

Widening Access Staff Story

Katy Goss – Head of Widening Access, Equality and Careers



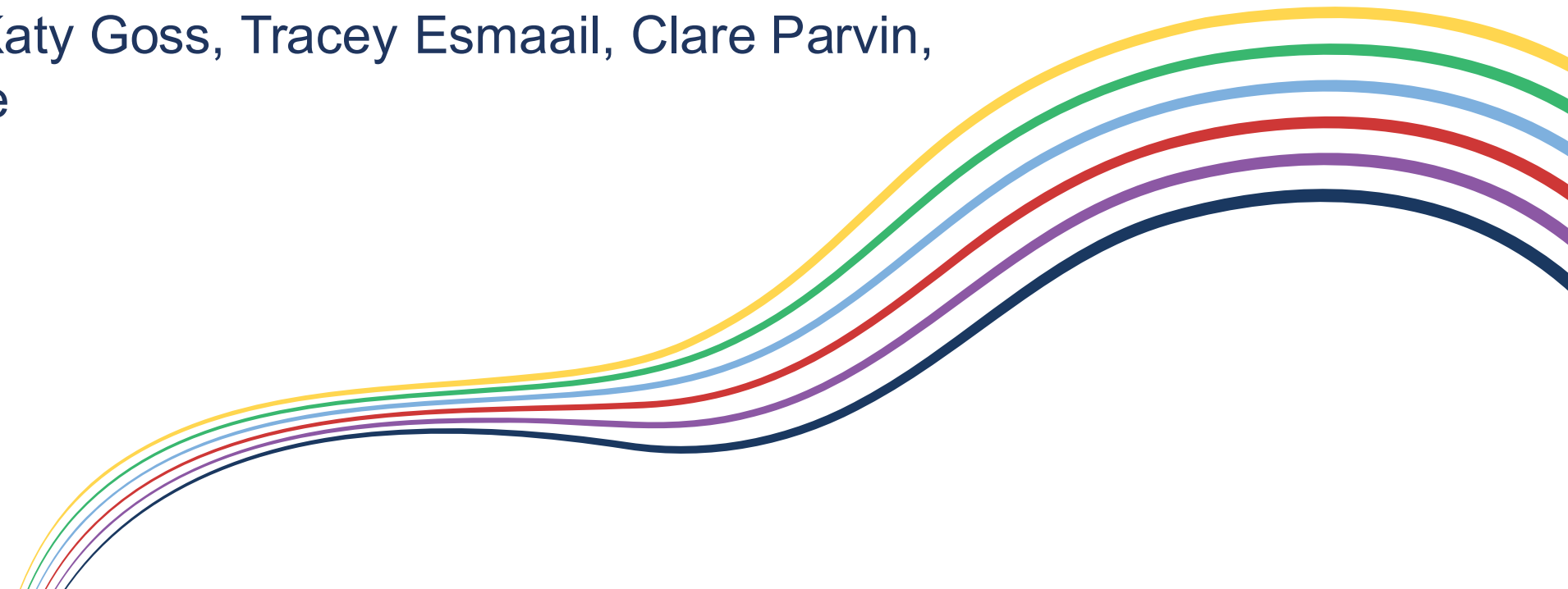
Widening Access, Equality and Careers

Who are we?



From left to right: Ceri Beckett, Ruth Evans, Margaret Lake, Katy Goss, Tracey Esmaail, Clare Parvin, Melanie Lloyd, Nia Leather, Victoria Williams, Julianne Guinee

Missing from photo: Leanne Baker



Widening Access, Equality and Careers



Apprentice Academy

The Apprentice Academy has placed a strong emphasis on supporting the progression of existing Health Board staff. This approach ensures that colleagues already within the organisation have equitable access to training and qualifications that enable career development and progression. By doing so, we are not only investing in our workforce but also strengthening organisational resilience and sustainability. This work has been delivered in close collaboration with Workforce Planning colleagues, aligning apprenticeship opportunities with succession planning priorities and addressing hard-to-recruit roles. The strategy has had a measurable impact on staff retention, with numerous colleagues successfully progressing into higher-level roles as a direct result of targeted development interventions; linking with the 'apprenticeships for all' principle to ensure that apprenticeship opportunities are included as part of the workforce plan for recruitment and staff development.

