



# NWSDN Annual Report 2023/24

## **Our mission**

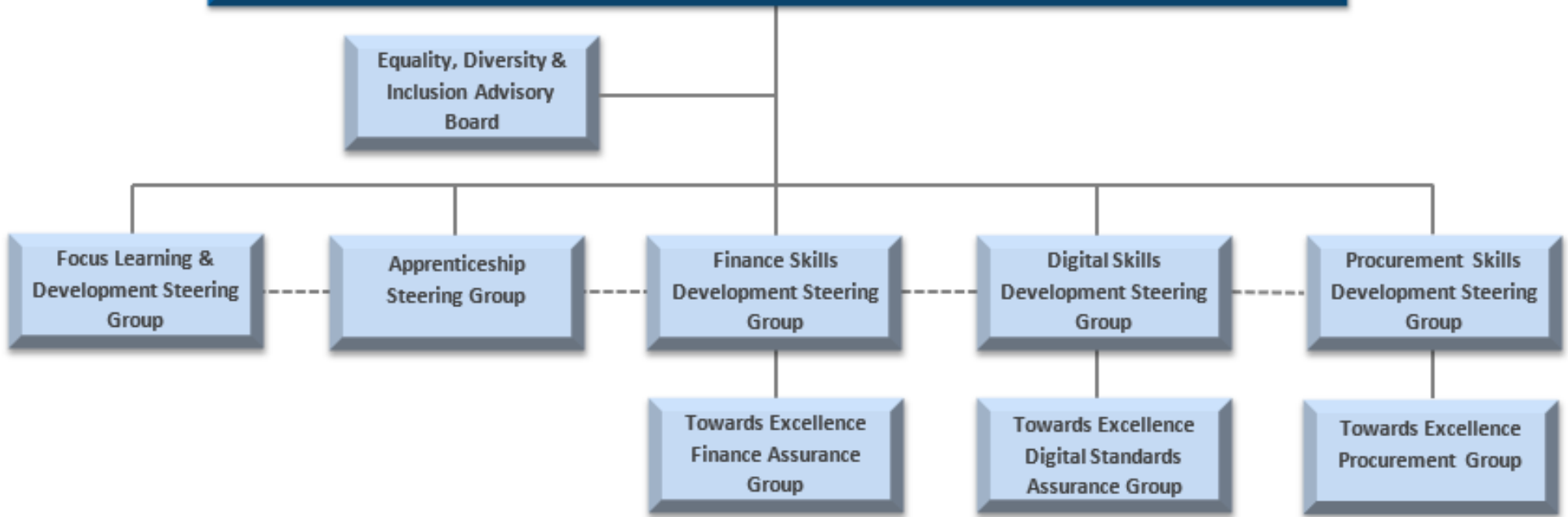
To offer an innovative and inclusive infrastructure to effectively support the continuous development of our member organisations across the North West, thus providing a sustainable and diverse workforce to support the continued delivery of high quality patient care

## **Our vision**

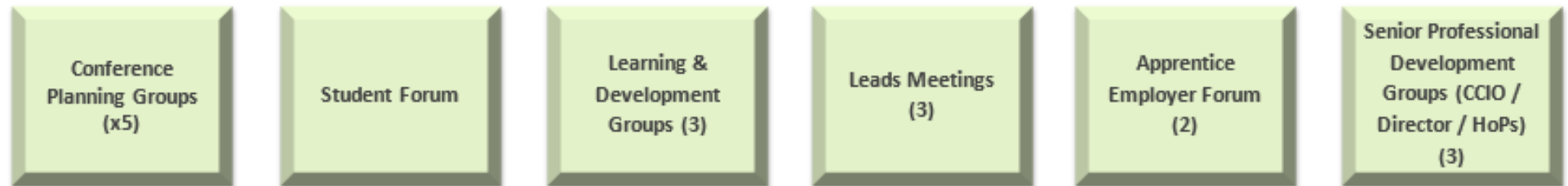
To be the chosen provider of inclusive and bespoke learning and development opportunities in the Health & Social Care sector in the North West.



