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England

ODP SURGE

SUPPORT FOR UPSKILLING, RETENTION,
GROWTH & EDUCATION

Inspiring Future ODPS

CHAMPION

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This project aims to inspire the next generation of Operating Department Practitioners (ODPs) and boost applications from school and college leavers. Led by Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust in partnership with its satellite site, Queen Mary's Hospital, it showcases the ODP role through real clinical context and accessible pathways into training. The initiative combines interactive tools-such as simulation demos, virtual walkthroughs, and hands-on skills tasters-with a stronger presence at career fairs to reach diverse audiences.

By elevating digital engagement, enhancing technological skills, and creating memorable, practical experiences, the project demystifies perioperative care and highlights clear progression routes.

The ultimate goal is to build a sustainable local pipeline of motivated ODP trainees who reflect the communities the Trusts serve.

Challenge: This project addresses the decline in numbers of people signing up to the ODP profession, particularly among school and college leavers. It looks at identifying barriers to recruitment, raising awareness of the role, and developing strategies to attract more applicants into the future workforce.

Actions: The initial task was to begin building a strong network of staff that included the Chief AHP Officer, AHP Learning Environment Lead, PDN, Work Experience/Apprenticeship Administrator, and Head of Clinical Education. This was essential to gather accurate information and secure support from like-minded individuals to help the project succeed. The HCPC was contacted for data pertaining to the decline of registered ODPs. Information was also gathered from HEIs to identify the most effective ways to target young people as potential recruits. An investment was made in the Virtuali-Tee technology, hands-on equipment and several props all with the aim of providing an enjoyable and memorable interaction. A new QR code and several new posters were developed which highlight the invaluable skills of the profession and inform of the extended and leadership roles which are available.

Impact: Queen Mary's Hospital is now being informed and invited to attend school and college visits in order to provide an active ODP presence. A set method of delivery has been established when schools are visiting the surgical environment at QMH. A stand has been arranged with information and props which are exclusively for ODP promotion. Historically work experience is arranged at DVH main site but going forward Queen Mary's will also be offered to any interested parties.

Leadership Learning: The ODP SURGE project has developed my communication skills particularly with how to adapt messages and interactions with different people. It has helped to motivate not only myself in trying to improve a difficult situation within the profession but it has also inspired others to become involved. My time management skills have improved and also my self awareness, particularly concerning my limitations and the need to request for support.

Future plans: To continue establishing regular career fairs and school visits whilst pinpointing other champions to become involved with the work. To arrange further meetings with the Chief AHP Officer concerning a possible framework for recruitment across Dartford & Gravesham Trust with a potential for rolling it out regionally.

ODP'S
DIFFERENT ROLES.
UNIQUE SKILLS. INCREDIBLE IMPACT.
OPERATING DEPARTMENT PRACTITIONERS
THE SPECIALISTS BEHIND EVERY SAFE SURGERY

THE ODP DIFFERENCE

- EXPERTS IN THE OPERATING ROOM**
ODPs are specialists in anaesthesia, surgery and patient care before, during and after an operation. You're at the heart of the action.
- ANAESTHESIA EXPERTS**
ODPs are the ONLY professionals trained to deliver and manage anaesthesia, keeping patients safe while they sleep.
- SPECIALIST KNOWLEDGE & HIGH-TECH SKILLS**
From complex monitoring and life-saving equipment to advanced technology and robotics - ODPs use skills you won't learn in general nursing.
- A SMALL, HIGHLY SKILLED TEAM**
ODPs are a vital part of a close-knit theatre team where communication, trust and teamwork save lives every day.

WHY TRAIN TO BE AN ODP?

- SPECIALIST STATUS**
You're a specialist from day one, with unique skills that are in high demand.
- GREAT CAREER PROSPECTS**
Excellent job satisfaction, strong salaries and opportunities to progress.
- DYNAMIC & FAST-PACED**
No two days are the same. You'll work in an exciting, technology-driven environment.
- MAKE A REAL IMPACT**
You play a crucial role in life-changing moments - helping patients when it matters most.
- BE PART OF SOMETHING BIG**
You're a key part of the surgical team - where skills, precision and teamwork save lives.

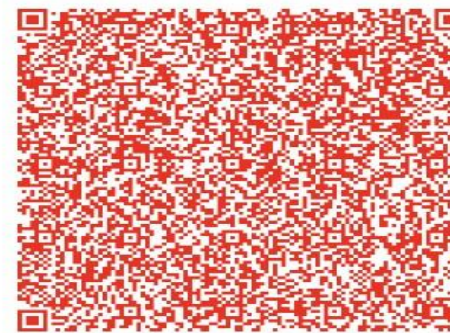
DIFFERENT ROLES. SAME GOAL. OUTSTANDING CARE.

THINK YOU COULD BE AN ODP?

- Love science and technology?
- Stay calm under pressure?
- Enjoy working in a team?
- Want a career that's challenging, rewarding and makes a real difference?

THEN THIS COULD BE YOUR FUTURE.
EXPLORE. LEARN. INSPIRE.

ODP'S - SPECIALISTS. INNOVATORS. LIFE CHANGERS. THAT'S THE DIFFERENCE.



ODP Extended Roles

BE MORE THAN YOU THINK.
ODP
BE ESSENTIAL.
OPERATING DEPARTMENT PRACTITIONERS
Highly skilled. Highly trusted. Highly you.

ODPs are vital members of the surgical team. We care for patients before, during and after surgery, using advanced skills, knowledge and calm under pressure to make a real difference every single day.

WHAT ODPs DO

- PATIENT FOCUSED**
We put patients at ease, explain what to expect and provide compassionate care every step of the way.
- CLINICALLY SKILLED**
We use specialist knowledge of anatomy, equipment and techniques to support safe, effective surgery.
- CALM UNDER PRESSURE**
We think fast, stay calm and make critical decisions when it matters most.
- TEAM PLAYERS**
We work closely with surgeons, anaesthetists and nurses - everyone relies on us.

BEFORE SURGERY
We prepare and reassure patients.

DURING SURGERY
We anticipate needs, manage equipment and keep everyone safe.

AFTER SURGERY
We support recovery and provide vital aftercare.

DID YOU KNOW?

- ODPs are healthcare professionals.
- We work in a wide range of settings.
- No two days are the same.
- You can have a career that's challenging, rewarding and makes a real difference.

SKILLS STRONG

WHY TRAIN TO BE AN ODP?

- Make a real difference. Be at the heart of care when it matters most.
- A career with purpose. Varying challenges and the chance to help others every day.
- Great career prospects. High job satisfaction, good earning potential and opportunities to progress.
- Be part of a team. Work with incredible people in a supportive and dynamic environment.
- Flexible and rewarding. Work in many specialities, with options to travel and work internationally.

COULD THIS BE YOU?

- You care about people.
- You enjoy science and problem solving.
- You stay calm and focused.
- You want a career that matters.

CHALLENGING. REWARDING. YOUR FUTURE.
Explore. Learn. Inspire. Become an ODP.

WHERE CAN IT TAKE YOU?
SPECIALIST ROLES
e.g. robotics, transplant, neurosurgery

WORK ANYWHERE
Opportunities across the UK and worldwide.

READY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE?
TALK TO YOUR CAREERS ADVISOR OR TEACHER TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT BECOMING AN ODP.

YOU COULD BE SOMEONE'S HERO FOR A BETTER TOMORROW.