

Specialist Exam Support across Wessex -2021 Update

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Exam Co-Leads

Specialist Support Group

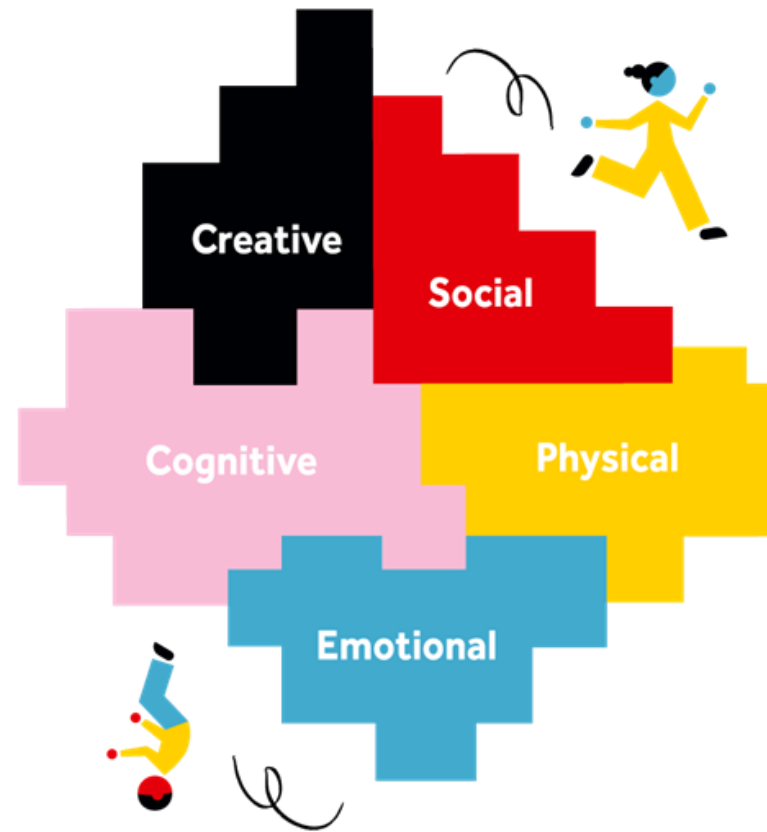
(Specialty Schools and GP School)

Wessex Professional Support and Wellbeing Unit (PSW)

Introductions and background

- Intros:
 - Poppy
 - Chris
- Evolution:
 - Colin Coles – up to 2017
 - Poppy Mackie and Hilary Swales – 2017 - 2020
 - Poppy Mackie and Chris Elfes – 2020 - current
- Ethos:
 - Central to all our work is a holistic approach to exam support

Exam support – holistic approach.