Interventions have included:

- Apprenticeship pathways targeted at individuals without traditional academic routes

Working with departments to offer apprenticeship vacancies

- Digital – 4.0 WTE
- Estates – 2.0 WTE
- Health Care Support – 9.0 WTE

Supporting existing staff with apprenticeship qualifications – currently 269 staff members on learning programmes

Development of Admin Academy and delivery of specific courses needed for progression

- Total number of staff attending = 61
- Staff promoted to Medical Secretary role because of gaining qualifications needed to apply for vacancies

Apprentice Academy



Rhys, Taylor, Matthew and Rhys with Gower College tutor Anne Fellowes

Rachel Jones
 Congratulations to all involved. A wonderful success story. Part of the Gower College who worked these opportunities. Rhys, Taylor, Matthew and Rhys making us all proud of you. #apprentice

Lisa Jones
 Well done all of you so proud of you especially Rhys my grandson

Gemma Louise Charles
Sarah Jane Cole it's lovely seeing Rhys working hard and always with a smile on his face

Beverley Reynolds
Lisa Jones your grandson He's working in the kitchen now, such a polite boy too

Sarah Jane Cole
Gemma Louise Walters aww thank you he really enjoys it there lovely to see him smiling

Claire Evans-Gwyther
Sarah Jane Cole I second this! Super grateful to all involved ❤️ my Rhys absolutely loves it too 🥰

Joni Bush
Sarah Jane Cole well in Rhys lad 🙌

Jessica-Kate Jones
Sarah Jane Cole I see Rhys regularly around the hospital. He's so lovely and always smiling. He's always polite when coming to our department. Great job Rhys! 🙌🙌🙌

Conrad-Kare
 This is wonderful proud of you STF xxxx

Lisa Jones
Beverley Reynolds Rhys of the other boys is Rhys met them all and they are x

Shellwyn Wi
 Absolutely amazing 🙌 so and the excellent work you achieved.



Vocational Training Programme

The Health Board's Vocational Training programme is specifically targeted at unemployed individuals from diverse or disadvantaged backgrounds. Working in close partnership with the Department for Work and Pensions and Communities for Work Plus, the model offers a 12-week wraparound programme combining real-world NHS work placements, employability support, job coaching and structured reviews. The ultimate goal is to equip participants with the confidence, skills, and qualifications needed to transition into meaningful careers within the NHS.

In the 2025/26 period, **37** trainees were accepted onto the training programme. Of those candidates, **15** went on to secure employment following completion, **9 within SBUHB** and 6 with other local employers.



Vocational Training Programme

Dear Tracey

Hope you are doing well. I wanted to take a moment to express my sincere gratitude for taking me in under your wings as a Vocational Trainee. As you know when we first communicated, I was struggling to find a job. But when we spoke you patiently listened, understood my situation and needs and came through for me. And voila! Thanks to you there I was a trainee at Morriston Hospital A&E. My training at A&E was my spring after the long winter. And Tracey it happened through you! I can't express how thankful I am...

Today as you know God's grace, I have a job as a HCSW at Morriston Hospital generosity. I'm eligible to do bank shifts at A&E. You opened these doors for me Tracey and have backed me up, especially with getting through the bank administrator application. Without your constant input that wouldn't have been possible.

I know at times I have been annoyingly hounding you with my problems, doubts, queries etc. etc. but you have been so very patient with everything and calmed me down, sorted my issues and have always been kind, patient and generous. Please know that I will always be grateful for your goodness and generosity, and I hope to one day I have the opportunity to pay it forward and make a difference in someone else's life, just as you have done in mine.

Tracey, once again THANK YOU from the bottom of my heart.

With Warmest Regards



Vocational Training Programme

After being a stay-at-home mum for 10 years I had no idea of how I was going to get back into the working world. I was extremely anxious and had lost all my confidence. I had attended college to do business studies before I started a family but had no experience. I was looking in to try to find a refresher course to update my skills but found out about Swansea Bay Health Board's Vocational Training. This was perfect for me as I could update my skills as I worked on my 12-week placement plus gain experience.

Although still anxious I received great support from Tracey, who quickly put me at ease. I was placed in SBUHB HQ. From day 1 I felt totally at ease, all the staff made me feel welcome. In the 12 weeks I was on placement I learnt so much and had lovely feedback and I am over the moon that I am now working here. I would never have imagined this possible for myself and would never have had the confidence to do it without going through the Vocational Training Placement. I cannot thank Tracey and her team enough for helping me with this opportunity!!




Careers

An example of the team celebrating different careers in the NHS, and opening up opportunities is the work done in partnership with Carers Trust Wales, the Widening Access, Equality and Careers team along with Practice Education Facilitators within Corporate Nursing, hosted a discovery day for young carers, many of whom face social disadvantage and educational disruption due to their caring responsibilities.

Through career workshops and a series of interactive role tasters, the young carers explored future possibilities in a trauma-informed and supportive environment. The event also helped to build confidence, aspiration and a sense of belonging, with feedback highlighting the value of being “seen” and supported by NHS professionals.



Caring Superpowers



- Your skills already make a difference
- **What you do matters** and your life experience gives you insight and maturity
- You understand care in a way that can't be taught in books
- The NHS needs people just like you
- There are many different routes into a healthcare career





lechyd gwell
Gofal gwell
Bywyd gwell

Better health
Better care
Better lives



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Bae Abertawe
Swansea Bay University
Health Board