# NORTH WEST SKILLS DEVELOPMENT BOARD



*The additional development groups below will form part of the overall Network structure but will not require Terms of Reference.*



**Developing Today to Influence Tomorrow**

# Meet the Chairs

The following colleagues were the Chairs of our various Groups, as at 31 March 2024.

## **North West Skills Development Board (NWSDB)**

Nikhil Khashu, North West Regional Director of Finance, NHS England

## **Digital Skills Development Steering Group (DSDSG)**

Dave Smith, Assistant Director for IT, Systems & Information (CIO), Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS FT

## **Finance Skills Development Steering Group (FSDSG)**

Kara Mason, Director of Finance Planning & Estates, East Cheshire NHS Trust

## **Procurement Skills Development Steering Group (PSDSG)**

Mark Stevens, Deputy Director, Greater Manchester Procurement

## **Focus Learning and Development Steering Group (FSG)**

John Graham, Director of Finance / Deputy Chief Executive, Stockport NHS FT, and Executive Chief Finance Officer, Tameside & Glossop Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust

# Meet the Chairs

## **Towards Excellence Finance Assurance Group (TEFAG)**

Mike Burns, Chief Finance Officer, The Walton Centre NHS FT

## **Towards Excellence in Digital Standards Assurance Group (TEDSAG)**

Pam Green, Associate Director for Clinical Informatics & Chief Nursing Information Officer, Wrightington, Wigan & Leigh Teaching Hospitals NHS FT

## **Towards Excellence Procurement Assurance Group (TEPAG)**

Jacky Bowman, NW Finance & Procurement Skills Development Manager, NW Skills Development Network

## **Apprenticeship Steering Group (ASG)**

Rose Garrod, Chief Financial Accountant, Countess of Chester Hospital NHS FT

## **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Advisory Board (EDIAB)**

Shahida Mohammed, Director of Finance, Liverpool University Hospitals NHS FT

# Network Objectives

**Wellbeing & Resilience** – We are dedicated to supporting staff wellbeing and resilience. Our goal is to not only maintain but to expand upon the directory of staff support schemes established in February 2023. We will also host tailored events in response to identified needs, providing Network members with robust support.

**Equality, Diversity & Inclusion** – We strive to foster a diverse workforce across our organisations. By implementing targeted equality, diversity, and inclusion initiatives, we aim for measurable progress towards this goal, creating an environment where everyone feels seen, heard, and respected.

**Organisational Development** – We are committed to helping our member organisations evolve by developing their staff. Through comprehensive training, the sharing of effective practices, our workforce accreditation schemes and cross-network collaboration, we aim to enhance the quality of services provided.

# Network Objectives

**Financial Sustainability** – We are constantly exploring avenues to extend the Network's influence, reaching out to existing member organisations and prospective new members. Our goal is to maintain a firm financial base, while delivering exceptional value for money to our members.

**System Working & Collaboration** – We will continue to facilitate effective collaboration across system and organisational boundaries, ensuring our staff are fully supported and can work together effectively.

**Workforce Skills Development** – We are committed to developing our workforce to meet organisational needs. We will implement suitable programmes and initiatives aligned with national strategies, promoting professional qualifications for relevant staff, and thereby fostering a skilled and versatile workforce.

**Innovation** – We believe in the power of innovative thinking. We will motivate our teams to devise creative, cutting-edge solutions to their challenges, and inspire others by sharing and celebrating their successful strategies.



