



# WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAMME 2018

**EVALUATION REPORT**

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**GO HIGHER**  
in healthcare

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Project history

This project is funded by Go Higher West Yorkshire (GHWY)'s National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP). It is targeted at young people from areas where progression rates to Higher Education where progression rates are low (and particularly so when above average GCSE attainment is taken into account).

## Contextualised provision and placements

In order to design and deliver this project, we have worked closely with NCOP partners and local healthcare organisations and providers. These have included: Clinical Commissioning groups, Acute Trusts and individual GP practices.

## Programme content

The programme includes an induction session, a 2-5 day placement and a review session within which participants are encouraged to reflect on their experience and explore their personal development/learning gains.

## Additional events and activities

As part of our work with partner organisations who support and promote healthcare career options, we held a 'Meet the Healthcare Professionals' event at the University of Leeds in June 2018.

The programme culminated in the regional careers and skills fair 'Skills Yorkshire', which took place in October and was hosted at Leeds United Football ground.

## Partners and placements

We worked with placement provider organisations across West Yorkshire. Key partners included: Wakefield General Practice Resilience Academy, Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust, Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Born in Bradford and University of Leeds Faculty of Medicine and Health.

## Findings

### The programme and experience it provided

For many, this programme provided a 'foot in the door' to access work experience in a healthcare setting. In addition, it provided contextualised content for use in applications for Higher Education programmes.



*It has got me in touch with Primary Healthcare which I couldn't otherwise get into independently, so it's a foot in the door really.*

### Evidence to support application to Higher Education

Many participants, in their reflections commented that the work experience had provided a critical source of evidence to support their Higher Education application (applications to study medicine in most cases).



*The university course I want to go into is very challenging. There are a lot of people applying, so the more work experience I can get the better chance I have of getting onto the course.*

### What participants experienced

Participants engaged in active experiences whilst on placement. These included observing healthcare professionals at work, meeting patients, spending time with doctors and nurses, and receiving advice and guidance linked to specific careers.



## Enjoyed the experience

Our survey and focus group work revealed that participants thought the programme provided a positive and supportive experience. The vast majority (98%) indicated that they had 'enjoyed' the programme.

## Preparing for work experience – the induction

Preparing participants for their placement experience was an important structural element of the programme. 100% of the programme participants found the induction element of the programme useful. For many it provided an opportunity to share thoughts on particular interests in healthcare subjects and to find out more about what to expect when undertaking their placements.



*After talking to other people about what they want to do I have learnt there are other healthcare professions I didn't know about.*

## Skill development whilst on the programme

We asked participants to consider the employability skills they had developed or enhanced whilst undertaking the work experience programme. Almost all participants (93%) indicated that their communication and interpersonal skills had improved through their engagement with the programme and their experiences whilst on placement.



## Learning Gains as a result of the programme

Before and after the work experience component of the programme, students were asked to respond online to a series of questions. The bank of questions reflected attitudes, skills and competencies and have been developed with reference to policy and workforce planning documents\* which explore and identify skills/attributes and understandings that are important for those working in healthcare roles.

### Understanding the environment

Some of the largest and most significant gains were recorded in relation to statements focusing on understanding the working environment in healthcare settings.

34%



I have an understanding of the physical, organisation and emotional demands of a career in healthcare.



*I think students who don't get this experience miss out. We got to shadow oncologists and got to experience various different departments. It's different on paper or how you see it on TV to how you see it in real life.*

### Recognising the transferable skills required for careers in healthcare

The immersive nature of the programme enabled participants to enhance their contextualised knowledge and understanding of the specific transferable skills required in many professional healthcare roles.

20%



I have an understanding of the transferable skills that I have that are required by a healthcare professional.

\*Medical Schools Council (MSC) (2018) Statement on the core values and attributes needed to study medicine. London: Medical Schools Council.

## Realistic view of healthcare

For some participants, gaining experience in a setting they would not usually have been able to access has given them a flavour of the realities of professional work in this sector. Moreover, the experience crystallised the value of showing and using initiative in order to pursue career goals.



*... I realised that in medicine and at University you often have to work with limited information and make decisions from that ... you have to do your own research and make decisions based on your evidence.*

## Partner reflections

Placement providers gave informal feedback on the programme, its structure and the attitude and commitment of participating students. One GP practice indicated that the presence of students in the setting had a positive impact on the work environment and raised the profile of the practice with others.

Other reflections from placement partners recognised that being immersed in a work setting enabled students to gain a more realistic and authentic view of a range of jobs and roles in healthcare.



*Work experience is really important in allowing students the opportunity to come and see and gain a better understanding of what we are describing rather than just being told about it or seeing it on a video. You can't transmit through a book. You need to come and see and feel it and do it.*

## Conclusions

### Access to opportunity

Access to work experience opportunity is limited for those from widening participation backgrounds. However, this programme has provided contextualised information on available career options in healthcare for young people from partner schools.

### Crucial for progression

Evidence presented by participants clearly shows that the experiences gained whilst on the programme provide important evidence to use in personal statements and Higher Education application interviews.



