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New medical student training in Cumbria

Posted on Wednesday 23rd January 2019

New additions to frontline medical staff in Cumbria have arrived in the county thanks to the first cohort of University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) medical students undertaking a full year placement.

 New medical student training in Cumbria

The Bachelor of Medicine & Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) students are undertaking a variety of placements at hospitals and GP surgeries throughout West Cumbria.

The 16 students, who are in the third year of their studies, will be based in the area for one year while completing their essential hands-on-training. They will spend three days a week working within the local health sector and will continue their academic studies at the UCLan Westlakes Campus two days a week.

Jesvin Tom Sunny is undertaking his placements at Flatt Walks Surgery, in Whitehaven, and West Cumberland Hospital. The 21-year-old said: "The placements are allowing us to clerk patients, perform physical examinations on them if appropriate and learn about the common medical conditions that are seen at the hospital. Working with patients in the community has been a great experience. I really enjoy talking to them and knowing more about their perspective. All the people here in Whitehaven are very welcoming and open to us. Life in Cumbria is really good."

Mansour Abdulshafea, who is carrying out placements at Lowther Medical Centre and West Cumberland Hospital, added: "People in Cumbria are the nicest people I've ever met in England. They are very kind, supportive and willing to let us do clinical examinations on them. They are also friendly and lovely to guide you around the town or chat to you in the bus or supermarkets. I feel very grateful and thankful for their great generosity and warm welcome to us."

The MBBS students started at UCLan in 2016. They completed their first two years of teaching at the Preston Campus and previously undertook only short clinical placements in Cumbria during that time.

Professor Cathy Jackson, Executive Dean of the Faculty of Clinical and Biomedical Sciences, said: "Since our establishment, we have worked closely with North Cumbria University Hospitals NHS Trust and Cumbria Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, providing educational collaboration for West Cumbria, with the aim of helping to attract staff to the region, to work both in UCLan and the local health economy. We are also helping to train students who will work locally, indeed, our first cohort of physician associates have gained employment throughout Cumbria. Our MBBS students will bring further medical support to a local health economy which has been under severe pressure for some time and they will learn a huge amount from dealing with patients in GP and hospital locations. The remote nature of West Cumbria means the students will experience a more diverse health economy, one which other medical students may never see, and they will get the opportunity to build skills unique to a rural setting. It's an exciting time for them all."

The remaining members of the cohort are completing their placements with East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust.

Professor Sam Dearman, Director of Medical Education for Cumbria Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and North Cumbria University Hospitals NHS Trust, added: "The arrival of our medical students is such an important landmark event for the Cumbrian Health Economy, and for West Cumbria specifically, as we all do what we can to ensure the sustainability of our health services and provide a quality learning experience for tomorrow's doctors. It is very satisfying to hear our students speak of their positive experiences and important that we recognise as a point of pride the significant efforts of our medical education, clinical and UCLan colleagues in getting to this stage. This is an investment in the future also paying dividends now. Contemporary, quality medical education is part of our developing systems."

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