

Abstract

The use of the UCLan Mountain Medicine and other Masters programmes as a recruitment tool for healthcare organisations with difficulties in recruitment and retention

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AUTHORS



Tim Sanders¹ Doctor *  [<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8581-2184>]



Stuart Maitland-Knibb² Director

CORRESPONDENCE

*Dr Tim Sanders tsanders2@lancashire.ac.uk

AFFILIATIONS

¹ Cumbria Health on Call, Carlisle, Cumbria, UK

² National Centre of Remote and Rural Medicine, School of Medicine, University of Central Lancashire, UK

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Abstract

Introduction: A variety of incentives are used to stimulate recruitment to remote and rural locations. In this presentation, we share experiences at the University of Central Lancashire of forming partnerships with National Health Service (NHS) organisations to offer investment in careers as a recruitment and retention tool.

Methods: Qualitative structured interviews.

Results: NHS organisations priorities were to find cost-effective and successful strategies to recruit and retain workers. Many had tried financial incentives, including 'golden handshakes' and 'golden handcuffs' but found them ineffective or unaffordable. Prospective employee priorities were multifactorial, including a

desire for flexibility, manageable workload and the ability to develop their personal and career interests. Whilst rates of pay were important, one-off lump sum payments were viewed as having lower value.

Discussion: This partnership approach has helped us develop MSc programmes that fit with the needs of their services and innovatively support their recruitment aims. We have also given voice to the needs of our learners, for example by encouraging job planning approaches that facilitate the prolonged blocks of leave required for acclimatisation of practitioners of Mountain Medicine to travel to high altitude. When explored, advertised one-off lump sum payments amounts were perceived as being misleading due to tax deductions, diminishing their utility as a 'feel good' factor in

retention. Conversely, gradual investment over time, using academic study as an enabler for flexible job planning combined with a feeling that their employer supported some of their drivers

and values contributed to a greater sense of commitment by employees.

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