



## DfN PROJECT SEARCH SUPPORTED INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME



### AIM of DfN:

Currently there are over one million young people in the UK with learning disabilities with less than 6% gaining paid employment. Over the next decade DfN Project SEARCH aims to alleviate this gap through working with host organisations to get 20,000 interns aged 16-24 with a learning disability or autism spectrum conditions, or both into full-time permanent jobs. As of 2022, DfN has 67 local partnerships across the UK with over 1000 young people.

<https://www.nhsemployers.org/articles/nhs-learning-disability-employment-programme>

“As part of the commitment to increasing supported internships and lasting employment in the NHS Long Term Plan; NHS England, NHS Improvement and Health Education England have each committed £210,000 to support 42 additional supported internship programmes through DfN Project SEARCH.” DfN has partnered with 36 NHS sites working with 270 interns. Whilst this is a new programme to QEHS it has run successfully across other NHS Trusts for a number of years with interns working across all areas of the hospital and NHS staff fully engaged with the aims of the programme.

### HOW WE WORK:

Interns are students of Newhaven School, King’s Park campus ASD Provision but are based at QEHS. Helping them to develop their career path is an onsite tutor (Sonia); full-time employment specialists (Jessica and Curtis) and the intern’s family. Together, we create a joined-up learning environment and employment goal.

Over the course of the academic year interns enter three on-site rotations completing 800 hours of skills acquisition. They also receive daily classroom based sessions to embed their skills, knowledge and behaviours which aim to empower them to enter the workplace with confidence.

### THE BENEFITS TO YOUR TEAM – TESTIMONIES FROM CURRENT PARTNERSHIPS AT QEHS

#### **Violet Meier (Knowledge and Library Services Manager)**

*“We have been able to move forward with tasks/projects that we haven’t had time to focus on before”*

#### **Isimeme Egbuniwe (Head of Resourcing)**

*“The feedback from the team is very positive. She is quite independent and gets on with work with no issues at all. She is learning quicker than we anticipated. Yesterday she scanned files for appointed nurses from the recruitment fair we had. Let her know that was a big task that she did. I struggle to get the team to do that but she did it”.*

#### **Giedre Tekoriute (Back of House Team Leader)**

*“It helped us a lot, we can now focus on other jobs whilst Back of House has been very short staffed. Susie completed snack packs which freed up time to allow staff to do other jobs”.* Giedre also commented that it was rewarding for her and her staff to see the personal growth of their intern.

#### **Joanna Pearce (Catering Assistant and Mentor to intern)**

*“She is wonderful, I wish we could keep her. She picks things up very quickly, only need to tell or show her once or twice and she gets it perfectly”*

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**Conference Centre staff – Amal, Michael and Miriyam**

“They have been helpful and it helps to share workload, especially when busy

**Catering (Front of House) - Joanna Pearce and Miguel Medina (Mentors)**

“We love having her in the team. She is a very fast learner and completes her tasks very quickly once she is showed how to do things.” Other members of the team have commented on how much everyone enjoys having her and the real value she adds to the team, even expressing a desire to be able to keep her on permanently.

**ROTATION ONE FEEDBACK FROM INTERNS AND PARENTS:**

- Sylcia *“the programme has helped me a lot. In the linen room I have learnt new things that I have never learnt before. From the start of the programme I was really shy but as the days go by I have become more confident and I am coming out of my shell”*  
 Mum said that she is she is very happy with the programme and that Sylcia has improved in so many ways, especially considering that prior to this Sylcia had been unable to find work.
- Morgan *“I feel more independent”*  
 Morgan’s mum said that she has seen a rapid difference in Morgan’s confidence which is amazing
- Israel *“Trying new things that I haven’t done before like working at reception which has pushed me out of my comfort zone”*  
 Israel’s mum said he is doing better than if he were at college due to smaller class sizes and support from all staff
- Kelly *“I have been able to use my I.T. Skills but also learning new programmes which has been fun. I also feel very much a part of the Employee Relations team”*  
 Kelly’s dad said that the programme has enabled her to become more responsible and mature.
- Lindsey *“I really like working in the restaurant and I have made new friends”*  
 Lindsey’s dad said that he has seen many positive changes in Lindsey since the start of the programme; there is more communication and verbal expression
- Jared *“I have enjoyed interacting with my colleagues and working with the team”*  
 Mum said the programme has been a very positive experience for her and her son. Jared is able to see how he can be an asset in the workplace and at home she sees a growth in his confidence and how he is expressing himself.
- Susie *Mum has said that she has “never seen Susie so happy and positive. She seems more confident and has a better understanding of the path she has to follow to gain skills for employment. This course offers aspiration for her.”*

