

A year in review Healthcare Science 2023-24

Over the last 10 years, 5 strands of activity have emerged that crystallise our contribution to the wider NHS across Scotland.

- + We support trainees directly through commissions
- + We quality assure training
- + We provide support for trainees, supervisors and training centres
- + We offer workforce development through CPD and e-learning resources
- + We are active in careers promotion to attract the next cohorts into service.

In February 2024, we were fortunate to run our in-person education and training event at COSLA, combined with webinars that touched on key areas of interest to the training community. It was a well-received event and refreshing to meet in-person with colleagues who support

the training agenda. Patient focus was ably articulated throughout the event.

It was appropriate that the last session was devoted to trainee presentations – explaining their role and the significant impact it has on patient outcomes.

Today's trainees are the trainers and system leaders of tomorrow. Even in the space of 12 months since our last report, the rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its impact on training and progression monitoring has been remarkable.



Change is the one certainty... the future is never so far away, and it quickly becomes our present. Decisions of today are the consequences of tomorrow, quite apt in relation to workforce capability and supply.



Strand 1
Commission of training posts



Strand 2
Quality assurance and monitoring of training



Strand 3
Supporting trainees and supervisors



Strand 4
CPD and e-learning



Strand 5
Careers promotion



Commissioning

Our core intake of Clinical Scientist 3-year training posts



6 new starts in 2023

using a co-funding model with service to maximise September's training post numbers. With an applicant pool of **78** per post and 8–9 interviewed for each post

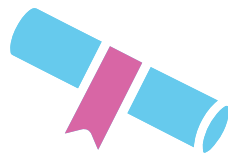
We offered

18 applicants



support for Clinical Scientist end-point assessment.

Clinical Physiologists



Whilst not directly funding the 2023 cohort of Clinical Physiology trainees, we were nevertheless able to help facilitate a cohort of **14** new starts on the **4-year work-based degree programme** at Glasgow Caledonian University.

We supported



27 postgraduate bursaries

with an applicant pool of **42** and a mean award of

£2230



We offered

25 Biomedical Science support staff

fee support for assessment of their non-accredited degree transcripts. This degree assessment is a prelude by the professional body, advising candidates about top-up learning necessary to acquire Biomedical Scientist registration.

Support Workers are an important source of workforce supply into higher career-grades, so we were pleased to maintain this initiative.



In response to a specific Support Worker commission from the Scottish Government to NES in August 2023, we built on the work of Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professions (NMAHP) colleagues to produce a practical guide for HCS Support Workers education and development.

We are indebted to the hard work of Ann McQuiston who was attached to our core team to lead the work, and to the constructive support from the HCS Advisory Group and the project's Reference Group.

Although the commission is complete, we intend to survey the usefulness and impact of the resource in Autumn 2024. The work is published on [Support Worker Central](https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/34351/support-worker-central) (learn.nes.nhs.scot/34351/support-worker-central) in Turas Learn, alongside guidance for NMAHP workforces.

We continue to track the progress of the Higher Specialist Scientist cohort, initially sponsored in 2020 by the Scottish Government. An impact study clearly points to the value of consultant-level scientific staff being prepared to take senior roles.



Quality assurance and monitoring of training

We monitor the state of training using a common approach across the HCS workforce. Our activity provides important comparators between training centres and specialties; it provides assurance to partners where necessary and is an important catalyst for sharing good practice.

There are common and recurrent themes reported by trainees, not least the tension between time-to-train and the pressure of service.

Our annual survey of trainees and supervisors included a specific set of questions around equality, diversity and inclusion. The results from both surveys, including details of EDI responses can be found on our Healthcare Science training website, within the Quality Assurance section (hcstraining.nhs.scot/quality-assurance/).

We included a neurodiversity session at our February 2024 training event; and just after the year-end we will run a dedicated follow-up session to build on the interest generated.

At the end of March 2024

Covering **239** national training number holders and **70** training centres, we have achieved a



satisfactory response

to requests from trainees for Annual Review of Competency Progression



CPD and e-learning

1st April 2023–31st March 2024

3654 learners accessed our CPD resources available on Turas Learn, with **4162** e-learning modules completed

Our core offer of trainer preparation and leadership programmes for HCS continues to be well-utilised, **139** attendees over the year to our consolidation workshops that are underpinned by e-learning modules.

Our hybrid education

and training event attracted **155** attendees over **2** days and offered a wide range of sessions and workshops including the following themes:

- + Artificial Intelligence
- + Considerations for effective training
- + Communicating clearly
- + Continuous improvement through feedback
- + Inspiring future generations of Healthcare Scientists



Careers

A new online careers booklet for Health Care Scientists was published on the [NHS Careers website](http://www.careers.nhs.scot/explore-careers/healthcare-science) (www.careers.nhs.scot/explore-careers/healthcare-science) during Healthcare Science Week in March 2024.

We worked with HCS colleagues in the regional boards during Healthcare Science Week to promote careers, and the publication of our guide to HCS Support Worker development emphasised the important contribution of this element of our workforce.

This year we have been engaging with various education providers to raise awareness of the wide range of careers in HCS, including *DYW Live* presenting 7 live classroom sessions for pupils P6–S3 across Scotland, and *My World*

of Work developing career video clips on social media for Medical Physics, and Sleep and Respiratory Physiology.

Skills Development Scotland developed the school game *Classroom Clash: Super Samples* about Healthcare Scientists and hosted it on a new platform on their website to improve accessibility.

We also shared information and delivered career stories at many live events, including *Speakers for School* sessions at Glasgow Science Centre, *Curious About* live sessions covering Biomedical Science careers, and Scottish Universities Life Sciences Alliance (SULSA) events. Our engagement with these learning sessions raises the awareness of the range of career and education pathways to HCS roles.

Key to the success of all these projects is the important collaborative work with the NHSScotland Careers team to create new career profiles on the website, developing the careers leaflet and working with the Centre for Workforce Supply marketing team

to promote a national campaign during Healthcare Science Week. All these valuable collaborations are crucial to share resources and to improve the visibility of HCS, which we will continue to support throughout 2024–25.

The wider Healthcare Science community

During 2023–24 we engaged with colleagues within the NHSScotland Academy and look forward to working with them on the new Accelerated IBMS Registration Training Portfolio Programme. We have contributed to a draft of the NES Climate and Sustainability Strategy 2024–27, which we anticipate will be published later in 2024. Similarly, we have contributed to the thinking underpinning the Scottish Government’s [Healthcare science: strategic approach](https://www.gov.scot/publications/healthcare-science-scotland-defining-strategic-approach) (gov.scot/publications/healthcare-science-scotland-defining-strategic-approach) which was published in March 2024. This is intended to set the priorities for the HCS Workforce during 2024.

It remains to thank all of you who have supported our work over the last year. I will be retiring from this role that has been a privilege to serve in. The support of colleagues has made it a joy to be involved.

Well done and good luck to you all!



NES Healthcare Science team: (back row, left to right) Charlie Brownlee, Lorna Crawford, Bianca Brownlee, Rob Farley; (front row left to right) Claire Cameron, Simon Petrie, Andy Dunne.