



The first graduates pictured with Marie McKeown, practice placement facilitator, Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and Jane Douglas, Senior Lecturer, Northumbria University. Katy Crinson pictured middle row, far right.

Jan 05, 2018 14:49 GMT

Student nurses graduate from new UK nursing degree programme

The first students to study on a new 18-month full-time work-based nursing degree have graduated, and with flying colours.

Traditionally a three-year qualification, the 18-month nursing course is aimed at people with a healthcare background.

The first of its kind in the UK, the programme leads to a BSc (Hons) Nursing

Studies/Registered Nurse (Adult) degree and is a partnership between Northumbria University, Newcastle, and Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. The course involves a mix of classroom-based teaching, simulated clinical skills and hands-on practical experience in hospitals and the community across Northumberland and North Tyneside and, on completion, the students were guaranteed employment at Northumbria Healthcare.

The first ten recruits – made up of Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust staff – began the programme in March 2016. The opportunity, funded by the trust, was so popular that it received almost six times the number of applications than there were places for, and a second course, with a further 10 recruits began in March 2017.

Katy Crinson, from Sunderland, is one of the newly-qualified nurses who took part in the new degree programme. She is now a staff nurse in the critical care unit at Northumbria Specialist Emergency Care Hospital in Cramlington, where she was originally a nursing assistant. She said: “I am absolutely delighted to have graduated from what has been a great course. Whilst it was quite intense, having had healthcare experience already stood me in good stead and the support I received from the University and the trust has been second to none.

“I am absolutely delighted to have fulfilled my ambition and to start my nursing career. It has been such an honour to have been part of an innovative approach to nurse education and it’s great to see that the North East are leading the way.”

Daniel Kane, from Newcastle, now works as a staff nurse on a respiratory medicine ward at North Tyneside Hospital. He said: “It’s momentous really to have had the opportunity to do this course. There’s been a lot of support during the degree, both from the University and the trust. I would definitely advocate this qualification to others going forward.”

Rachel Heron, from Blyth, is also a staff nurse on a respiratory medicine ward at Northumbria Specialist Emergency Hospital. She previously worked in the Northumberland Sexual Health Service. She said: “We had a lot of support particularly from the clinical educators. The highlight of the course for me was the placement, where I had excellent support from my mentors and I am now delighted to be putting my learning into practice.”

Following the success of the 18-month degree programme, the course is now being replicated in other areas of the country.

Professor Alison Machin, acting head of the nursing, midwifery and health department within Northumbria University's Faculty of Health and Life Sciences, said: "I would like to congratulate all the student nurses on their graduation and to wish them an exciting and rewarding career in nursing.

"Northumbria has a long-standing excellent reputation for delivering high quality innovative nurse education and training. This programme uses a new approach of workplace-based coaching to support student nurses' teaching and learning, keeping quality of patient care at the forefront."

"The course with Northumbria Healthcare is a real trail blazer, with other NHS trusts and higher education institutions now following in our footsteps. It was specifically designed to help address their nursing requirements and enables motivated people, with healthcare experience, already working within the sector, to step up and become fully qualified nurses."

Ellie Monkhouse, executive director of nursing and quality at Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, said: "Many congratulations to our nurses who have graduated from the first shortened nursing programme of its kind in the country. We are delighted to welcome them back to our trust as fully-qualified nurses and they are already making a positive difference to patient care across Northumberland and North Tyneside.

"Like every NHS organisation in the country, we continue to face real recruitment pressures and must continually look at innovative ways to secure our future nursing workforce and this is just one way we are being able to do this.

"Working in partnership with Northumbria University to train our own nurses has enabled us to not only grow our own workforce and create opportunities for our own staff, however, have nurses who share our values and put patients at the heart of everything they do.

"We wish these nurses every success in their roles and look forward to developing their careers with Northumbria while continuing to support the next cohort of nurses to join them as fully-qualified members of our nursing

team.”

The course has also been viewed positively by the Nursing and Midwifery Council following a monitoring visit where it was highly commended in the verbal feedback.

At the end of the course, the students are qualified to work in hospitals or in the community – a key part of work led by Northumbria Healthcare to develop new models of care in Northumberland as a national vanguard site as chosen by NHS England.

For more information about a career in nursing visit www.northumbria.ac.uk.

For more information about Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, visit www.northumbria.nhs.uk

Northumbria is a research-rich, business-focused, professional university with a global reputation for academic excellence. To find out more about our courses go to www.northumbria.ac.uk

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