

## **ULHT to lead development of a degree apprenticeship standard for physiotherapist and occupational therapist**

ULHT has been given government approval to lead on the development of the first ever degree apprenticeship for the roles of physiotherapist and occupational therapist (OT).

The degree apprenticeship hopes to boost numbers of physiotherapists and occupational therapist roles in a bid to tackle both local and national staffing shortages. It will provide an alternative route for those wishing to become a registered healthcare professional but who want to combine their studies with on the job training.

The Trailblazer group, led by ULHT and the Lincolnshire Talent Academy, will develop a nationally recognised standard for these roles. The group will include representatives from NHS Employers, multiple NHS trusts from across the country and employer representatives from small and medium sized private organisations, in addition to the College of Occupational Therapists and the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy.

In the first year, it's predicated there will be 100 apprentices of which 42 are for Lincolnshire.

Due to continued employer interest in the programme development the Trust will be holding a Trailblazer launch event at Sheffield Hallam University on the 22 March 2017. We'll provide further information regarding the development process and to engage with further employers. The event is currently over sub-scribed with 100 delegates due to attend.

The Trust will be partnering with Skills for Health, Sheffield Hallam University and Coventry University in the development of the national programme, working alongside Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), College of Occupational Therapists and the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy to ensure professional standards are adhered to within the programme development which is due to take approximately 12 months. On completion, the standard will be accredited for national delivery by employers and educational organisations.

ULHT, along with partners in Lincolnshire, have been running a pre-registration degree programme for physiotherapists and OTs with Sheffield Hallam University for the last 11 years. Both organisations presented the success of this partnership at an OT apprenticeship event held by the College of Occupational Therapists in London in October, providing the basis for the Trailblazer proposal.

Following this event over 70 organisations expressed their interest in being part of the roll out of this work. This led to ULHT submitting their application to develop the degree apprenticeship standard for both physiotherapist and occupational therapist roles in November, which was approved by the Department of Education last month.

This is fantastic news for the allied health professions and we're delighted that the ULHT proposal to lead the national development has been successful and will play an active role in developing the workforce of the future.