

# South East Allied Health Professions Faculty Report 2022/2023

## Background:

Starting in 2019/2020 Health Education England (HEE) funded the 24 testbed project to initiate and develop Allied Health Professions (AHP) Faculties into each Integrated Care System (ICS).

The original aim of the AHP Faculties was to improve the co-ordination of workforce activity across Integrated Care Systems with a focus on supply, education and training to secure the current supply pipeline and future growth of the AHP workforce.

Initially AHP Faculties were developed from a single AHP project focus, e.g. placement expansion, and a remit to develop a system level AHP leadership and governance structure. During the period 2020-2023 the AHP Faculty model has continued to grow with the establishment of new AHP Faculties.

## Landscape of the South East region

The Southeast (SE) region is made up of six ICSs. Each ICS system has an AHP faculty initially funded by HEE in 20//21 Each AHP Faculty has appointed a faculty lead, who is the responsible person for the functioning of the faculty and its activities. HEE funding in 2021/22 to increase the capacity & capability of leadership to effect change and coordinate the AHP workforce activity required and further funding 2022/23 was provided to sustain this leadership across the six SE AHP faculties.

The AHP Faculties within the South East region have all been established at different times due to recruitment challenges and therefore are all at different stages of maturity.

A SE AHP Faculty Lead Network has been set up to meet monthly, chaired by the HEE SE AHP workforce programme lead. These meetings provide regional strategic direction aligned to the regional AHP priorities. This network offers support for the faculty leads, sharing of good practice and resources.

## Evaluation of AHP Faculty funding 2022/2023:

The faculty funding has all been spent to fulfil the faculty specification and closure reports have been submitted by all of the faculties. Overall this funding has increased the AHP leadership capacity across the region via the faculties to implement change. The evaluation of the outcomes in relation to the faculty funding specification are identified below.

## Sustainable AHP Faculty

All six faculties have a faculty lead and faculty team that is enabling collaboration across the system and leading change. Within the AHP Faculties they have representation from the Health and Social Care providers and local HEIs within the system. They all have AHP leadership and governance structures in place and report to their respective ICS AHP Council and are

embedded within ICS and supported with the appropriate infrastructure. Annually each faculty completes a self-assessment called the maturity matrix. This tool identifies areas of development needed, and the faculties produce an action plan to enable them to mature. Overall, the Faculties identified themselves as mature or developing into mature. One of the six faculties is sustained by their ICS and a permanent AHP workforce lead has been appointed and their role is to support and lead the Faculty. Two of the Faculties have put in business cases into their ICSs for the faculties to be sustained and are awaiting to hear the outcome. The other three faculties have newly appointment Chief ICS AHP leads and moving forward the sustainability of the faculties is a priority. These roles have demonstrated the influence and increased awareness of the AHP community across the ICSs.

### **Workforce planning, data and intelligence:**

The National £62k AHP workforce planning project has improved engagement between providers and the faculties and learning has been shared. This project has enabled AHP workforce leads within providers to have time to scope their workforce and have a better understanding of ESR (electronic staff record). The six faculties have received twice yearly AHP workforce data slide decks from HEE and they have presented their AHP ICS workforce data to their Faculties. This information has highlighted priority workforce challenges and directed the work streams within the faculties. The faculties have completed an 18 month AHP workforce plan for their system. The faculty leads all felt this was a useful exercise and they have a greater understanding of their AHP workforce across the system. This has enabled them to identify areas of focus and develop multi professional workforce plans with their ICSs to support new ways of working and workforce redesign.

### **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) :**

The faculties ensure EDI is a golden thread that is across the faculty and all workstreams and projects. Faculties are continuously reviewing AHP diversity data across the ICS (professions and bandings), engage with system and use key findings to coproduce plans with systems to address inequalities. They are broadening the reach of the faculty by reviewing membership every six months to ensure Faculty membership is inclusive. An Equality impact analysis is completed for each programme of work, liaising with appropriate system or regional wide networks to help inform these assessments. One faculty has liaised with their system to offer AHP community funded Empowerment passport. This is an online tool that enables individuals with long term conditions or disabilities to identify reasonable adjustments, through a series of focused questions and prompts. The online tool then creates a bespoke document detailing their personalised needs.

### **Finance and activity:**

Each faculty lead has submitted quarterly reports and closure reports demonstrating delivery and spend against their specification. All funding allocated has been spent aligned with the faculty specification for delivery.

### **Practice based learning: Placements and Quality:**

The faculties are all collaborating with the newly formed ICS Placement teams. Continued work is occurring across all AHPs and services to ensure high quality placements and learning environments.

### **AHP Support workforce:**

The AHP support workforce programme has continued to develop across the region with national guidance. Each faculty have AHP support workforce networks. Padlets have been produced for each Faculty as a centralized place to host training information for support

workers. Two Faculties held face to face conferences to celebrate the work of the support workforce. Two other faculties are planning to host AHP support worker conferences this year. From a regional steer this the work that has been completed has ensured the national AHP support workforce programme is sustained by the Faculties and ICSs.

### **Retention and support for newly qualified and early careers:**

In 2021 Kent and Medway AHP Faculty have collaborated with Canterbury Christchurch University to produce a pre preceptorship programme to support AHPs transition from education into employment. This initiative was scaled up in 2022 across the SE region with workshops involving all of the six faculties to enable them to deliver and implement this programme.. All the faculties have a preceptorship working group and they have all explored the pre preceptorship programme 'step to work'. There have been different implementation methods across each system. They have been working with local HEIs to support the signposting of this programme to final year AHP students, to ensure all newly qualified AHPs are aware of the programme. This was scaled up nationally in 2022/2023 and has resulted in an extra resource and tool for newly qualified AHPs to access to support them to transition from education into employment.

