# South East Imaging Practice Educator Funding 2024/25

## Information for South East NHS Trusts and Imaging Networks on how to access this funding, including the application process.

For any queries about this funding or details within this document, please contact the **NHS England South East Cancer and Diagnostic Programme,** part of the **Workforce, Training & Education directorate**, [england.canceranddiagnostics.se@nhs.net](mailto:england.canceranddiagnostics.se@nhs.net)

**Key Messages**

## 2024/25 funding for the NHS England South East Cancer & Diagnostics (C&D) Programme, part of the Workforce, Training & Education Directorate (WT&E) has not yet been confirmed.

## We are hopeful that the 2024/25 C&D Programme budget will include funding to support the *development of Imaging Practice Education* and we are therefore progressing with the application stage; applications will be reviewed and provisionally approved, subject to funding confirmation from the National Cancer & Diagnostics Programme.

## This document details the 2024/25 offer for the ongoing development of imaging practice education. The funding offer is designed to afford flexibility in supporting regional and local workforce plans and aims to enable and facilitate the integration of education and training activities within efficient service delivery. To further support this, there will be an impact of investment analysis within 2024/25 and 2025/26. This funding:

* is available to support new or existing PE roles operating within trusts, Community Diagnostic Centres (CDCs) or the regional imaging training academy hub sites.
* can be used to develop new ways to support learners, including alternative models of delivery, focused pastoral support, and coaching and mentoring.
* Can be used to develop regional Practice Education networks.
* Is available to provide further education and training for existing and aspiring Practice Educators within Radiography [Diagnostic and Therapeutic], Mammography [including screening], Ultrasound/Sonography, Radiology Nursing, Medical Physics\*, and Imaging Clinical Technology.
* is being offered to Trusts that sit within the South East Imaging Network footprints, including Dorset and Milton Keynes.

*\*Please note: separate discussions are taking place with healthcare science colleagues regarding the 2023/24 regional Medical Physicist [MP] Practice Educators, and they are therefore not included in this guidance. Applications should therefore only be for Trust-based MP Practice Educators not funded in 2023/24*

**Deadline for funding applications**

* To apply for funding, please complete [Imaging Practice Education application form](https://app.onlinesurveys.jisc.ac.uk/s/healtheducationyh/application-form-5)
* **The application window will open in early March and will close at 9am on Tuesday 2 April 2024** to support funding being transferred in June 2024 via the NHSE Education Contract schedule if possible. It is possible that a second application round will run later in the year, subject to available funding but at this stage we aren’t able to confirm this.

Funding is required to be spent and fully utilised by 31 March 2025, and chosen courses and formal education must start **before** 31 March 2025. For any queries, please contact [england.canceranddiagnostics.se@nhs.net](mailto:england.canceranddiagnostics.se@nhs.net)

**Overview**

High quality and sustainable practice education provision is required to support the growth in the numbers of learners within the NHS as well as promote and improve key issues such as retention, career development and job satisfaction. The [NHSE Educator Workforce Strategy](https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/educator-workforce-strategy) [published March 2023] highlights the role of education and training in alleviating workforce shortages; specifically, its importance in securing a future workforce, retaining the current workforce, and maximizing the productivity of the workforce by optimizing capacity and confidence. Investing in high quality practice educators is a key enabler.

The 2024/25 NHSE SE funding is to support and enable investment at a regional level to **develop, increase and improve the quality of practice education provision** for the imaging workforce and other associated professions and/or clinical specialties. The funding offer is designed to **afford flexibility in supporting regional and local workforce plans** going forward and aims to **enable and facilitate the integration of education and training activities within efficient service delivery.**

The funding is aimed at providing practice education opportunities and support for the following staff groups.

* Clinical support workers
* Assistant Practitioners
* Radiographers –both therapeutic and diagnostic
* Sonographers
* Mammography workforce – including associate practitioners, mammographers and breast screeners.
* Clinical technologists working within imaging
* Medical Physicists
* Registered nurses working within imaging

**The funding offer**

Once agreed, funding will be paid in a lump sum to the organisation. Funding is required to be spent within this financial year, so by 31 March 2025, and chosen courses and formal education [where applicable] must start before 31 March 2025.

