

# Physician Associate Pilot Programme – January 2016



Developing people  
for health and  
healthcare

[www.hee.nhs.uk](http://www.hee.nhs.uk)

## Background

The appetite for introducing **Physician Associate** roles is growing steadily; primarily in response to the shortage of doctors in a number of specialities.

The **Physician Associate** role provides a new way of working that complements roles already developed in primary and secondary care and strengthens the multi-disciplinary team.

A **Physician Associate**, whilst not a doctor, works to the medical model with the attitudes, skills and knowledge base to deliver holistic care under defined levels of supervision.

A qualified **Physician Associate** can:

- formulate and document a detailed differential diagnosis, having taken a history and completed a physical examination;
- work with patients and, where appropriate, carers to agree a comprehensive management plan in line with the patients' needs;
- maintain and deliver clinical management in collaboration with patients and on behalf of the supervising physician whilst the patient travels through a complete episode of care;
- perform diagnostic and therapeutic procedures;
- interpret diagnostic studies and undertake patient education, counselling and health promotion.

As part of the Workforce Transformation programme Health Education England's North West team (NW) is supporting a pilot programme of 160 student **Physician Associates**, starting in January 2016 across Cheshire, Merseyside, Greater Manchester, Cumbria and Lancashire.

Work to date has ensured that:

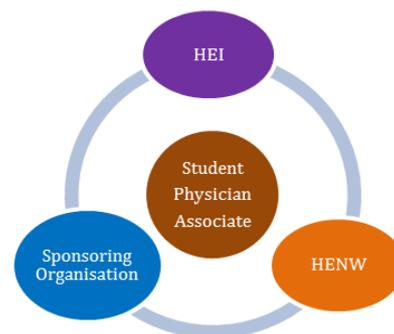
- we have a funding model in place for the pilot programme;
- we have an employment model which:

- minimises the workload for sponsoring organisations;
- enables robust evaluation and
- supports any issues relating to indemnity.

- We have an academic model that is 'standardised', in relation to outcomes, across the region and meets the national framework for **Physician Associates**.

Our intent being to determine a funding and delivery model which is:

- attractive to students;
- supports the sector/sponsoring organisations;
- recognises the commitment of all partners;
- delivers high quality learning.



## Academic Partners

### Manchester Medical School



### Liverpool University

Faculty of Health and Life Sciences



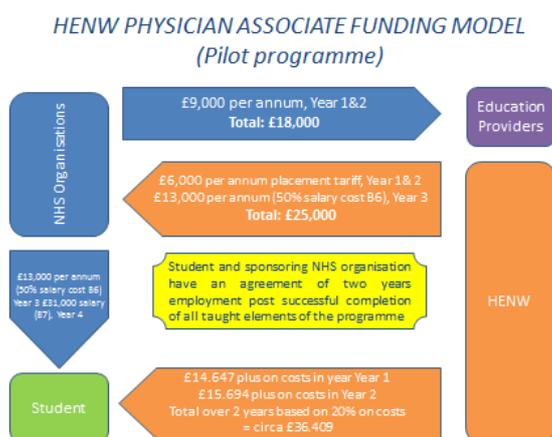
### University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) Medical School



## Funding Model

The funding model in place for the pilot programme has been developed to support us in:

- acting quickly given escalating demand;
- attracting, supporting and retaining candidates;
- maximising fitness for purpose/practice on completion of training.



Above equates to:

Health Education England's North West team (NW) will pay the student **Physician Associates** salary for the first 2 years plus 50% of their salary, band 6, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year.

Health Education England (NW) will pay the sponsoring organisation/s £6k placement tariff per year per student for the first 2 years = £12k.

Sponsoring organisations will pay £9k per annum to the universities to cover the students' academic fees = £18k per student **Physician Associate**.

Sponsoring organisations will advertise, at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the programme, a 12 month internship, contributing 50% of band 6 salary costs. **NB** the **Physician Associate** is qualified at this stage.

At the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year, sponsoring organisations will recruit a band 7 **Physician Associate** on a minimum 12 month Fixed Term Contract.