*I've really enjoyed the experience I had at the hospital. I was able to refer to it in my personal statement and, now that I've got an interview at Lancaster, it is something I can talk about and refer to in my interview.*

Interpersonal and sector-specific skills have been significantly improved as a result of the Go Higher in Healthcare programme. Securing development of these critically important skills and insights can only serve to support participants and help them reach their ambitious career goals.





## BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

### Career opportunity information in healthcare

Access to career opportunity information in the region is limited for some young people. GHWY is committed to providing meaningful information to support young people, irrespective of background, to make informed decisions on their options. As a result of this project work we hope to generate an informed student pool drawn from the wider community, where students are capable of progressing into careers across the healthcare sector. This strategy is aligned with NHS aspirations to correct under-representations in their workforce and therefore reflect the wider community in terms of background, gender, ethnicity, age and disability.

### Project history

This project is funded by GHWY's National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP). It is targeted at young people from areas where progression rates to Higher Education where progression rates are low (and particularly so when above average GCSE attainment is taken into account).

This initiative builds upon a programme started by the University of Leeds in 2014, funded by Health Education England (HEE) and the Royal College of General Practitioners. This project involved working with a broader mix of healthcare-related organisations in order to deliver careers activities and events in schools and to support placements in a wide variety of settings.

### Contextualised provision and placements

In order to design and deliver this project, we have worked closely with NCOP partners and local healthcare organisations and providers. These have included: Clinical Commissioning groups, Acute Trusts and individual GP practices.

Employer involvement in the programme included collaborating on the development and co-production of guidance materials, supporting documentation and structured placement experiences. All of this ensured that the programme focused upon skills and competencies required to enable student engagement in placement activities and increase student employability.





## PROGRAMME CONTENT

The programme includes an induction session, a 2-5 day placement and a review session within which participants are encouraged to reflect on their experience and explore their personal development/learning gains. In order to track students' development, the students fill in an online questionnaire at the beginning of the programme, and this is updated at the end of the intervention.



Induction



2-5 day placement



Review session

**CAREER OPTIONS IN  
HEALTHCARE AND  
GETTING READY FOR  
WORK EXPERIENCE**



**REVIEWING AND REFLECTING  
ON YOUR WORK EXPERIENCE:  
WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNT?**

REVIEWING WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT:  
SOME QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

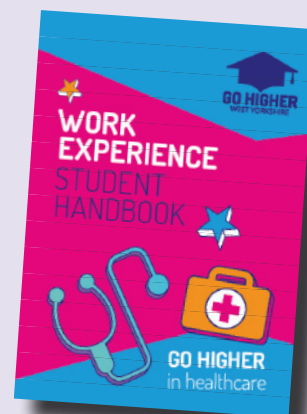


We've taken the 'What, so what, now what' technique and produced a template for you to use and complete as you progress through your work experience placement.



## WORK EXPERIENCE STUDENT HANDBOOK

Each participating student was provided with a 'Work Experience Student Handbook' developed in collaboration with our partner placement providers. This resource included content on preparing for work experience, getting the most out of the placement and reflecting on the whole experience.







## ADDITIONAL EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

As part of our work with partner organisations, who support and promote healthcare career options, we held a **'Meet the Healthcare Professionals' event at the University of Leeds in June 2018**. This was attended by 114 Year 11/Year 12 students who welcomed the opportunity to speak with healthcare professionals from the Universities of Leeds, Bradford, Huddersfield, Leeds Trinity and Leeds Beckett University.



Meet the Healthcare Professionals event

The programme culminated in the regional careers and skills fair **'Skills Yorkshire'**, which took place in October and was hosted at Leeds United Football ground. Skills Yorkshire is the region's largest careers, jobs, skills and apprenticeship event for young people and their key influencers. The event is part of the Skills England series, delivered by Prospects Events ([www.skillsengland.co.uk](http://www.skillsengland.co.uk)).

The Go Higher in Healthcare Programme sponsored the event's 'Healthcare Zone' and we worked with partners and employers to ensure visitors had career option representation from across the entire sector.



Skills Yorkshire event 2019: Go Higher Team



Skills Yorkshire event 2019: Operating Department Practice team, University of Huddersfield







## PARTNERS AND PLACEMENTS

We worked with placement provider organisations across West Yorkshire. Key partners included: Wakefield General Practice Resilience Academy, Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust, Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Born in Bradford and University of Leeds Faculty of Medicine and Health. Our target was to achieve 100 placements (two to five-day duration), to be undertaken between July and September 2018. Total placements achieved on the project exceeded this target by 15 placements.



30 placements



35 placements



15 placements



7 placements



28 placements



### 115 PLACEMENTS

provided in healthcare settings

Placements were offered, primarily, to Go Higher West Yorkshire partner schools with uptake shown in the table below.