# Products and Services



## Learning & Development

- Coaching & Mentoring
- On-line & Learning Portal
- Bespoke Events Programme
- Free Microsoft Training
- Website & Resources
- Development Days
- Student Forum
- Shadow a Senior Leader



## Workforce Development

- Apprenticeship Recruitment
- Bespoke Apprenticeship Programmes
- Study & Pastoral Support
- Undergraduate Placements
- Annual Workforce Profile
- Workforce Benchmarking Reports
- Graduates into Health Programmes
- Informatics Skills Framework for Healthcare Analysts



## Peer Review Accreditation

- One NHS Finance Towards Excellence
- Excellence in Informatics
- NHS Procurement & Commercial Standards
- Promoting Personal & Professional Development
- Peer Review Assessments
- Celebration of Success
- Sharing Best Practice

# Products and Services



## Networking & Sharing Best Practice

- Informatics, Finance Directors, Student & Payroll Conferences
- Sharing Best Practice Events
- Quarterly Leads Meetings
- Special Interest Groups
- Apprenticeship Development Days
- Celebrating Success
- Regional Value Maker Networks & Events
- Annual Awards



## Professionalism & Leadership Development

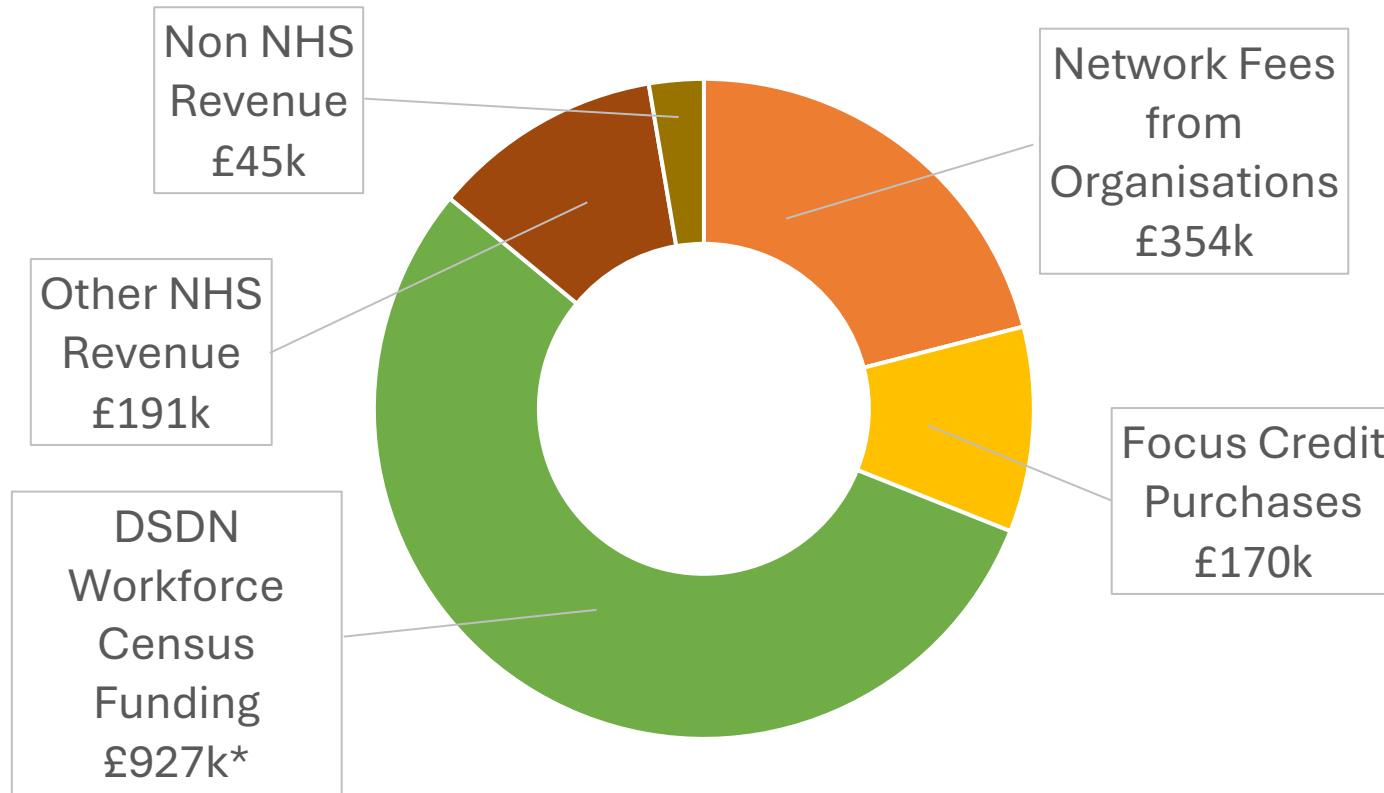
- Management & Leadership Development Programmes
- Masterclasses
- Links to Professional Bodies
- Sponsorship Programme
- Skills Frameworks
- Personal Portfolio Development
- University Links
- Director Development