Health Education England (NW) retains the right to change the funding model for any subsequent **Physician Associate** programmes in line with national and regional guidance/developments, workforce need and evaluation.

## Delivery Model

In the North West **Physician Associates** will complete a two year Postgraduate Diploma in **Physicians Associate** Studies.

In order to get onto the course applicants had to:

- hold a first degree, minimum 2:2, in life sciences or health plus at interview;
- demonstrate the values and behaviours required by the sector.

The **Physician Associates** programme, as determined by the national framework, is split 50% academic learning and 50% clinical learning (placement time) with both elements covering:

- Primary/Community Medicine and General Practice;
- Emergency Care;
- Mental Health;
- Medicine;
- Surgery;
- Obstetrics & Gynaecology;
- Paediatrics.

Professional behaviour, the acquisition of clinical skills and fitness to practice is monitored throughout the 2 year programme.

Academic achievement is measured by institutional assessment across the 2 years and national assessment at the end of the programme.

## Recruitment

Whilst in training phase, the **Physician Associate** students will be employed, on a 2 year fixed term contract, by St Helens and Knowsley NHS Trust as one of the region's Lead Employers.

All pre-employment and occupation health checks plus induction, pay etc. being supported under this arrangement; uniforms will be

provided at nil cost to the sponsoring organisation.

Induction will cover:

- Fire Safety;
- Equality, Diversity and Human Rights;
- Health, Safety and Welfare;
- Infection - Prevention and Control;
- Information Governance;
- Moving and Handling;
- Safeguarding Adults, Children, Mental Capacity, Disability;
- Medicines Management;
- Health Records;
- Resuscitation.

Under their contract of employment all students will work a 37.5 hour week and placement with start and finish time being locally negotiated, within Agenda for Change defined social hours these being 7am to 8pm, in order to:

- ensure supervision can be assured at the level required;
- service provision can be met and supported;
- learning opportunities maximised.

In November this year the opportunity was advertised on NHS Jobs, in regional media, through the universities alumni and via sponsoring organisations' intranets etc.:

- 433 applications were received with the opportunity being closed 2 days earlier than anticipated;
- 77 were rejected at long listing – didn't meet the required academic standard;
- 1 withdrew;
- 355 progressed to shortlisting – of these 37% have previously been or are currently employed in the NHS;
- 282 invited to interview – 260 accepted the invitation.

1<sup>st</sup> Degrees of those progressed to shortlisting

Bio Medical Science	37.3%
Pharmacology/Pharmacy/Pharmacy Science	10.6%
Healthcare Science/ Healthcare Studies/ Nursing/Midwifery/Public Health	10.3%
Biology/Biological Science/Human Biology/Marine Biology/Molecular Microbiology/Tropical Diseases	7.5%
General Medicine/Medicine/Medicine Science/MBBS/Medicine/Human Science & Medicine	4.5%
Sports and Exercise Science/Sport Rehabilitation/Sports Science/Sports Therapy	4.5%
Life Science/Neuroscience	3.3%
Bio Chemistry	3.3%
Exercise Physiology/Physiology	3.0%
Psychology/Psychology & Criminology/ Applied Physiology	2.4%
Diagnostic Radiology/ Radiotherapy	2.1%
Forensic Science/Natural Science/Science	1.8%
Clinical Science/Embryology/Respiratory/Cardiac Physiology	1.5%
Physiotherapy	1.5%
Veterinary Science/Zoology	1.5%
Nutrition/Nutrition and Dietetics	0.9%
Operating Department Assistant/Paramedic	0.9%
Podiatry	0.9%
Genetics/Medical Genetics	0.6%
Audiology	0.3%
Dental Medicine	0.3%
Orthopitics	0.3%
Parasitology	0.3%
Animal Behaviour	0.3%

Interviews took place on the 24/25/26<sup>th</sup> of November with candidates undertaking three 10 minute stations –

Station 1

Commitment to and understanding of the programme

Station 2

Communication and Empathy

Station 3

Confidentiality and Escalating Risk

Interview panels were made up of 1 academic and 1 sector representative.