School/College	N	%
Bradford Academy	13	11
Bradford College	1	1
Carlton Bolling College	3	3
Elliott Hudson College	23	20
Hanson Academy	8	7
Leeds City College	3	3
Leeds West Academy	3	3
Minsthorpe Community College	7	6
Mount St Marys High School	3	3
New College Pontefract	3	3

School/College	N	%
Notre Dame College	22	19
St. Wilfrid's College	9	8
The Rodillian Academy	2	2
Tong Leadership Academy	3	3
Wakefield College	5	4
Bradford Girls Grammar School	2	2
Ermysteds Grammar School, Skipton	1	1
Pocklington School	1	1
The Grammar School at Leeds	2	2
The Holy Family Catholic School, Keighley	1	1
TOTAL	115	100



# DATA COLLECTION AND EVIDENCE

## DATA SOURCES

Our evaluation and impact data came from a number of sources:

- (1) Pre- and post-placement measurements linked to specific statements about the programme (using the Research Toolkit Learning Gain Tool).
- (2) An online survey of participants administered immediately following completion of the post placement review session.
- (3) Three focus groups held at GHWY partner schools and colleges following completion of the programme.
- (4) Partner comment and feedback.

Impact data have been combined from all data and evidence sources, above, in order to provide a structured narrative of the programme and its effect or impact.

## **Pre- and post-placement measurements linked to specific statements about the programme**

Each participant completed an online survey questionnaire pre-placement and post-placement, reflecting their perception of their ability level across a wide range of questions related to prior understanding and subsequent impact/learning gain. Students were asked to place a value between 0-10 for each question in the survey.

We looked at the variance and mean value for each question awarded across the whole student population and we also looked at variance and mean from an individual student perspective across the range of questions. These observations were repeated in the same way after the work placement component of the intervention and subjected to statistical testing.

## **An online survey of participants administered immediately following completion of the post placement review session**

We carried out an online survey with all participants who had completed a work experience placement. This survey was administered immediately following the review session for the programme. This instrument sought to capture reflections on impact of the programme whilst the experience was still 'fresh in the minds' of participants.

## **Three focus groups held at GHWY partner schools and colleges following completion of the programme**

These focus groups were organised to take place in November 2018, following the development of personal statements by programme participants. Topics for discussion in these sessions included how the work experience programme had helped prepare participants for progression to Higher Education, observations made whilst on placement and the influence the experience had on career intentions. For those who wished to make further contributions to our evaluation, we also conducted a number of short telephone interviews with participants. Twelve programme participants chose to provide evaluation comments via this opportunity.

## **Partner comment and feedback**

As part of programme review meetings we collected reflections from representatives of placement providers. These contributions were drawn from discussions between individual partner representatives and, as such, were informal and linked directly to placement providers offering.






## FINDINGS


### The programme and experience it provided


Applications to participate in the programme were received from those students who had limited access to work experience opportunities. All NCOP officers in partner schools were provided with information about the programme. For many, this programme provided a 'foot in the door' to access work experience in a healthcare setting. In addition, it provided contextualised content for use in applications for Higher Education programmes.

 *It has got me in touch with Primary Healthcare which I couldn't otherwise get into independently, so it's a foot in the door really.*

### Real-life view of working in healthcare


A positive outcome for a number of participants was that the work experience placement enabled them to develop a realistic view of working in a professional healthcare environment. Through their placement participants were introduced to healthcare professionals who worked collaboratively with others in the wider sector. This exposure to diverse roles and responsibilities allowed some participants to re-think their career intentions in a positive and structured way.


 *The best thing has been meeting new people and learning about different roles in hospitals. It's not just nursing, occupational therapy, doctors and midwifery. That's the only roles I knew, but now I know there are other options available for me to take.*

 *Having work experience really helps you to work out what you want to do for a career ... shows that you've gone out there to look into it and see what it is really about. I was really surprised to see how many roles and routes there are in patient care for those with a specific illness.*

### Evidence to support application to Higher Education

Many participants, in their reflections commented that the work experience had provided a critical source of evidence to support their Higher Education application (applications to study medicine in most cases). Through their use of reflective notes, participants were able to reference examples of their experiences in healthcare settings.

 *I would definitely advise people to do work experience because it's a way of gaining skills and you can reflect on it and know what to write in your personal statement.*

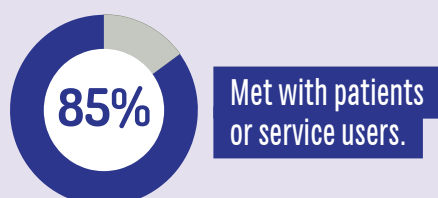
 *The university course I want to go into is very challenging. There are a lot of people applying, so the more work experience I can get the better chance I have of getting onto the course.*





## ★ WHAT PARTICIPANTS EXPERIENCED

Participants engaged in active experiences whilst on placement. These included observing healthcare professionals at work, meeting patients, spending time with doctors and nurses, and receiving advice and guidance linked to specific careers.



...I enjoyed the ward round as I got to interact with a patient whilst I was helping to give out food. This was really rewarding as the patient seemed really happy with my help.

...I was taken to the intensive care unit where I was able to talk to a nurse who explained to me all the qualification and skills I need in order to be an adult nurse.