## Our Successes in Summary

- Excellent engagement from senior leaders across the region in all three professions
- 100% of NW organisations participate in the Network
- 100% compliance with censuses in 2023
- Phenomenal engagement with, and success in, national and regional awards
- Great uptake and engagement in networking events and special interest groups
- Strong uptake of NW sponsorship programme
- 138 events run by the Focus Programme
- Our largest ever cohort of Apprentices, with 32 young people joining our programme
- Won a contract worth £1.5m from NHS England to lead the roll-out and establishment of regional Digital Skills Development networks
- Leading the development of regional Digital, Data and Technology (DDaT) censuses and workforce plans

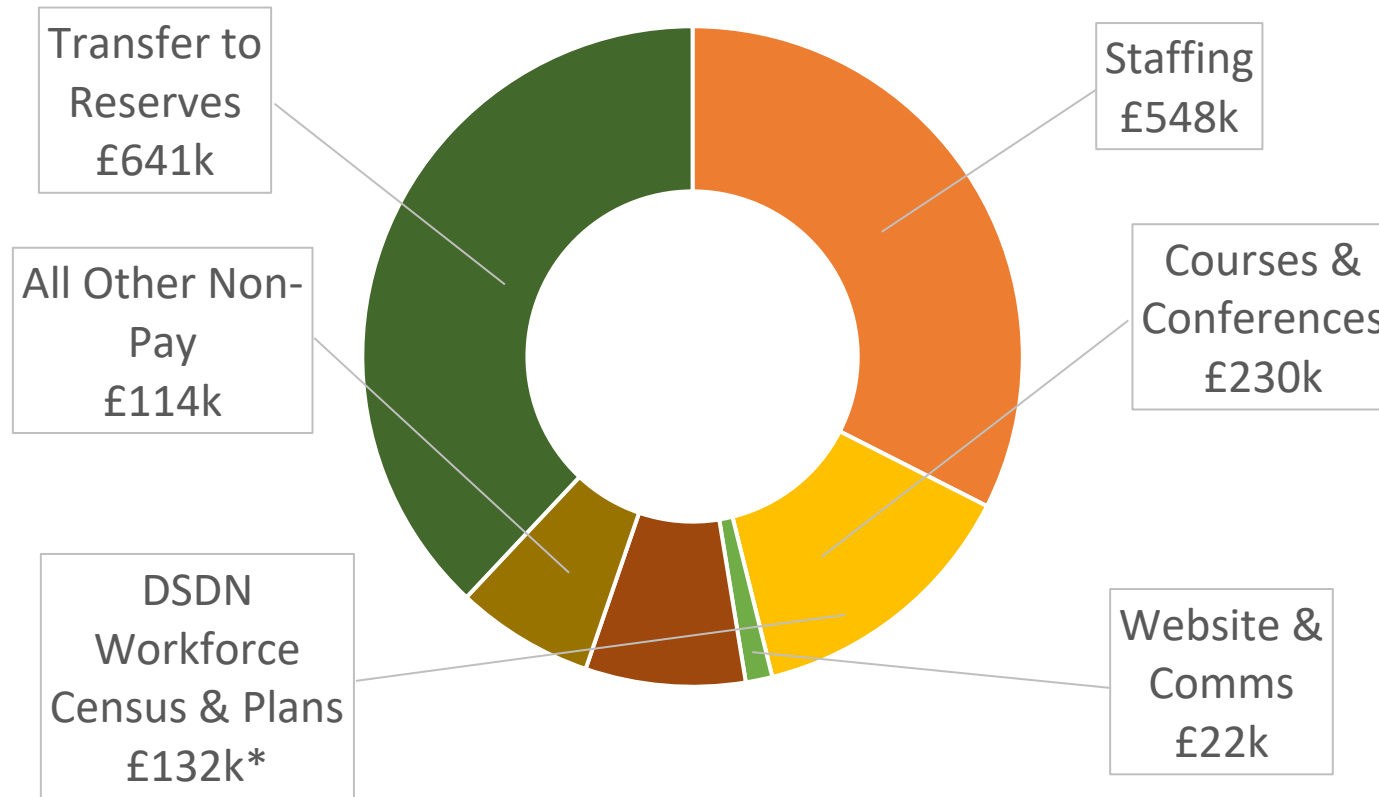


# Network Income 2023/24



\* See note on page 22

# Network Expenditure 2023/24



\* See note on page 22

## Movement in Reserves 2023/24

	Opening Position	Closing Position	Movement
General reserve	£171k	£140k	-£31k
Focus reserve <i>(including credits held)</i>	£387k	£273k	-£114k
NW PSD reserve	£28k	£18k	-£10k
DSDN workforce census reserve	£0k	£795k	£795k
Redundancy reserve	£253k	£253k	£0k
<b>Total</b>	<b>£839k</b>	<b>£1,480k</b>	<b>£641k</b>

## Equality & Diversity

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (ED&I) continues to be key to everything that the Network does. During 2023/24 we showed our continued commitment by:

- Working with Shahida Mohammed, Deputy Director of Finance at Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and ED&I Champion on the NW Skills Development Board, and with our wider ED&I Advisory Board, to ensure that due consideration is given to ED&I issues in our decision making and that the Network's activities demonstrate best ED&I practice.
- Supporting and being actively engaged in the three workstreams of the NW ED&I Group:
  - Measuring our diversity baseline
  - Fairness in Recruitment
  - Supporting Colleagues
- Continuing to promote our own NW Sponsorship Programme providing sponsorship opportunities to staff from all the professions engaged in the Network, including being actively engaged with the One NHS Finance (ONF) Programme and finding sponsors for colleagues in more junior posts.