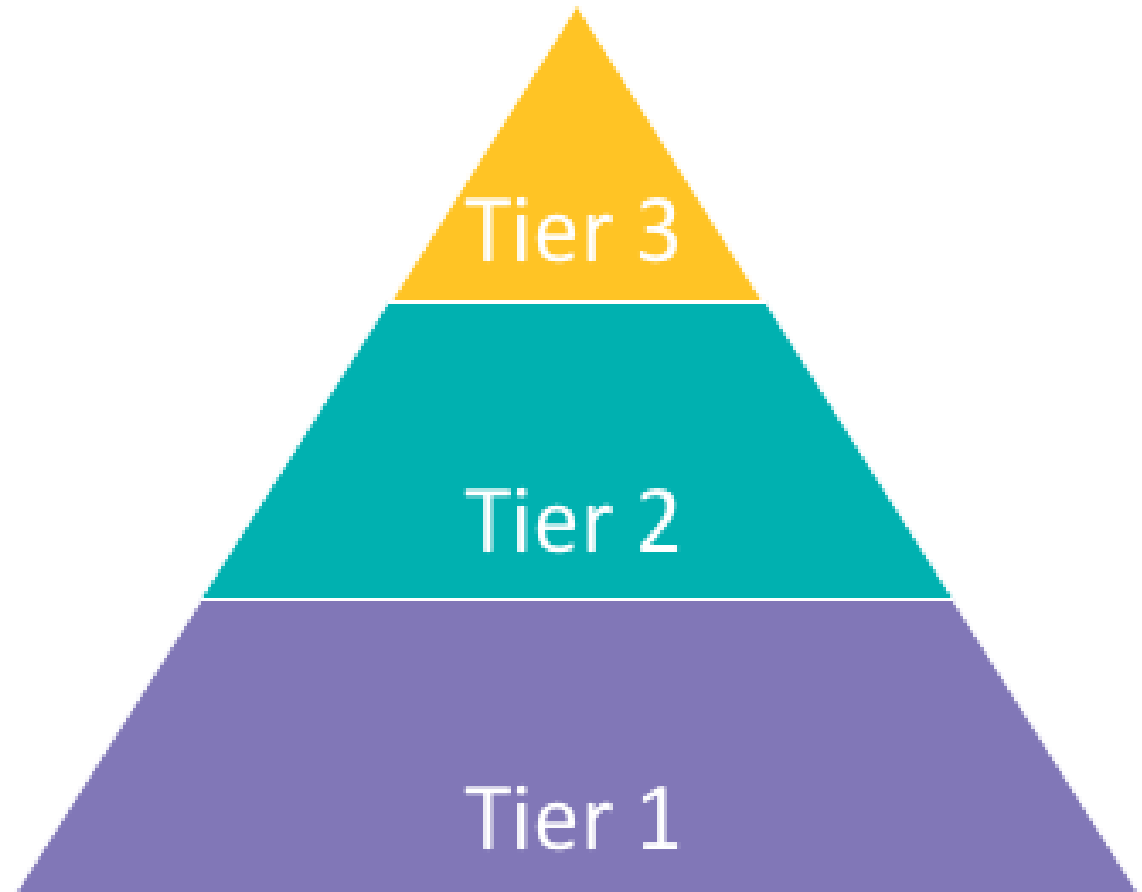


Extent of the challenge

- High referral rate to PSW
- Personal cost – personally, professionally and financially
- Cost to the Deanery - £75k per 6 month extension
- Workforce issues – shortages of trained specialists, slows or halts progress
- Differential attainment – evidence of this locally and nationally

Strategy 2021 – a fresh look.

- The 3 Tiers
- Workforce Psychology Group
- GP School review
- Specialty School – HOS survey
- NE Deanery review



Workforce Psychology Group

- Supervisor Frameworks for discussion (EM, GP, Paeds, Psych)
- Based on Ten Success Factors
- Key principles
- Six key themes
 - Trainee Background – personal
 - Trainee Background – work/educational
 - Support from others – senior colleagues/mentors, peers
 - Opportunities for learning
 - Career preferences/awareness
 - Exams

WSG Ten Success Factors

Working and learning environment	
1	Treating learners as individuals - recognition of trainee's background and experience in and outside of work
2	An inclusive workplace that values diversity - recognition of a trainee's experience of the workplace
Who supports learning	
3	Access to senior colleagues who act as informal role-models, mentors or career coaches - supporting development and access to opportunities
4	Access to a supportive trainer or supervisor who encourages and supports trainees with their development
5	Having support and validation of peers - access to network of peers who can improve learning, provide advice and guidance
What supports learning	
6	Personal motivation and drive to succeed in training
7	Having working arrangements that facilitate learning - e.g. shifts/rotas/structures that enable relationships to build and time for learning
8	Maximising the value of learning - access to learning (at training and in work) that is valuable, holistic and helps inform career choices
9	Clarity, certainty and support for career choices - access to opportunities that support informed decisions about career choices or next steps
10	Support to pass exams or deal with exam failure

GP School Review

Transferrable generic principles

- Improve PSW Communication
- Support Educators
 - better prevention
 - earlier diagnosis
- Share best practice
- Positive language
- ES Handover
- Outcomes

Highlights from Schools Survey.