### **Sustainability and growth of the work force: Supporting Return to Practice (RTP) and International Recruitment (IR):**

All faculties have engaged with the regional AHP Return to practice campaign. The majority of the faculties have scoped the current process for returning to practice across the providers. They have hosted workshops and the majority have collaborated with their systems to produce toolkits and guidance. Across the region there has been 38 AHP return to practice in 2022/23.

The faculties have been linking with the NHSE national and regional IR support teams to IR Diagnostic Radiographers, Podiatrists, OTs and Paramedics. There have been some delays with recruitment, but all faculties are working across their systems to ensure support is in place to ensure a positive transition into the workplace.

For Diagnostic Radiographers an e-learning programme has been implemented and is available to all IR Radiographers across the South East region. This was a successful programme with 51 International Radiographers completing the e-learning and 36 departmental staff completing the training. Phase 2 of the programme will start in July 2023 and the package will be expanded to also offer two face to face simulation training days.

### **Apprenticeships:**

The faculties have been working with £62K project funded AHP workforce leads in each provider to understand local workforce challenges and explore the opportunities of apprenticeships. They have been working with regional apprenticeship leads and local HEI to scope current apprenticeship courses that are available. Working groups have been set up and level 6 apprenticeships for ODP, Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, Podiatrists and Radiographers have been implemented. Further work has been occurring regarding level 3 and 5 apprenticeships and the AHP support workers and enabling growing your own and offering an attractive career pathway. The faculties have engaged with the HEE team to scope requirements. Each system has a project lead within this space and a working group across the region has been set up, chaired by HEE, to bring the work together and minimise duplication. Working across the six faculties collaboratively, an ODP apprenticeship toolkit has been produced to support providers through the planning and recruitment process.

### **Profession specific growth:**

The AHP faculties are all engaging with the regional professions specific workforce programmes. This information is shared with the faculties at the monthly network meeting and the faculty leads feed this information into the faculty. The areas of focus have been Radiographers, ODPs, Podiatrists and Paramedics. These programmes of work are ongoing and the faculties will enable the implementation of the outputs from the task and finish groups.

Each AHP faculty has focused on a specific profession to increase workforce growth and sustainability. They have been producing and enhancing the career promotional strategy across the ICS, by promoting AHP careers on websites and supporting career ambassadors to promote AHP careers. The Springpod virtual work experience programme has been relaunched and is being promoted across the faculties. The completion rates of the programme have improved since the relaunch. There has been very positive feedback regarding the programme and contents and between 2022/23 705 have completed the required units to complete the programme.

### **Research and innovation:**

The faculties have engaged with the Allied Health Professions' Research and Innovation Strategy for England (January 2022). They have collaborated with local HEIs to offer research and leadership placements which support opportunities for AHP pre-reg student for research and innovation. One faculty has offered Researcher role models and mentorship for AHPs of all disciplines encouraging support systems to value, recognise and implement the research and innovation strategy in Allied Health practice. There is ongoing work across the faculties to ensure research is identified in career pathways and linking with professional body career framework to implement this.

### **Community services and elective recovery:**

The faculties have all scoped specific training needs to increase the capacity and capability of the community AHP workforce across health and social care to respond to this increase in demand. They have engaged Stakeholders across all settings within AHP services across health and social care. Some faculties have commissioned training that was identified, and others have hosted bitesize sessions across a vast array of subjects from motivational interviewing, pulmonary rehab, exercise prescription to dementia. This has enabled upskilling across all levels of the workforce.

Scoping has also occurred to support elective recovery and upskilling and training has been identified. The faculties have linked into regional upskilling funding offers and there has been training to upskill 244 ODPs and 105 Podiatrists across the south east region. There have also been other innovations to support elective recovery. For example one faculty has been piloting a digital app to support orthopaedic departments and new ways of delivering rehabilitation.

### **Overall achievements:**

This year the AHP faculty funding has increased the AHP leadership capacity within ICS' across the region and has enabled readiness for AHPs to be embedded into the ICSs and have influence within the ICBs. The faculties have matured and increased the collaboration across each system and improved the influence they have across a wide range of stakeholders. Across the SE, AHP faculty governance structures are now formed and AHP leadership, sustainability and transformation projects are underway. Each faculty lead feels they have developed as a leader and have gained skills and knowledge to support them in their role. They all report the benefits of the SE AHP Faculty network and the support and collaboration they receive from this network.

### **Overall challenges:**

Overall, the main challenge has been recruiting seconded posts into the faculty teams. Due to the current climate of Health and Social Care, clinical staff have been unable to be released from clinical duties to move into these positions to support this work. Timely recruitment and advertisement is needed. There is still uncertainty around the sustainability of some of the Faculties and how this will look in the future. The ICS landscape is still in its infancy and AHP leadership and influence is crucial to ensure AHPs are involved with transformation and service redesign.

### **Sharing of the project:**

Each of the faculties have shared the faculties progress with the AHP Councils within the ICS and with the regional HEE AHP team.

### **Conclusion**

This funding Investment has developed the leadership to lead and effect change in AHP workforce supply, sustainability, and transformation at system level. In 2023-24 the need is to sustain the leadership to effect change to build on the foundations and deliver specific projects with targets and KPIs.