

Adult Social Care Pathways

Bexley takes an Everyday Learning approach to staff learning and development believing in the 70:20:10 approach where 70% of learning happens through experience, 20% through learning from and with others and 10% occurs through formal and structured learning.

Learning and Development and Continuing Professional Development within Adult Social Care is the golden thread in delivering sound, professional services. We believe we provide a sound framework of opportunities that enables our staff to



Induction

All Adult Social Care staff benefit from an approach to Induction that spells out what they need to know, understand and do within 6 months of joining us; the approach is jointly owned by the individual and their manager and includes supervision, shadowing, coaching, e-learning and face-to-face workshops.

Our Newly Qualified Social Workers find the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment provides them with a fantastic opportunity to grow and develop in their first year of appointment to Social Work.

Continuing professional development

In-house learning and development programmes are commissioned in line with service delivery priorities and is currently focussed on strengths-based assessment and support planning.

All staff have access to a wide range of e-learning modules and resources via EVOLVE (the Council's e-learning system), MeLearning (an e-learning portal also open to providers in the borough) and SCILS (an electronic information hub including individual workbooks, a newsdesk and a discussion forum, to name but a few)

Making Research Count (MRC) is an initiative facilitating the dissemination of research findings between academics, practitioners, carers and users in the social care field. We subscribe to MRC thus enabling all staff to access a number of current and varied workshops throughout the year; MRC also deliver 5 in-house sessions within Bexley each year – primarily in supporting our Newly Qualified Social Workers to continue best practice approaches of critical analysis, reflection and the application of theory into practice.

Support workers in our Triage Hub, Rapid Response and Community Assessment and Rehabilitation Teams are expected to be able to assess and procure small aids and adaptations for those they are working with and therefore have access to an accredited Trusted Assessor Award.

Support workers with considerable experience currently have the opportunity to be considered for part-funded support to undertake social work qualification training.

Qualifying and Post-qualifying courses – all staff are encouraged to review their personal development needs and where they identify an external qualification programme that supports their needs and equips them with skills and knowledge to invest back into the service it may be possible to provide support or assistance in enabling them to register for such awards.



Social Work

Bexley Adult Social Care has a history of supporting staff towards professional qualification and a great track record in retaining those we support in this way.

We currently have 3 routes to social work qualification within Adult Social Care and we are looking forward to engaging with the new Social Work Degree Apprenticeship

- Open University - undergraduate, part-funded route into social work via the Open University BA (Hons) Social Work Degree programme with 5 staff from within the Department at various stages
- New in 2017; Open University – post graduate Diploma in Social Work
- We partnered the Think Ahead organisation in 2017 in a fast-track Diploma in Social Work/MA in Mental Health Services with 4 external participants joining Bexley from September 2017 with a view to appointment as NQSWs from September 2018.

Placements

We have a very strong culture of providing social work student placements within Bexley Adult Social Care Teams, firstly for our own staff on qualification training, then for external students from the University of Greenwich and sometimes with space for one or two students with strong links to the borough. On average we provide 10 placements per annum to a range of students often identifying talented, committed practitioners along the way who are subsequently successful in applying to work for us. In line with requirements, Social Workers providing formal placements undertake Practice Educator Professional Standards qualifications at Levels 1 and 2 as part of their own professional development. Part of the preparation pathway towards this will include social workers participating in readiness for practice assessments at the University and/or providing shadowing opportunities to social work students. Formalising Practice Education is one of the requirements for progression as a Bexley Social Worker.

Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) – we are delighted with the excellent progress of many of our Newly Qualified Social Workers in Adult Services and we are particularly proud that the evidence of the support and development journeys of some of these NQSWs has been identified within South East London as exemplar material for the sub-region. Adult Social Care piloted the introduction of the ASYE Process back in 2012 with the first person completing this being one of our early grow our own social workers. Whilst implementation remains a management responsibility with successful achievement of the ASYE a condition of confirmation of employment, Newly Qualified Social Workers (NQSW) in Adult Social Care benefit from a clearly structured process that is led and closely managed by a Professional Practice Development Officer (PPDO). Feedback from all our NQSWs rates this support very highly indeed. The PPDO and Organisational Development (OD) Consultant for Adult Social Care staff work closely with colleagues in Children's Services to ensure consistency of approach, to share best practice and access to learning opportunities and to jointly moderate ASYE outcome decisions.

Occupational Therapy

We have considerable experience with Occupational Therapy grow our own schemes, currently supporting one Rehab Assistant to undertake the BSc Hons Occupational Therapy Degree and keeping a watchful eye on the emerging Occupational Therapy Degree Apprenticeship.

OT Student Placements will provide potential career opportunities to committed, excellent practitioners.

In addition to accessing all in-house provision, Occupational Therapists receive mandatory annual Moving and Handling Training and attend Practice Forums specific to Moving and Handling equipment and practice updates.

Commissioners

Commissioners and Care Brokers within Bexley have benefitted from undertaking Institute of Public Care programmes in commissioning and contracting care services. A number of commissioners have recently embarked on the new Level 5 Commissioning for Wellbeing qualification with a Senior Manager training as an Assessor. It is expected that this will provide a sound foundation for future commissioning qualifications for those in these roles and functions.

Professional Progression Options

We expect all our professionally qualified workers to undertake Best Interest Assessor Awards and /or relevant Practice Education Awards and to operate as BIAs and PEs on a regular basis.

Progression and practice in these areas will enable staff to demonstrate how they meet the requirements for progression in both Social Work and Occupational Therapy roles.

We operate a single Approved Mental Health Professional (AMHP) Rota in Bexley. Access to the AMHP qualification is open across all eligible adult social care staff, with a clear expectation that all Mental Health Social Workers will progress their development in this way. There are specific academic pre-requisites to this exacting Masters Level Qualification, including the BIA Award, a Developing Professional Specialist Practice Award or previously having studied at Masters Level and holding sound mental health services experience. We have a clear succession plan in place to support staff applications to undertake this award towards appointment as an AMHP within the borough.

Masters Qualifications – a number of staff express interest in further qualifications and may apply for individual sponsorship or support towards a full Masters Award, for example in areas such as Practice Education, Mental Health or Leadership and Management. Applications are considered on a case by case basis having regard to the specific job role and the benefits to the organisation.

Value for Money

We believe investing in our staff development reaps many rewards, not least in delivering an excellent service to Bexley residents but also for individual staff members and for the organisation as a whole. We also believe in value for money and are keen to achieve a return on this investment in the shape of well-rounded, confident, skilled and knowledgeable workers who put their skills to good use once qualified; for this reason we enter fee/learning agreements with all our staff in whom we invest support for a transferable and portable qualification.

We consider both our offer and our expectations are sound and fair, leading to clarity and success amongst our dedicated workforce.