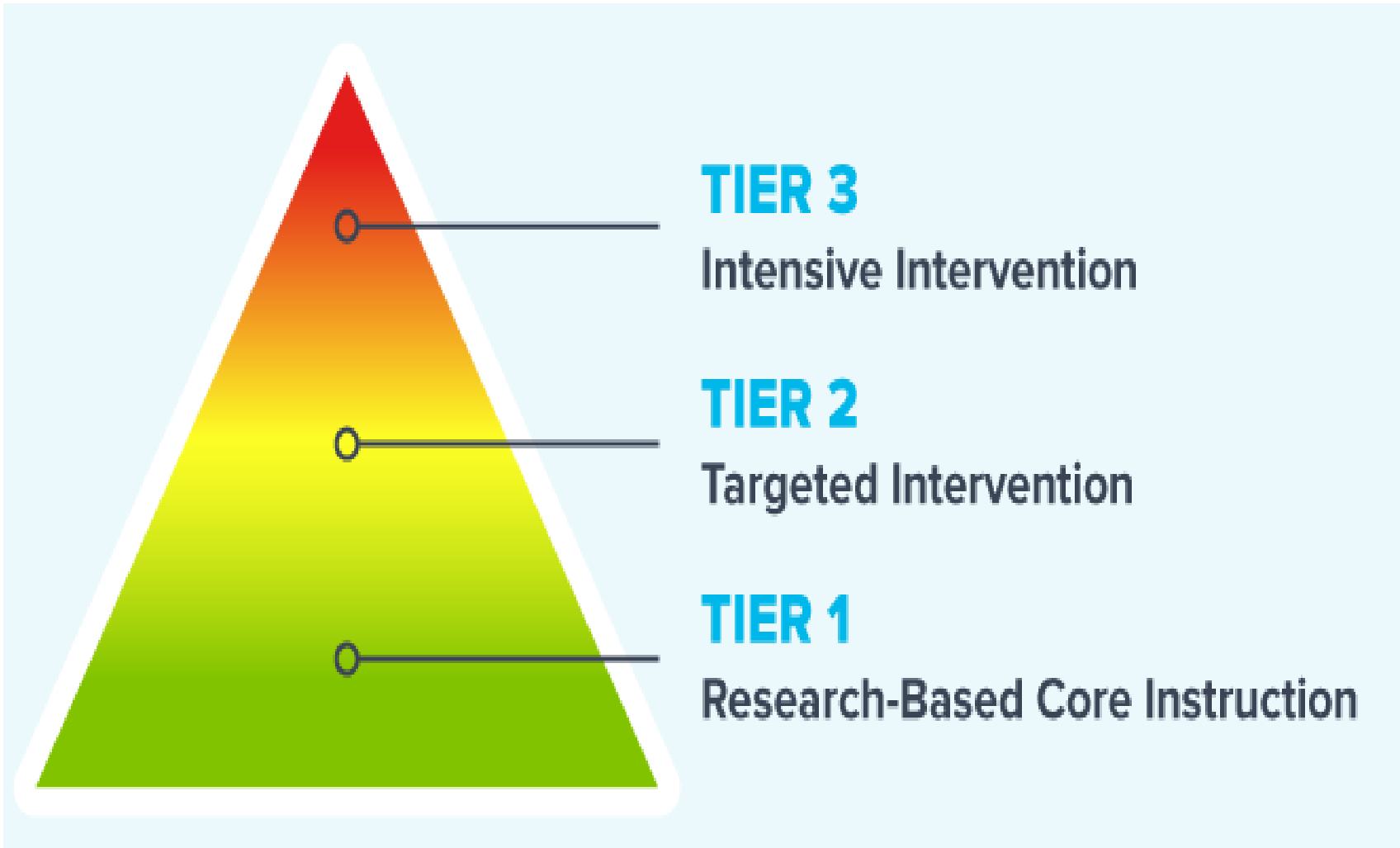
- Recognising the standard required for the exam
- Easy to get 'out of touch'
- Need coordinated support throughout School – experts/examiners/pockets of expertise
- Peer groups – ad hoc and organized through teaching (senior trainees to junior trainees)
- Exam focused teaching
- ES support variable
- Recognising struggling trainees early - dyslexia
- Awareness of differential attainment
- Wider support PSW and more accessible

NE Deanery review key messages.

- Need to bolster the support available
- Sharing of ideas and resources
- Concept of the Tiers
- 'Exam Game Plan'

The 3 Tiers.