## Enjoyed the experience

Our survey and focus group revealed that participants thought the programme provided a positive and supportive experience. The vast majority (98%) indicated that they had 'enjoyed' the programme.



*I thoroughly enjoyed all my time at the placement and gained a valuable insight into the lives of General Practitioners. My favourite part would be completing home visits as well as witnessing nurses taking blood samples from patients and other examinations.*

Intentions to progress to professional healthcare roles or jobs remained very strong by the end of the programme for almost all participants, but the positive view was not universal as one student noted.



*...after [the work placement] I realised it's not for me as I'm not a person who likes to be sat in an office environment day in and day out. I'd worry about what hours I'd be there...and working in a clinic or GP surgery is sort of the same thing.*

## Preparing for work experience – the induction

Preparing participants for their placement experience was an important structural element of the programme. 100% of the programme participants found the induction element of the programme useful. For many it provided an opportunity to share thoughts on particular interests in healthcare subjects and to find out more about what to expect when undertaking their placements.



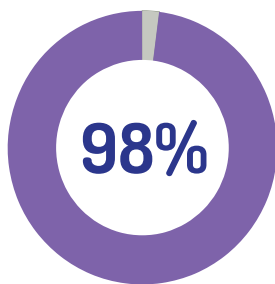
*After talking to other people about what they want to do I have learnt there are other healthcare professions I didn't know about.*



*Yes, since speaking to other people I now know what I'm doing, where I'm going and how I'm going to get there.*



*It's really calmed my nerves listening to others and the facilitator (who used to be a GP) at the induction session ... because GP's surgeries seem very personal as it's on a one-to-one level. So, it's opened it up and shown me it isn't as daunting as it appears.*



Enjoyed their work experience placement.



Said preparing for work experience (induction) was useful.



## Skill development whilst on the programme

We asked participants to consider the employability skills they had developed or enhanced whilst undertaking the work experience programme. Almost all participants (93%) indicated that their communication and interpersonal skills had improved through their engagement with the programme and their experiences whilst on placement. In addition, participant immersion in dynamic and fast-paced healthcare environments encouraged them to use their initiative and adapt to changing situations. This is evidenced by almost all participants stating developments in learning/adapting and being self-motivated.



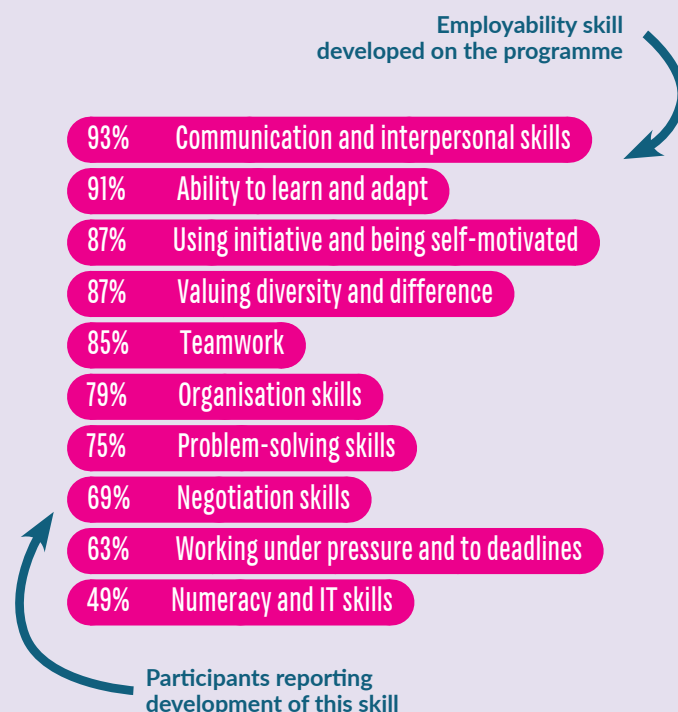
*For anyone who speaks a second language you can use that to sell yourself [in your personal statement]. When I was in a GP Practice, I observed the issues that can occur with communication when a patient cannot make themselves fully understood. I live somewhere that is multi-cultural and I happen to speak two languages – I realise how important it is for healthcare professionals to understand cultural and language differences when deciding on treatments.*

## Applicants by gender

Considerably more females applied to undertake work experience than males. Our 'Application/programme data' on page 26 show that 83% of work experience placements were undertaken by female applicants. Factors affecting this might have been linked to the nature of the placements on offer (healthcare sector rather than specific areas of healthcare – such as medicine). The programme team and local careers staff in schools and colleges supported a broader subject intake to include those interested in nursing, midwifery, technician-driven healthcare careers. Such opportunities may have been more attractive to female applicants; it may be of value to consider this finding when developing recruitment strategies for future programmes.



## EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS DEVELOPED WHILST ON PLACEMENT









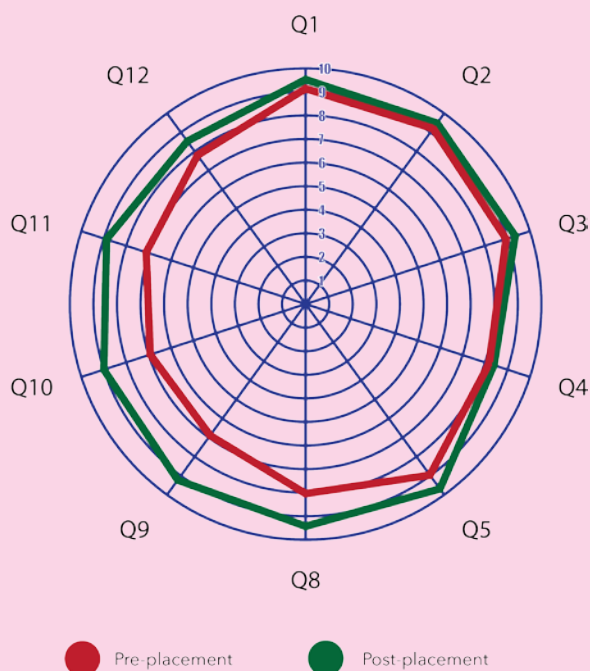
# LEARNING GAINS

## AS A RESULT OF THE PROGRAMME



### LEARNING GAIN STATEMENTS HEALTHCARE AND HE

Learning Gain statements: Healthcare and HE questions	Pre- placement	Post- placement	% change
(Q1) How would you rate your current interest in a career in healthcare?	9.14	9.53	4.27
(Q2) How likely are you to apply for a healthcare course currently?	9.2	9.49	3.15
(Q3) How likely are you to apply for a course related to healthcare currently?	8.94	9.35	4.59
(Q4) How likely are you to apply to study at a local higher education provider?	8.18	8.40	2.69
(Q5) I understand the importance of communication skills in a healthcare setting.	8.97	9.69	8.03
(Q8) I understand the diversity of a career in healthcare.	8.04	9.43	17.29
(Q9) I have an understanding of the physical, organisation and emotional demands of a career in healthcare.	6.89	9.23	33.96
(Q10) I have an understanding of what healthcare professionals do on a daily basis.	6.93	9.00	29.87
(Q11) I understand the roles of different members of the team in the healthcare environment I am being/have been placed in.	7.11	8.88	24.89
(Q12) I have an understanding of the role and function of colleagues in other health professions outside of the environment I am being/ have been placed in.	7.80	8.54	9.49



#### Learning Gain Tool

The Research Toolkit Learning Gain Tool®, is an interactive resource capable of assessing and measuring impact of educational interventions. It uses pre and post-activity data to explore impact from the perspective of the activity participant, school or stakeholder representative. This tool has been used across a number of GHWY programmes and is also used by other outreach providers regionally and nationally to identify effect, impact and distance travelled of educational interventions.



### How the Learning Gain Tool was used

Before and after the work experience component of the programme, students were asked to respond online to a series of questions. The bank of questions reflected attitudes, skills and competencies and have been developed with reference to policy and workforce planning documents\* which explore and identify skills/attributes and understandings that are important for those working in healthcare roles.

Results from the on-line tool were analysed in terms of impact as a population group, by individual question and by individual student. To ensure that any statistical analysis was robust a frequency curve (histogram) was created from the perceived change in aptitude across the range of questions for all 101 respondents. Learning or development gain in these identified areas, therefore, provides an indication of participants sector-specific competencies and abilities.

### What our analysis means

We have identified in this section where some of the most significant pre and post-programme differences occur. Our classification suggests that changes or gains of +20% are considerably significant and go some way to demonstrating a strong causal link between our activity and its impact from the perspective of the participant.

Further detail of our data analysis methodology is provided at the end of this report.

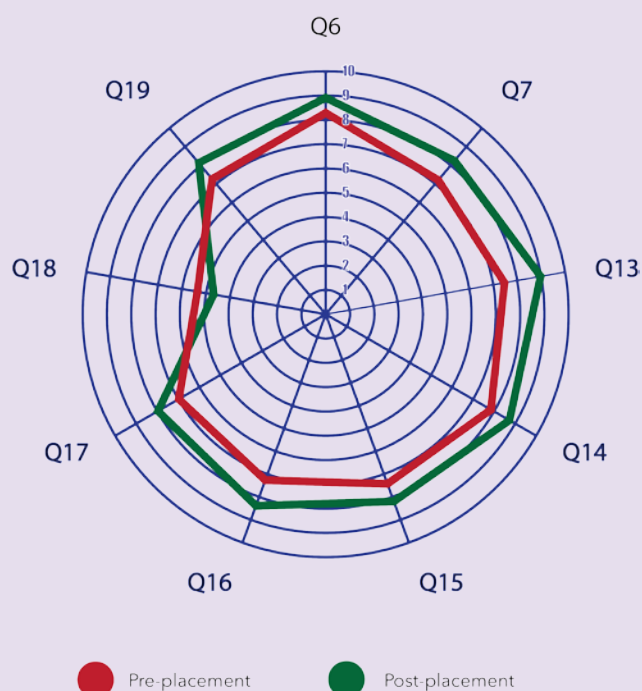


\*Medical Schools Council (MSC) (2018) Statement on the core values and attributes needed to study medicine. London: Medical Schools Council.



