the ward where I worked."

Jenny plans to continue studying to become a registered nurse with the Trust.

The next set of nurse associates will begin their training in May.

Anyone interested needs to have a diploma (NVQ) or BTEC level 3 in care or access into nursing, along with GCSE maths and English at grades A-C of Functional skills level 2.

For more information search on NHS Jobs or email Philippa.brazier@nhs.net

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