Tier 1 - principles

- Getting off to a good start!
- Trainee – engagement, organisation, planning
- Trainer – supportive exam focused discussions, ‘checking-in’, recommendations, motivation, pick-up any early concerns
- School – exam support through raising awareness, teaching programmes and exam focused activities

Tier 1

Already in practice

- Local support – ES/CT/ Dept
- Educational resources tailored to the exam – courses and teaching programmes
- Trainers with an interest
- Peer support

Areas to develop

- ES checklist to help frame exam discussions
- ‘Exam champions’ – accessible to all
- Website – videos, resources to help trainees from outset, Wessex Exam Game Plan
- Support development of peer study groups

Website advert

- **Wessex PDU Courses**

<https://wessex.hee.nhs.uk/learning-and-development/courses/>

- **Wessex Self-Help videos**

<https://wessex.hee.nhs.uk/wellbeing-and-support/exam-support/self-help/>

- **Wessex Exam Game Plan**

<https://wessex.hee.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2021/04/Wessex-Trainee-Pack-Exam-Game.pdf>

Tier 2.

- Additional resources available – based around common themes recognized within exam support
- Courses
- Referral to specialists such as exam champions/local examiners
- TPD/wider educational support team involvement too
- Accessible to all – avoid ‘postcode lottery’, and awareness of other factors that influence accessibility

Tier 2.

Already in practice

- Support from TPD / level 2 – supported reflection on previous attempt and exam preparation
- Exam focused support groups / offerings within School

Areas to develop

- Exam skills courses – ‘preparation for success’ and ‘VERP’
- Refer to ‘exam champion’ in specialty
- Supported reflection on previous attempt and exam preparation
- Widely accessible to all trainees – co-ordinated and advertised

Exam skills courses.

- Exam skills – preparation for success
 - 1 day
 - ‘All aspects of revision planning’
 - Wellbeing
 - Cultural issues
 - Advanced communication skills
 - Post course 1:1 follow up advanced communication session
- Exam skills – Video Enhanced Reflective Practice (VERP)
 - Group session – 3 hours
 - 2 sessions 1:1 with psychologist

Tier 3

- Bespoke individualised support
- Cannot jump straight to Tier 3 – need to work through Tiers 1 and 2 fully first
- Takes time to adopt and changes and influence outcome, so please refer early – ideally 3-6 months prior to next attempt.

Tier 3

Already in practice

- Referral to PSW for bespoke individualised support
- Dyslexia assessment – plus consider other neurodiversity

Areas to develop

- Earlier access – after 1 attempt
- ‘Open door’ to discuss concerns at an earlier stage
- Newly expanded team
- Additional follow-up session with trainee
- ES development - specialty specific courses
- Dyslexia screening at induction

Tier 3 – key PSW developments.

- Earlier access – after just one failed attempt
- Bigger team – ‘Exam support case managers’
- Additional session(s)
- Links with wider SSG
- Dyslexia developments – induction screening
- Poppy and Chris – leads for ‘Specialty Schools’ and ‘GP School’
- ‘Open-door’ to encourage discussion at an early stage and support
- Link with ES development
- Specialty School- exam support updates
- Developing pathways of support – needs engagement
- Differential attainment

Referral process

- Online referral forms PSW.WX@hee.nhs.uk 01962 690309
- Streamlined process
- Trainee to complete learning differences questionnaire – all screened for dyslexia on referral
- Once ready to allocate to an Exam Support Case Manager, to make contact within a week and arrange meeting, ideally within 2 weeks.
- Exam Support Case Manager to inform referrer that meeting has taken place
- Report written and shared with trainee, and then trainer with trainee consent.

Dyslexia / learning differences.

- All screened on referral
- If score >45, referred to Dyslexia team for review
- One hour consultation to explore in greater depth prior to committing to 3 hour full assessment
- Full assessment as appropriate
- Coaching session x2 following this

Wellbeing

- Trainees are poorly prepared for the experience of exam failure
- Motivation impaired significantly
- Exam nerves / anxiety can be high
- Knock-on effect in other areas of work and life
- Low confidence – can affect work too, with potential patient safety concerns too
- Underpins success

'Open door policy'.

- Newsletter
- Generic email
- Feedback

Plans for the future.....

- Further engagement with all Schools – developing pathways, trainers with a focus on exam support, resources, upskilling trainers
- More exam support provided by PSW – bolstered support with funded additional session(s), referral to wider SSG as required, increased investment and awareness of dyslexia and other neurodiversity requirements
- Ongoing development of resources – courses, videos, website, Wessex Exam Game Plan
- Accessibility and regular updates – email and newsletter
- Trainee involvement and experience

Question time....