## LEARNING GAIN STATEMENTS SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Learning Gain statements: Skill development/employability questions	Pre- placement	Post- placement	% change
(Q6) I can interact with a wide variety of people and feel confident in doing this.	8.29	8.91	7.48
(Q7) I can present my thoughts and ideas to others in a group and feel confident in doing this.	7.21	8.25	14.42
(Q13) I have an understanding of the transferable skills that I have that are required by a healthcare professional.	7.47	8.98	20.21
(Q14) I use reflection to learn more from the experiences that I have.	7.85	8.73	11.21
(Q15) I know my own strengths and can clearly describe these to others.	7.43	8.20	10.36
(Q16) I can identify my weaknesses and where I need to develop.	7.27	8.39	15.41
(Q17) I use specific techniques to help me deal with stressful situations.	6.98	7.97	14.18
(Q18) I lose time during the day because I'm not sure what I need to get done.	5.36	4.68	-12.69
(Q19) I can overcome barriers or issues that stop me from doing my work.	7.27	8.13	11.83





## Understanding the environment


Some of the largest and most significant gains were recorded in relation to statements focusing on understanding the working environment in healthcare settings. Understanding the demands of healthcare careers as well as the roles and responsibilities of healthcare professionals showed significant increases at the end of the programme. These realistic experiences of working in different healthcare settings made some participants re-assess their career intentions.


**34%**  I have an understanding of the physical, organisation and emotional demands of a career in healthcare.


**30%**  I have an understanding of what healthcare professionals do on a daily basis.

**25%**  I understand the roles of different members of the team in the healthcare environment I am being/have been placed in.

 *I think students who don't get this experience miss out. We got to shadow oncologists and got to experience various different departments. It's different on paper or how you see it on TV to how you see it in real life.*

 *We got to see how a day goes behind the scenes. We talked to patients and the radiologists then the GP's.*

 *Prior to today I wanted to be a paramedic but after meeting different people it has changed my mind and [now I want to] go into a nursing career, there are different roles you can do in nursing.*

 *The best thing has been meeting new people and learning about different roles in hospitals. It's not just nursing, occupational therapy, doctors and midwifery. That's the only roles I knew, but now I know there are other options available for me to take.*





## LEARNING GAIN STATEMENTS USED, RANKED BY LARGEST GAIN

Understanding/knowledge/ability

Learning gain as a result of the programme



- Healthcare and HE questions
- Skill development employability questions

Q: 9	I have an understanding of the physical, organisation and emotional demands of a career in healthcare.	34 %
Q: 10	I have an understanding of what healthcare professionals do on a daily basis.	30 %
Q: 11	I understand the roles of different members of the team in the healthcare environment I am being/have been placed in.	25 %
Q: 15	I have an understanding of the transferable skills that I have that are required by a healthcare professional.	20 %
Q: 8	I understand the diversity of a career in healthcare.	17 %
Q: 16	I can identify my weaknesses and where I need to develop.	15 %
Q: 7	I can present my thoughts and ideas to others in a group and feel confident in doing this.	14 %
Q: 17	I use specific techniques to help me deal with stressful situations.	14 %
Q: 18	I lose time during the day because I am not sure what I need to get done.	13 %
Q: 19	I can overcome barriers or issues that stop me from doing my work.	12 %
Q: 14	I use reflection to learn more from the experiences that I have.	11 %
Q: 15	I know my own strengths and can clearly describe these to others.	10 %
Q: 12	I have an understanding of the role and function of colleagues in other health professions outside of the placement environment.	9 %
Q: 5	I understand the importance of communication skills in a healthcare setting.	8 %
Q: 6	I can interact with a wide variety of people and feel confident in doing this.	7 %
Q: 3	How likely are you to apply for a course related to healthcare currently?	5 %
Q: 1	How would you rate your current interest in a career in healthcare?	4 %
Q: 2	How likely are you to apply for a healthcare course currently?	3 %
Q: 4	How likely are you to apply to study at a local higher education provider?	3 %

## Recognising the transferable skills required for careers in healthcare

The immersive nature of the programme enabled participants to enhance their contextualised knowledge and understanding of the specific transferable skills required in many professional healthcare roles.

20% ↑

I have an understanding of the transferable skills that I have that are required by a healthcare professional.



Most patients think the GP does everything but there's a whole team behind the GP. Teamwork is a major part of working in a medical setting.



I've learned how to deal with a variety of patients and how to transfer and apply the communication skills I already have into the world of medicine. It has also helped me to identify which skills are important for this career route.





## Realistic view of healthcare

For some participants gaining experience in a setting they would not usually have been able to access has given them a flavour of the realities of professional work in this sector. Moreover, the experience crystallised the value of showing and using initiative in order to pursue career goals.



