

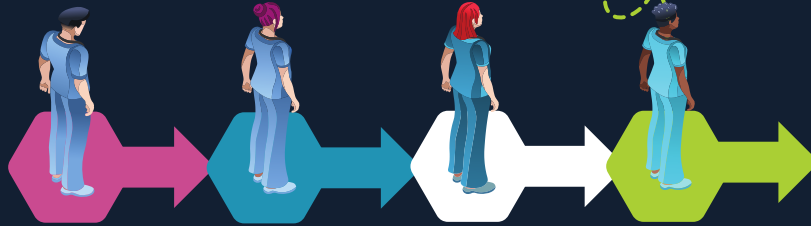
Aspirant Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) Programme



Greater Manchester Cancer Alliance

The Aspiring CNS Programme was initiated to provide a means to upskill staff as the future generation of CNSs. The programme was aimed at generalist nurses with an interest in careers in cancer. Funding was secured through Health Education England to pilot the programme at five trusts across Greater Manchester.

- 12 Month Programme
- Bespoke training package
- Aligned to RCN CNS capability framework
- Designated Mentor
- Rotational Placements
- 1 Education Day / Placement Day Allocated
- 5 Participants Enrolled



- Participant enrolled on programme.
- Mentor Assigned.
- Placements outlined
- Learning framework provided.
- 1 Day per week allocated for learning/placements
- Regular feedback loop with mentor to assess ongoing educational needs.
- Potential to complete practice improvement project.
- Capabilities assessed.
- Opportunities for development identified.
- Learner able to explore CNS roles in pathway of interest.

Placement Teams

- Haemato Oncology
- Gynaecology
- Breast
- Head and Neck
- Lung
- Colorectal
- Acute Onc
- Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary
- Skin
- Urology
- Oesophago-gastric

Project Outcomes

All candidates enrolled on the programme received a set of competencies that were to be achieved by the end of the programme.

The competency framework consisted of 13 domains and each aspiring CNS was assessed according to two levels depending on their current banding. The standards for successful completion were as follows:

Band 5 professionals should achieve level 1 assessment on all competencies, Band 6 professionals should achieve level 2 on at least 75% of all competencies.

- Level 1: Demonstrates a good level knowledge around the required competencies, and the ability to undertake relevant tasks where appropriate, under supervision
- Level 2: Demonstrates excellent knowledge and ability to undertake required competencies, both with and without supervision (where appropriate)

Participant Feedback

"It was nice to see the different teams, how they work and how different size teams work."

"It's given me an understanding of how the role is orientated...the way that their role is done and how much they get done as well."

"I really enjoyed it. It's given me confidence. It's given me a bit more confidence and understanding of what the process is and it's made me feel like that I could definitely do the job now"

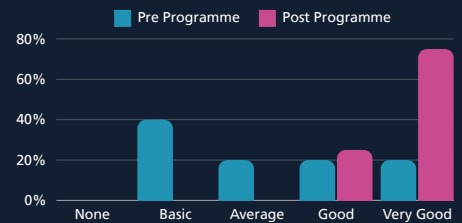
Organisation Mentor Feedback

- Protected Time
- Designated Time Away
- Improved Networking
- Rapid Knowledge and Skill Progression
- Recruitment and Retention
- Wider View of the CNS Role

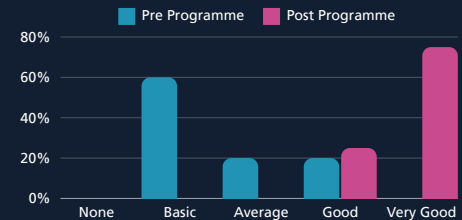
Key Findings

- The programme improved participants' knowledge and confidence to support people affected by cancer, as well as positive feedback on the programme structure and content.
- **100% of participants achieved level 2 competency**, demonstrating excellent knowledge and ability to undertake required competencies, both with and without supervision
- **60% of participants are now in a CNS role and feel confident in their duties**
- All participants knowledge of cancer pathways from diagnostics through to treatment and follow up improved from "basic" or "average" baseline to "good" or "very good" post programme.

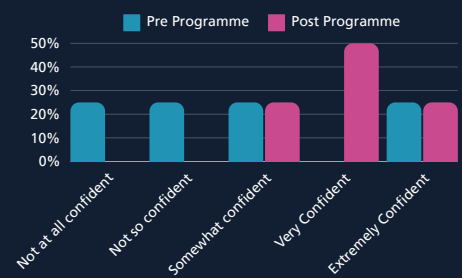
How would you describe your current knowledge of what a cancer diagnosis is, and why it occurs?



How would you describe your current knowledge of cancer pathways from diagnostics through to treatment and follow up?



How confident would you feel to conduct a Holistic Needs Assessment (HNA)?



Lessons and Recommendations

The programme offered a model that could be applied to a CNS Preceptorship Model

Mentors felt a guaranteed role could have been explored or more focus on progression within the pilot organisations.

Mentors and Participants would have benefited from detailed communication packs to help prepare placement teams for the participant

Both Mentors and Participants noted improve Peer Networking and Participant Peer Support

Future iterations of the programme should be aligned to ACCEND Framework

The Greater Manchester Cancer Academy ePortfolio offers an online platform to track learners progress against ACCEND

Read full evaluation and references



Project Funded by

Pilot Sites

