

PRESS RELEASE – 3rd January, 2018

Healthcare Group plans overseas recruitment drive for registered nurses in 2018

Health bosses at the South Tyneside and Sunderland Healthcare Group are planning a New Year recruitment drive in the Philippines following the long-term success of recruiting Filipino nurses for over a decade in Sunderland.

Thanks to joint working across the Healthcare Group and following a strategic staffing review undertaken by the Director of Nursing in South Tyneside during 2017, a joint trip is planned for February next year, with a view to attracting over 100 nurses to come and work in both South Tyneside and Sunderland.

The move signals a shared commitment from both Trusts to address some of the long-term challenges facing the nursing and midwifery workforce as they continue to work together to develop high quality healthcare services which are fit for the future.

The new recruits will work in acute inpatient areas in South Tyneside District Hospital, Sunderland Royal Hospital and Sunderland Eye Infirmary and cover a range of specialities including emergency care, acute medicine and care of the elderly. The nurses will form part of vital multidisciplinary teams and work with a range of different healthcare professionals to ensure patients experience a seamless pathway of care from hospital to home.

As pressures on the NHS continue to grow and despite the financial challenges facing both Trusts, NHS leaders have been very clear that investment into more nursing posts is absolutely essential in order to continue delivering the highest possible quality of safe patient care.

The overseas recruitments efforts form part of a wider strategic plan exploring all routes to expand the nursing and midwifery workforce in South Tyneside and Sunderland. Both Trusts are already working in close partnership with the University of Sunderland after successfully launching the new nursing school in April 2016 and are expecting the first cohort of 'home grown' graduates who will be able to apply for permanent posts in 2019.

Melanie Johnson, Executive Director of Nursing & Patient Experience for South Tyneside and City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trusts, said: “Nursing and midwifery is a complex, demanding but, ultimately, very, very rewarding profession. I am extremely proud of our existing workforce who do an exceptional job every single day providing compassionate care for patients and who are always looking at innovative ways of improving patient care and experience.

“As we look ahead to 2018, we have a number of exciting plans to expand our nursing and midwifery workforce and the overseas element is just one important part of this. For many years, we have welcomed many Filipino nurses into the NHS in the region and there is already a very strong sense of community and belonging which I hope will help us attract even more nurses of the highest calibre to join our teams in South Tyneside and Sunderland.

“It is important, given the pressures facing our NHS and the demands on our existing workforce that we continue to explore all possible opportunities to attract more people into our organisations and I am confident that by working together as the South Tyneside and Sunderland Healthcare Group that we will be able to do just that.”

All new recruits from overseas will be required to meet the new registration process from the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) which sets the standards of education and training that overseas nurses will have to complete. Further details about the overseas recruitment drive will be shared early in the New Year.

Ongoing recruitment is also taking place for any local candidates who aspire to become part of the ambitious future vision of the South Tyneside and Sunderland Healthcare Group with all posts advertised for each Trust via NHS Jobs (www.jobs.nhs.uk). In South Tyneside, this includes ongoing current recruitment for neonatal nursing staff.

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Notes to editors:

South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust and City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust have been working together as part of a strategic alliance known as the South Tyneside and Sunderland Healthcare Group since March 2016. A joint executive management team was established in November 2016 and is working towards a shared vision to develop high quality healthcare services that will benefit local communities for many years to come.

Issued by Liz Davies, Head of Communications 07771943066