*... I realised that in medicine and at university you often have to work with limited information and make decisions from that ... you have to do your own research and make decisions based on your evidence.*



*It just opened my eyes to the different roles I could take in medicine. It made me do some research into the different roles I could take. It helped me to cement which route I would go down.*

## Overall learning gain

Our analysis shows that the combined learning gain, taken as the average of all statement areas post placement, was 13% above that at the beginning of the programme. As a combination of statements, this indicator is a broad measure of general learning gain. It does not provide question or statement level detail, and therefore obscures the high gain or impact achieved in some areas (as we have discussed earlier). Similarly, our combined analysis masks participant data that return low or limited learning gain.

We identified from our data, 14 participants who provided small, or negative, movements in learning gains overall by the end of the programme. Communication with these participants revealed a number of issues that may have had an impact on the effect, impact or gain provided by the programme. Many indicated that, at the beginning of the programme, they had overestimated their knowledge/ understanding or skill; they were more realistic about these areas by the end of the programme. This issue has been noted in previous work in this area (Nicholls et al, 2015\*). In addition, some participants told us they had undertaken other work experience in similar areas to that offered by this programme; others had benefited from additional support in school to explore career options and potential work experience opportunities. We also found that most of the participants in this group had engaged in other support or outreach work (focusing on access to medicine or healthcare) provided by local Higher Education providers. We believe that all of these factors would mitigate the learning gain provided by the Go Higher in Healthcare programme.



*At the start, I thought I knew much more about medicine than I actually did – it is so diverse and varied. I now know that I just don't know everything there is to know, you are only just scratching the surface really.*



*Whilst I enjoyed the opportunity to participate in the two-day programme at the hospital, it wasn't as good as the experience I had at the GP practice my school has managed to get me into.*



\*Nicholls, G., Stroud, L., Wilkinson, D. and Danks, N. (2015) Work experience: A deterrent to applicants to medicine from a widening participation background? Medical Schools Council.



## PARTICIPANT COMMENTS





## PARTNER REFLECTIONS

Placement providers gave informal feedback on the programme, its structure and the attitude and commitment of participating students. One GP practice indicated that the presence of students in the setting had a positive impact on the work environment and raised the profile of the practice with others.



*We like having students within the Practice, they are incredibly professional and interested in what we do. As a Practice, we enjoy the learning culture which their presence brings.*

Other reflections from placement partners recognised that being immersed in a work setting enabled students to gain a more realistic view of a range of jobs and roles in healthcare. In addition, whilst on placement, students would be able to ask questions about jobs and career possibilities from those with expert knowledge in relevant healthcare sectors.



*Work experience is really important in allowing students the opportunity to come and see and gain a better understanding of what we are describing rather than just being told about it or seeing it on a video. You can't transmit through a book. You need to come and see and feel it and do it.*



*It gives students an opportunity to experience what it's like, rather than just hear about it. It also gives them the opportunity to ask questions of people who are actually working in the field. I wish I'd had the opportunity.*

Many providers indicated that offering work experience allowed them to promote the many career opportunities that exist in healthcare settings. It enabled some to promote options beyond those that focused on clinical work.



*When we talk about wanting to work in theatres people assume it's surgeons and helping surgeons, but it's admin, working on ward areas and pre-assessment areas. There are so many job opportunities out there and by giving the students hands-on practical skills is invaluable.*



*Work experience is a brilliant opportunity for students to get hands on and learn exactly what we do by spending the time with the people who are out there doing it.*











## CONCLUDING REMARKS

### Access to opportunity

Access to work experience opportunity is limited for those from widening participation backgrounds. However, this programme has provided contextualised information on available career options in healthcare for young people from partner schools. The positive experiences the students have had on the programme have been shared with others and have served to demonstrate the value of this approach to work experience.

### Measurable development of skill using the Learning Gain Tool

The Learning Gain Tool has been a useful instrument as it has enabled the evaluation team to see the effect of programme. It quantifies the increases in confidence and capability of the students across a range of transferable skills which are important elements of progressing to Higher Education or employment.

### Immersive experiences

Through immersive work-based experiences, programme participants have been exposed to the realities of work in busy and often hectic healthcare environments. Placement experiences have exposed participants to a wide variety of healthcare roles and team structures. They have been able to consider and reflect on the experiences with their peers (through their attendance at the post-placement workshop sessions), and this has helped to crystallise progression options. For some, it has served to broaden horizons.

### Crucial for progression

Testimony presented by participants clearly shows that the experiences gained whilst on the programme provide important evidence to use in personal statements and Higher Education application interviews.



*I've really enjoyed the experience I had at the hospital. I was able to refer to it in my personal statement and, now that I've got an interview at Lancaster, it is something I can talk about and refer to in my interview.*

Interpersonal and sector-specific skills have been significantly improved as a result of the Go Higher in Healthcare programme. Securing development of these critically important skills and insights can only serve to support participants and help them reach their ambitious career goals.





