Spotlight on Careers in Digital Health and Care

The 4th Industrial Revolution is transforming the world of work in almost every area and the Health and Care sector is no exception. The workforce is required to be more agile and flexible to keep up with the accelerating pace of technology change and an increasing elderly population and their growing health and care needs. One of the fastest growing economic sectors globally is Digital Health and Care, spearheading the digitisation of health and care services. A recognised factor restricting the growth of Digital Health and Care in Scotland is the lack of a suitably skilled workforce. This is costly as across the UK economy, the annual expense of skills shortages is an additional £2bn in higher salaries, recruitment costs and temporary staffing bills.

Based on earlier research carried out by the DHI, the occupational categories in most urgent need of staff in the Digital Health and Care sector are:

1. Software Developers
2. Product Owners
3. Implementation Facilitators
4. Knowledge Engineers
5. Health Data Analysts
6. Cyber Security Specialists

Our report, produced in partnership with Skills Development Scotland, examines the nature of these roles, the required skills and capabilities of people employed in them, the education and career pathways taken by professionals currently engaged in these roles and the currently available educational pathways into them. The main purpose of the study is to highlight issues underlying the lack of clear career pathways into these roles and offer pointers for organisations involved in planning the education and training provision for the (Digital) Health and Care sector in Scotland.

Key findings

General lack of awareness of the existing career opportunities and emerging job roles in the Digital Health and Care sector.

The emergence of new job roles at the interface of humans and technology translating data, knowledge and information between these.

The increasing importance of distinctly human soft skills which are not replicable by technology.

Valuable opportunities for considering common approaches to education, skills development and career planning.

Summary of recommendations

Based on the findings of the report, DHI recommends the following:

1 Raise awareness of career opportunities in Digital Health and Care among career advisers, parents, school staff, students, education providers, perhaps via a strategic information campaign.

2 Strategic collaboration between the industry/employers and the education and skills system – to influence core curriculum, create education and career pathways, and embed placements and internships as part of degrees.

3 Improve the attractiveness of the Digital Health and Care sector by focusing on unique selling points (genuine challenge, values).

4 Raise awareness of the core skills and capabilities required in the sector, including soft skills, among education and training providers, employers, students etc.

5 Create a core education/training provision for the six categories, allowing for opportunities for specialisation later on in the degree, and for a more flexible movement between job categories.

6 Create early career opportunities for translational job categories.

7 Create CPD opportunities to upskill/reskill existing staff and attract new talent to the sector – young people as well as experienced staff (incl. career changers) from other parts of the economy.

Read full report:

https://bit.ly/2kL1LFB

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