Funding can be utilised in a range of ways to support the imaging and radiography workforce including:

1. Supporting new or existing PE roles operating within trusts, Community Diagnostic Centres (CDC’s) or imaging training academies.
2. Developing new ways to support learners - alternative models of delivery, focused pastoral support, coaching/mentoring opportunities etc.
3. Projects which look to improve the quality of practice education provision, linking specifically to one or more of the priorities set out in the NHS England Educator Workforce Strategy e.g., establishing initiatives which provide coordinated educator support and development, emphasizing the importance of educator well-being.
4. Development of regional PE networks - to facilitate collaboration between educators in practice and support the sharing of best practice and resources to promote high quality practice education provision.
5. Providing further education and training for people already working in PE roles and for those who aspire to work as a PE in the future. As suggested in the [SoR Educational and Career Framework (2022),](https://www.sor.org/learning-advice/professional-body-guidance-and-publications/documents-and-publications/policy-guidance-document-library/education-and-career-framework-fourth) this should ideally be accredited and delivered at level 7 i.e. PGCE or similar where appropriate

Where appropriate, please consider how the investment could support the use of the Allied Health Professionals Educator Career Framework, and the Society of Radiographers Education and Career Framework.

Applications should be for individuals. It is expected that the work of individual Trust/Department based Practice Educators will complement the work of Imaging Network Practice Educators, and South East Medical Physics/Clinical Technologist Practice Educators.

**How to access this funding**

Please note the different approaches for **Radiography** vs **Radiotherapy**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. **Radiotherapy Departments** | Please complete the [Imaging Practice Education application form](https://app.onlinesurveys.jisc.ac.uk/s/healtheducationyh/application-form-5) | | |
|  |  | |  |
| 1. **Radiology Departments/ Imaging Departments** | | | |
| **Imaging Network** | **Trusts** | **Imaging Network Contact** | **Action required** |
| **SE1** – Thames Valley & Milton Keynes | * Buckinghamshire Healthcare * Milton Keynes University Hospitals * Oxford University Hospitals * Royal Berkshire | Lisa Crowie – Programme Lead, Thames Valley Radiology Network (TVRN) [l.crowie@nhs.net](mailto:l.crowie@nhs.net) | If you are from an NHS Trust within **SE1, SE3 or SE4** Imaging Network, please link with your relevant Imaging Network Workforce Lead in the first instance; they will work with you to agree 2024/25 application submissions. |
| **SE3** – Hampshire, Isle of Wight & Dorset [Wessex] | * Dorset County Hospitals * Hampshire Hospitals * Isle of Wight * Portsmouth Hospitals University * Southern Health * University Hospitals Southampton * University Hospitals Dorset | Mary So – Imaging Network Lead, SE3 Wessex Imaging Network (WIN) [mary.so@hhft.nhs.net](mailto:mary.so@hhft.nhs.net) |
| **SE4** – Kent & Medway | * Dartford & Gravesham * East Kent Hospitals University * Maidstone & Tunbridge Wells * Medway | Emma Ince – Workforce Senior Responsible Officer – Kent & Medway Imaging Network (KMIN) [eince@ nhs.net](mailto:mary.so@hhft.nhs.net) |
| **SE2** – Surrey, Sussex & Frimley. | * Ashford & St. Peter’s Hospitals * East Sussex Healthcare * Frimley Health * Queen Victoria Hospital * Royal Surrey County Hospital * Surrey & Sussex Healthcare * University Hospitals Sussex | If you are from an NHS Trust within the **SE2** Imaging Network, please complete the application form.  If you would like to discuss your application with SE2 Imaging Network before you submit it, please contact Sayeh Alavi, Interim Managing Director for SE2 [sayeh.alavi@nhs.net](mailto:sayeh.alavi@nhs.net) | |

The application window will open at **midday on Monday 4 March and will close at 9am on Tuesday 2 April 2024** to support funding being transferred in June 2024 via the NHSE Education Contract schedule if possible.

**Please note**: applications must not be submitted by individual learners themselves; all applications must be submitted on behalf of the named learner e.g. by a line manager/head of department/education lead etc.

