# Press Release | 8 March 2022

**QEH awarded £24,000 to help people from deprived communities into employment**

The Queen Elizabeth Hospital King’s Lynn NHS Foundation Trust (QEH) has been awarded £24,000 from independent charity the Health Foundation to help people from deprived backgrounds into the NHS and social care workforce locally.

Working in partnership with Norfolk and Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group, and wider community and health and social care partners, the Trust will lead on developing a shared ‘local plan’ between health and care partners to enable those from the most disadvantaged local communities to access employment opportunities.

Across West Norfolk, educational attainment is the lowest in the East of England and average weekly earnings are significantly lower than average. In Norfolk and Waveney, there are an estimated 3,300 open vacancies in NHS and social care, with a considerable number of retirements on the horizon.

Carly West-Burnham, Director of Strategy and Integration at QEH, is leading the initiative. She said: “This is funding to conduct new research and try new ways of working. With our partners, we will be mapping key workforce gaps that need addressing, the current recruitment entry routes, and how well we are doing at reaching the people we think could help fill those roles.

“Engaging with and understanding people’s experiences and views on health and care career pathways, finding out what the barriers are to them applying for and succeeding in those roles, and how we might be able to help will all be central to the project.

“We’ll also try and test some new approaches within those communities, to learn and inform future planning. As well as promoting aspiration and education, the programme will look to address long-standing challenges with recruitment to critical health and care roles locally."

The project runs from March to December 2022 and will result in a collaborative plan for local community, health, and social care organisations to increase the amount of good quality, secure employment in our most deprived neighbourhoods and, in so doing, help to address health inequalities in those communities.

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