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Dear Colleague

I appreciate that it is a very hard time in general practice and it is difficult to manage the current situation let alone think about a new initiative.

This initiative is about apprenticeships in practice for Health Care Assistants. The apprenticeships would be arranged, supported and managed via the National Skills Academy for Health who will be the apprentice employers and arrange the apprenticeship framework in partnership with the practice and an appropriate training provider. The practice would be required to pay the national minimum wage for an apprentice, currently £2.73 per hour as a minimum towards the salary of the apprentice plus a management fee of £975.00 per apprentice per annum plus VAT or you could directly employ the apprentices.

In my experience the apprentices can do many tasks, take bloods, do ECGs, and can carry out new patient checks. They can also be trained to carry out other functions depending on the practice needs. The apprenticeship would be for one year and at the end of that time the practice would not be committed to keep them on as a HCA. It is hoped that suitable employment would be found to take advantage of the training the apprentice HCA has received but this would not be the responsibility of the practice.

The apprentices would be recruited for their values and behaviours and we hope that some of them would be suitable to be put forward for nurse training. With 50% of practice nurses due to retire in 5 years we need to encourage nurses to think of practice nursing and an aim is to expose trainees early in their nursing careers to see the benefits of practice nursing.

If you would like to explore the possibility of hosting a HCA apprentice then please contact the National Skills Academy for Health on 020 7391 7173 or email information@nsahealth.org.uk so that a Local Skills Coordinator can contact you.

Kind regards



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