- 25 failed to attend for interview on the day;
- 235 were interviewed;
- 30 were considered un-appointable on the day;
- Leaving 205 candidates for consideration of an offer;
- Offers were made based on interview scores with those scoring 50% or above of the overall score being considered.

160 offers, across the 3 universities, have now been confirmed and the programme will start on the **28<sup>th</sup> January 2016** with **2 days NHS Induction**.

University start date being the **1<sup>st</sup> February 2016**.

First Placements commence the **6<sup>th</sup> June 2016**

### Next Steps

As we move into the next phase of the programmes development attention will focus on placement preparation.

To date I have visited all sponsoring organisations that have requested a visit.

If you would like me to come out to see you or if you would like further information on the programme my contact details are as below.

### Judith McGregor

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**Physician Associate** Programme

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Programme Calendar – 1<sup>st</sup> Year

January 2016 to January 2017

28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> January (2 days)  
NHS Induction

1<sup>st</sup> February to 20<sup>th</sup> March (7 weeks)  
University Based

21 March to 3<sup>rd</sup> April (2 weeks)  
Holidays (includes Easter 2 Bank Holidays)

4<sup>th</sup> April to 5<sup>th</sup> June (9 weeks)  
University Based (includes 1 Bank Holiday)

6<sup>th</sup> June to 31<sup>st</sup> July (8 weeks)  
1<sup>st</sup> Placement

1<sup>st</sup> August to 14<sup>th</sup> August (2 weeks)  
University Based

15<sup>th</sup> August to 29<sup>th</sup> August (2 weeks)  
Holidays (includes 1 bank holiday)

30<sup>th</sup> August to 23<sup>rd</sup> October (8 weeks)  
2<sup>nd</sup> Placement

24<sup>th</sup> October to 6<sup>th</sup> November (2 weeks)  
University Based

7<sup>th</sup> November to 18<sup>th</sup> December (6 weeks)  
3<sup>rd</sup> Placement

19<sup>th</sup> December to 2<sup>nd</sup> January (2 weeks)  
Holidays (includes 3 bank holiday's)

3<sup>rd</sup> January to 15<sup>th</sup> January (2 weeks)  
Continuation of 3<sup>rd</sup> Placement

16<sup>th</sup> January to 29<sup>th</sup> January (2 weeks)  
University Based

Programme Calendar – 2<sup>nd</sup> Year

January 2017 to January 2018

30<sup>th</sup> January to 10<sup>th</sup> March (6 weeks)  
University Based

13<sup>th</sup> March to 2<sup>nd</sup> April (3 weeks)  
4<sup>th</sup> Placement

3<sup>rd</sup> April to 17<sup>th</sup> April (2 weeks)  
Holidays (includes Easter 2 Bank Holidays)

18<sup>th</sup> April 7<sup>th</sup> May (3 weeks)  
Continuation of 4<sup>th</sup> Placement  
(includes 1 Bank Holiday)

8<sup>th</sup> May to 18<sup>th</sup> June (6 weeks)  
University Based

19<sup>th</sup> June to 30<sup>th</sup> July (6 weeks)  
5<sup>th</sup> Placement

31<sup>st</sup> July 13<sup>th</sup> August (2 weeks)  
Holiday

14<sup>th</sup> August to 28<sup>th</sup> August (2 weeks)  
University Based (includes 1 Bank Holiday)

29<sup>th</sup> August to 8<sup>th</sup> October (6 weeks)  
6<sup>th</sup> Placement

9<sup>th</sup> October to 22<sup>nd</sup> October (2 weeks)  
University Based

23<sup>rd</sup> October to 3<sup>rd</sup> December (6 weeks)  
7<sup>th</sup> Placement

4<sup>th</sup> December to 26<sup>th</sup> December (3 weeks)  
University Based (includes 2 Bank  
Holidays)

27<sup>th</sup> December to 7<sup>th</sup> January (2 weeks)  
Holiday (includes 1 Bank Holiday)

8<sup>th</sup> January to 26<sup>th</sup> January (3 weeks)  
University Based – National Exams  
(Employment Contracts End)