/cont.

## Equality & Diversity

- Being active supporters of the NW Sponsees' network.
- Supporting the ONF Inclusion & Diversity Ambassador network in the NW.
- Analysing diversity data relating to attendees at our events and ensuring that any issues arising from the data are addressed. Analysis undertaken in early 2024 showed that in terms of finance colleagues attending Focus events, there seem to be no barriers to colleagues from minority ethnic backgrounds attending such events. However, fewer men seemed to attend events than their prevalence among finance staff would suggest (28% of attendees were men, compared with 38% of the workforce); and fewer people over 50 attended events (20.3%, compared with 33.8%). While not specifically related to issues of diversity, it was also noticeable that fewer colleagues in bands 2 to 4 attended events (15.3% of attendees) than might have been expected (23.4% of the workforce). We continue to work to understand how to address these apparent anomalies.



# Accreditation

As at 31/3/24

	Digital		Finance		Procurement	
Accredited	23	61%	36	92%	19	59%
Self-assessed (procurement only)	-	-	-	-	5	16%
Working towards accreditation/re-accreditation	7	18%	3	8%	8	25%
Not accredited	8	21%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>		<b>39</b>		<b>32</b>	

# Workforce Development

## Foundation Apprenticeship Programme

The autumn 2023 cohort was the largest to date with 32 apprentices joining the programme - 14 Accounting, 5 Data, 6 IT and 5 Procurement at Level 3 plus 2 Level 4 Data Apprentices.

Overall retention and achievement on programme remains high, significantly above the Government aspiration of 67% achievement for apprenticeships.

Our partnership with The Prince's Trust has continued with them helping to support three engagement sessions with the new cohort over the summer prior to their start on programme; topics covered included mentoring, transitioning from education to work, employability skills and wellbeing. In addition they also provide mentoring support to apprentices during their first six months on programme.