All applications will be reviewed by the NHSE SE Cancer and Diagnostics Programme team [WT&E]. It is possible that a second application round will run later in the year, subject to available funding but at this stage we aren’t able to confirm this.

**Expectations of organisations upon application of funding**

* If approved, all investment will be subject to reporting requirements (outlined below).
* If approved, that all funding is managed appropriately in line with individual organisation’s financial management and assurance processes.

**Reporting and monitoring investment**

NHSE SE are required to provide full details of the use of this funding to the national NHSE Cancer and Diagnostics programme so that investment can be appropriately reported. Where funding has been used to support an individual, the national Programme team may keep a database of participant details (to include role, Trust, HEI/training provider).

Where funding has been used to fund upskilling/an education-related qualification, organisations will be required to provide twice-yearly updates [Sept 2024 and Feb/March 2025] relating to the status of each individual learner; guidance and templates will be provided later in the year.

NHSE SE will be undertaking an impact and evaluation report based on this regional PE offer, in 2024/25 and again in 2025/26. This will include considering how the investment has:

* increased the provision of high-quality clinical supervision, education and assessment for all levels and types of learners within the imaging workforce.
* improved and increased the number of PE’s who have attained formal education and training in supporting clinical education.
* increased placement capacity for different types of learners.
* promoted and strengthened education as a career development option and choice.
* provided opportunities to support regional level strategic education and training plans through dedicated higher level PE roles.
* been used at a regional level working with key stakeholders to identify and directly support areas with known educational and training deficiencies and limitations such as dedicated apprenticeship support, Breast, international recruited staff, newly qualified preceptees etc.

In addition to the perceived and potential impact, it is essential that deeper understanding is gained through further evaluation. Whilst reporting on the performance delivery of this funding stream focuses on the number of PE roles that have been supported, other metrics can be utilised to demonstrate both quantitative and qualitative impact. Examples of this include the following.

* Learner feedback – National Education Training Survey [NETS] or focused feedback for different groups of the workforce
* Increase in placement capacity for undergraduate and post graduate learners
* Reduced learner attrition
* An increased number of radiographers undertaking training and further education enabling them to practice at an enhanced, advanced and consultant level and which has a direct impact on patient care and service delivery.
* Retention of staff – international recruits, legacy mentor and Return to Practice opportunities.

**Further Information**

**The NHSE Educator Workforce Strategy 2023**

NHS England (NHSE) published the [Educator Workforce Strategy](https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/educator-workforce-strategy) (2023) which sets out actions to support the provision of educators which will enable growth in the healthcare workforce that is required to deliver care, now and in the future. The strategy has seven strategic priorities that underpins future PE planning and provision.

The Educator Workforce Strategy complements the [NHS Long Term Workforce Plan (2023)](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.england.nhs.uk%2Fpublication%2Fnhs-long-term-workforce-plan%2F&data=05%7C02%7Ctessa.candy%40nhs.net%7Cb4ab2f6706fd4e37d9e508dc3a0d15a0%7C37c354b285b047f5b22207b48d774ee3%7C0%7C0%7C638449075067178696%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=uDkCnCboQdVe%2BId4TgzOtYu1vWpnKQsymlpgrGXADT0%3D&reserved=0) and presents an opportunity to rethink the approach to enabling and sustaining high quality healthcare education and training. It calls for a re-evaluation of the roles of educators across healthcare professions to ensure that we maximise evidence-based benefits and efficiencies in opportunities to both learn inter-professionally and learn from one another.

**Allied Health Professionals [AHP] Educator Career Framework 2023**

The Council of Deans of Health published their [AHP Educator Career Framework](https://www.councilofdeans.org.uk/ahp-framework/) which is outcome based and describes the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to be an effective teacher, learning facilitator, supervisor and role model in AHP education both within practice and formal education settings.

This framework sets out a set of expectations for all AHPs who have responsibility for education, described through six domains, associated capabilities, education, and training standards. It seeks to be inclusive, empowering for all those involved in AHP education irrespective of job role, workplace setting and career stage.

