**Guidance for Practices and PCNs: Bidding for Resilience Funding to Support Hosting a NEL GPN VTS Trainee**

This guidance is designed to help GP practices and Primary Care Networks (PCNs) prepare a strong and compelling bid for Primary Care Resilience Funding to support the costs of hosting a General Practice Nurse Vocational Training Scheme (GPN VTS) trainee.

The aim is to ensure applications clearly demonstrate the value of investing in trainee nurses as a strategic workforce development measure, aligned with both local and national priorities.

1. **Align Your Bid to Strategic Priorities**

When preparing your application, ensure you show how your proposal supports:

* NEL ICB Workforce Priorities – expanding the general practice nursing workforce, strengthening supervision, and creating sustainable career pathways.
* NHS England’s “Train, Retain and Reform” vision – building the future workforce through structured training and development.
* NHS Long Term Plan – improving access, prevention, and continuity of care in community settings.
* Fuller Stocktake Vision – embedding general practice at the heart of integrated, multidisciplinary neighbourhood teams.

**2. Clearly Present the Case for Investment**

Use evidence and clear arguments to explain why funding is essential now:

* Workforce pipeline risk – Highlight that the NEL GPN VTS provides a direct route for training nurses locally, with evidence showing 60% of nurses who train locally remain in the area post-qualification.
* Loss of national training grant – Emphasise the gap left by the withdrawal of academic training grant funding for GPNs in 2025/26 and the urgent need for local investment.
* Rising workforce pressures – Refer to the ageing GPN workforce and risk of retirements in the next 5–10 years.
* Impact on patient care – Show how the trainee will increase appointment capacity, improve continuity, and support same-day access for patients.

**3. Demonstrate Tangible Benefits**

For Patients

* Faster access to care, including chronic disease reviews and vaccinations.
* Improved health equity through targeted support in high-need areas.
* Continuity and trust by embedding nurses in the local community.

For Practices/PCNs

* A sustainable pipeline of skilled nurses, reducing reliance on agency staff.
* Cost savings over time through retention and reduced turnover.
* Increased capacity to deliver preventative and proactive care.

**4. Show Financial Responsibility**

Detail how the resilience funding will be used alongside existing funding streams:

* Salary support for the trainee nurse.
* Supervision and mentorship costs, aligned with NEL mentorship frameworks.
* Training costs through the GPN VTS academic and clinical programme.
* Integration with ARRS funding where applicable for PCN-based roles.

If possible, present an itemised budget similar to the financial modelling provided by NEL Training Hub.

**5. Evidence Sustainability and Impact**

Funders want assurance that the investment will have a lasting effect. In your bid:

* Commit to tracking patient access metrics, staff retention rates, and trainee progression into permanent roles.
* Describe how the trainee role supports Integrated Neighbourhood Team priorities.
* Explain your plan for continued employment post-programme.

**6. Address the Risk of Not Proceeding**

A strong application should also outline the risks if the funding is not awarded:

* Reduced ability to meet patient demand, especially in high-need areas.
* Weakening of the nursing workforce pipeline.
* Increased reliance on costly locum or agency staff.
* Missed opportunities to address health inequalities.

**7. Structure Your Application Effectively**

When submitting your funding request:

1. Executive Summary – 1–2 paragraphs summarising the proposal.
2. Strategic Fit – Alignment with local and national priorities.
3. Case for Investment – Why now, supported by workforce and patient need data.
4. Proposed Funding Use – Clear, costed breakdown.
5. Expected Outcomes – Measurable benefits for patients and workforce.
6. Sustainability Plan – Long-term vision beyond the funding period.

**Final Tip: Tell a Strong Local Story**

Where possible, use local workforce data and examples from your practice/PCN to illustrate need. Funders respond best to bids that combine strong evidence with real-world context.