## Workforce Development



### Graduate Digital, Data and Technology (DDaT) Scheme

Due to a change in funding from NHS England the Graduates into Health DDaT Scheme unfortunately closed at the end of March 2024. However, the NWSDN agreed to continue to provide support to any grads on programme and the Digital Skills Development Steering Group agreed to support work on the continuation of the DDaT Scheme in the North West.



### Awards

Summer Elliott, Senior Divisional Accountant at East Cheshire NHS Trust won the Tony Whitfield Finance Apprentice of the Year Award in September 2023. Her line manager commented:

“Summer has reignited my own passion for coming to work and had made our team a wonderful place to work. She certainly has redefined how the organisation views an apprentice.”

Summer originally commenced on the Foundation Apprenticeship Programme in 2018 since when she has gone on to be the first of the SDN Foundation Apprentices to become fully qualified.



## Focus Programme in Numbers

Average Focus event cost	£80.44
Number of courses	135
Number of conferences	3
Total delegates attending courses	2,132
Total delegates attending conferences	246
Organisations participating in events	46
Credits used	3,124
Value of credits used	£187,440
Average spend per delegate	£78.82
Percentage of delegates who considered their event to be good value for money	97%
Percentage of delegates who would recommend their event to a colleague	91%

## Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

We ran the following SIGs during 2023/24

- **CXIO Network** – 102 attendees at 3 meetings across the year
- **Digital Skills Development Leads Network** – 111 attendees at 3 meetings
- **IT Management Forum** – 73 attendees at 3 meetings
- **Project & Programme Management Office Network** – 100 attendees at 2 meetings
- **Clinical Informatics Network** – 133 attendees at 3 meetings
- **Data Science Network** – 91 attendees at 3 meetings
- **Senior Information Analyst Network** – 127 attendees at 3 meetings
- **Digital Workforce Development Leads Network** – 90 attendees at 3 meetings
- **Clinical Applications SIG** – 56 attendees at 2 meetings

A total of 883 attendees at 25 meetings

## **National Digital Workforce Census Initiative**

The Network received £927k in November 2023 from the workforce team of the Transformation Directorate at NHS England. The funding was issued to conduct regional digital workforce censuses under the new DDaT framework in all regions. A third-party provider was commissioned to develop regional digital workforce plans. MoUs have been put in place with all regions to support this work, which is overseen by the National Coordination & Liaison committee, via a project board.

£132k of this funding was spent in 2023/24; the balance will be spent in 2024/25.

## Meet the Team

**Christine Banks**, Digital Skills Development Manager – [christinebanks@nhs.net](mailto:christinebanks@nhs.net)

**Lucie Bottell**, Administration Support Officer – [lucie.bottell@nhs.net](mailto:lucie.bottell@nhs.net) (left 6/8/24)

**Jacky Bowman**, Finance & Procurement Skills Development Manager – [jacky.bowman1@nhs.net](mailto:jacky.bowman1@nhs.net)

**Sara Braidwood**, Student Coordinator – [Sara.Braidwood@nhs.net](mailto:Sara.Braidwood@nhs.net)

**Julie Davison**, Regional Apprenticeships Manager – [julie.davison6@nhs.net](mailto:julie.davison6@nhs.net)

**David Ellcock**, Director – [david.ellcock@nhs.net](mailto:david.ellcock@nhs.net)

**Donna Hanson**, Digital Skills Development Project Manager – [donna.hanson5@nhs.net](mailto:donna.hanson5@nhs.net)

**Carolyn Harding**, Personal Assistant and Office Manager – [carolyn.harding@nhs.net](mailto:carolyn.harding@nhs.net)

**Tony Haslam**, Event Coordinator & Data Analyst – [tony.haslam@nhs.net](mailto:tony.haslam@nhs.net)

**Helen Pennington**, Programme Support Officer – Apprenticeships – [helen.pennington@nhs.net](mailto:helen.pennington@nhs.net)