**Society of Radiographers Education and Career Framework**

The Society of Radiographers published their [Education and Career Framework](https://www.sor.org/learning-advice/professional-body-guidance-and-publications/documents-and-publications/policy-guidance-document-library/education-and-career-framework-fourth) in 2022. The Framework outlines the knowledge, skills and behaviours expected of a radiographer practice educator alongside the suggested educational standards also associated with this role.

**Challenges**

A growing ageing population that has an increasing prevalence of chronic health problems, continuous improvements in our ability to diagnose and treat ill health and changing societal expectations, means that there are increasing workforce shortages, both in the UK and globally, despite associated staffing increases. Issues around prolonged workforce deficit and ongoing service delivery challenges are affecting multiple professions working across the diagnostic sector.

High quality and sustainable practice education provision is required to support the growth in the numbers of learners within the NHS as well as promote and improve key issues such as retention, career development and job satisfaction.

There are several roles and titles that are currently captured by the term practice educator, these include Clinical Educator, Student Co-ordinator, Training Co-ordinator, Placement learning tutor and Mentor. All provide a form of clinical support, education, training, and assessment through different levels of interaction with the learner and each role may have a slightly different remit.

Whilst traditionally Practice Educator roles have focused primarily on supporting the undergraduate and professionally qualified workforce, there is now an increasing demand for additional resource to be directed towards supporting a multi-level, multi-disciplinary workforce within imaging and radiography to include the supportive and assistive workforce**,** nurses and those learners who are undertaking alternative education routes such as apprenticeships.

Consideration should also be given to the non-clinical elements of practice education such as pastoral care which is required to support and maintain the mental health and wellbeing of the learners working in today’s healthcare environment.

**Who to contact if you have any queries on this offer?**

The NHSE SE Cancer and Diagnostics Programme – [england.canceranddiagnostics.se@nhs.net](mailto:england.canceranddiagnostics.se@nhs.net)

**Frequently Asked Questions**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Question** | | **Response** |
| 1 | Can the funding be used to extend existing Trust/Dept-based PEs [funded by NHSE in 2023/24] | Yes, funding can be used to support existing Imaging & Radiography PEs |
| 2 | Which professional groups can utilise this funding? | Funding is available to provide further education and training for existing and aspiring Practice Educators within Radiography, Mammography [including breast screening], Ultrasound, Radiology Nursing, Medical Physicists, and Imaging Clinical Technology. Funding could not be used to support Clinical Radiology Doctors in Training. |
| 3 | Can we appoint to 12-month posts, and can funding be carried forward into 2025/26? | No. Funding must be fully utilised within the 2024/24 financial year. This means that individuals starting in post e.g., in January 2024, with Trusts requesting salary, would only receive 3 months equivalent funding. |
| 4 | Can we use the funding to purchase kit or equipment? | No, the funding can’t be used to purchase kit or equipment |
| 5 | What’s the difference between Imaging Network Practice Educators, and South East Medical Physics/Clinical Technologist Practice Educators | Network and regional practice educators work at a more strategic level. It is expected that the work of individual Trust/Department based Practice Educators will complement the work of Imaging Network Practice Educators, and South East Medical Physics/Clinical Technologist Practice Educators, and we can make introductions as appropriate. |
| 6 | Please could you give some examples of existing Practice Education programmes? | * Bucks New University – [Practice Education PG Cert](https://www.bucks.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/pgcert-practice-education) * University of Surrey – [Education for Health Professionals PG Cert](https://www.surrey.ac.uk/postgraduate/education-health-professionals-pgcert) * University of Brighton – [Leading Practice Education PG Cert](https://www.brighton.ac.uk/courses/study/leading-practice-education-pgcert.aspx?utm_source=prospects&utm_medium=course_listing&utm_content=leading-practice-education-pgcert&utm_campaign=annual_pg) * University of Winchester – [Practice Education (distance) PG Cert](https://www.winchester.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/courses/pg-cert-practice-education/) * University of Reading – [Healthcare Education – PG Cert](https://www.reading.ac.uk/education/cpd/pgcert-healthcare)   Please link directly with the College of Radiographers for a complete list of programmes approved by them: <https://www.sor.org/about/society-of-radiographers/contact-us> |