## APPLICATION/PROGRAMME DATA

Interest in programme	N	%
Expression of interest - Female	112	84
Expressions of interest - Male	22	16
TOTAL	134	100

Applications completed	N	%
Completed applications - Female	96	83
Completed applications - Male	19	17
TOTAL	115	100

Length of placement	N	%
5-day placement	16	14
4-day placement	9	8
3-day placement	53	46
2-day placement	27	23
1-day placement	10	9
TOTAL	115	100

Location of placement	N	%
Primary Care (General Practice) placements	45	39
Secondary Care (Hospital) placements	63	55
Other (Born in Bradford) placements	7	6
TOTAL	115	100

School/College	N	%
Bradford Academy	13	11
Bradford College	1	1
Carlton Bolling College	3	3
Elliott Hudson College	23	20
Hanson Academy	8	7
Leeds City College	3	3
Leeds West Academy	3	3
Minsthorpe Community College	7	6
Mount St Marys High School	3	3
New College Pontefract	3	3
Notre Dame College	22	19
St. Wilfrid's College	9	8
The Rodillian Academy	2	2
Tong Leadership Academy	3	3
Wakefield College	5	4
Bradford Girls Grammar School	2	2
Ermysteds Grammar School, Skipton	1	1
Pocklington School	1	1
The Grammar School at Leeds	2	2
The Holy Family Catholic School, Keighley	1	1
TOTAL	115	100



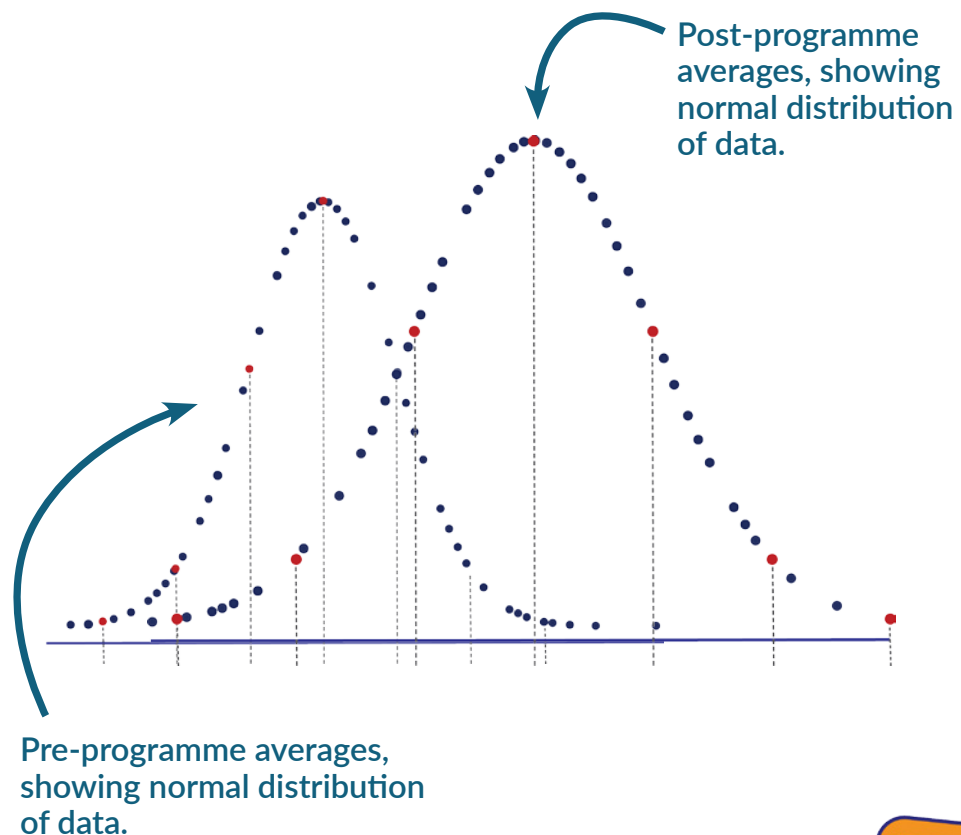


# STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF LEARNING GAIN DATA

The chart here (displaying pre and post-programme averages) shows a normal distribution to the response data. Therefore the change in learning gain for the population group (all 101 students) can be assessed using a repeated measures Student T-Test. This widely used analytical tool describes the probability of a student gaining in the skills and aptitudes required for entry into Health Sciences degree or training programmes. Some participants provided negative scores in their post-placement responses and this reflects a phenomenon noticed in prior work on prospective GP placement students where the individuals award themselves maximum scores in many of the questions prior to the intervention then self-assess with a lower value post intervention (Nicholls et al 2015). This phenomenon does not affect the validity of the data nor affect the normal distribution. As can be seen from our charts, values attributed to questions across the student population show a normal frequency distribution with slight bias towards positive scores. On average when we combine data across all 101 respondents the impact/ learning gain provides a 13% increase from the beginning of the programme.

In order to test the impact of the teaching intervention we use a paired t-test (repeated measures) to compare the mean difference of the values to zero and the variability of these differences across the student population.

Our null hypothesis: There is no difference in mean scores pre and post intervention. Our experimental hypothesis: There is difference in mean pre and post marks. In conclusion the value calculated for t for either a 1 or 2 tailed test (p values of 0.0045 and 0.0091 respectively calculated using the t-test function in Microsoft Excel) shows that we can accept our experimental hypothesis that this intervention significantly improves student learning gain at the 99% confidence level.





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