

Responding to changing population needs

“The Hidden Army”

Richard O'Connell
Therapy Support Services Team Leader
Birmingham Children's Hospital



let's make it better

Aims of presentation

- To share my perspective on how the role of assistants have changed
- Share examples of developing & advancing assistant workforce
- Highlight challenges assistants face
- To inspire you to think differently promoting the potential in therapy assistants
- To invite discussion how this model could influence use of assistants across Europe.



“THE HIDDEN ARMY”

Clinical support workers account for 29.9% of
the NHS entire workforce.

NHS Provisional Workforce Statistics June 2016



11 Years ago at BCH

1 x Senior Therapy Assistant (Band 3)

2 x Therapy Assistants (Band 2)



BCH Therapy Assistant Team 2015 – 12 posts

Therapy Assistant Team Leader and Assistant Co-ordinator for Major Trauma (Band 5)

1 x Therapy Assistant Practitioner (Band 4)

4x Senior Therapy Assistants (Band 3)

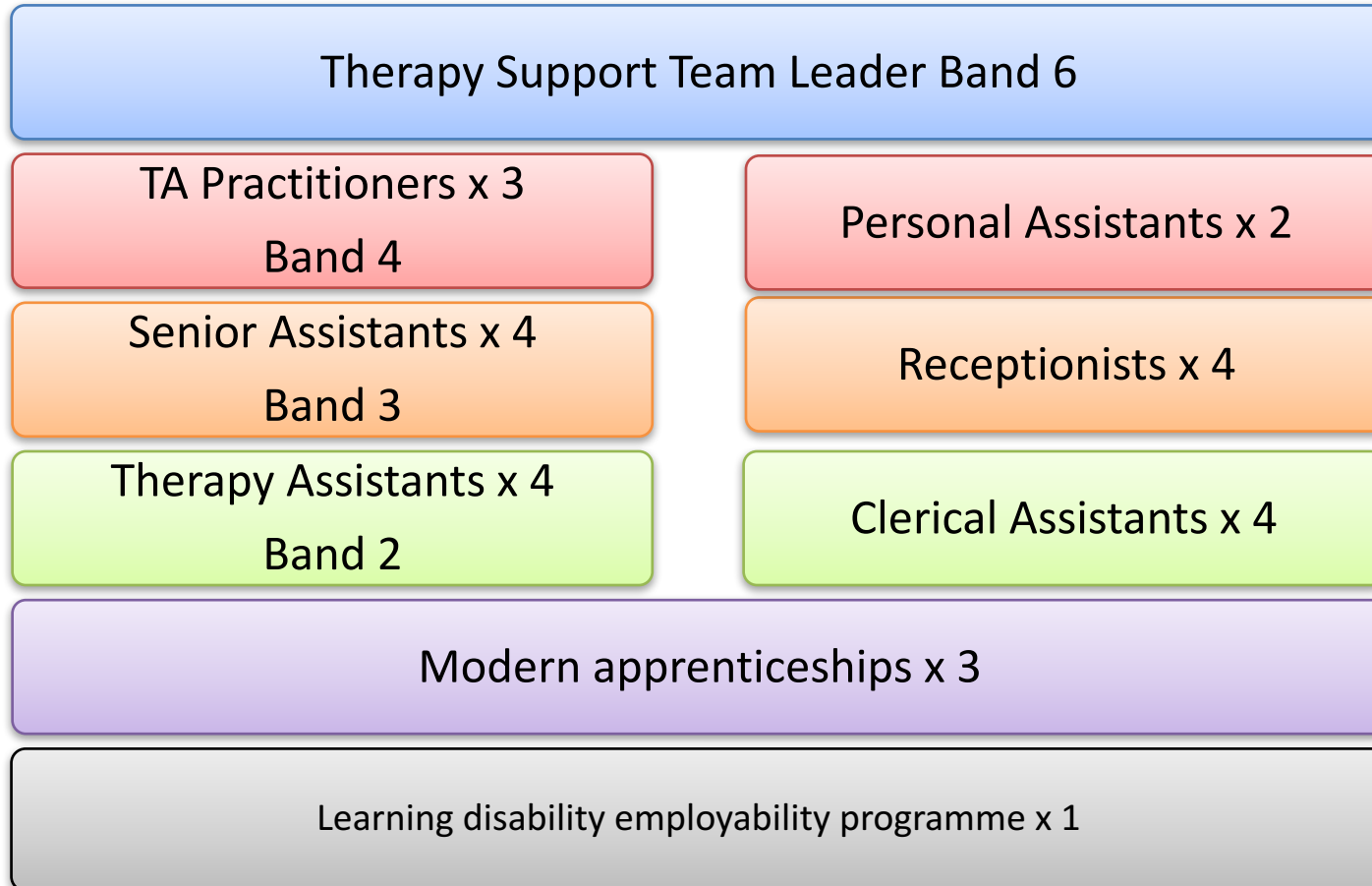
4 x Therapy Assistant (Band 2)

1 x Modern apprenticeships

1 x Learning disability employability programme



Team Today – 26 posts



Modern apprenticeships

- Paid Fixed Term 15 month Contract
- On the job experience
- Day release college
- Recognised health care qualification



Band 4 Therapy Assistant Practitioners

- Neuro Rehabilitation & Orthotics
- Major Trauma and Occupational Therapy
- Acute Respiratory / Complex Respiratory Care (recent recruitment)



Influencing factors for change

Patients living longer with complex needs / surviving Trauma

Ever growing population needs increasing demands on service

Increasing healthcare cost & needing to work differently

Challenges recruiting individuals with required experience & skills



Challenges to working differently

Time, Investment and Organisational Commitment

Resistance to change / seen as a threat by some

Ensuring competence and confidence

Limited assistant specific recognised qualifications

Impact on patient care & experience



Benefits of developing an assistant workforce

Right job done by the right person with the right skills

Allows trial of new ideas i.e. expand TA role in new rotations

Opportunities for others who may not normally get this

Aid Recruitment & Retention – “Train to Retain”

Increase Therapy Profile – involvement and development of schemes

‘Grow your own’ – right skills and competencies



Future Hopes, Aims & Aspirations

Development of Advanced Assistant Practitioner Roles

Continued Investment in assistant roles & opportunities

To see development of recognised qualifications

Increased opportunity to progress to professional registration

To see registration of Advancing Assistant Practitioners



let's make it better

Useful Links



Megan's Story

www.aspireatbch.com

**NHS Employers - Government
Apprenticeship Levy**



let's make it better