## Haematology training in Wessex

Haematology training in Wessex incorporates a comprehensive exposure to the full range of haematology over five years of training, of which typically two years are spent at University Hospital Southampton (UHS) whilst rotating through a selection of the other hospitals in Wessex these include University Hospital Dorset, Queen Alexandra Hospital, Hampshire Hospitals Foundation Trust, Salisbury District Hospital and Dorchester Hospital.

The training programme has been designed to incorporate all aspects of the updated 2021 Haematology Training Curriculum. Over the duration of the training programme trainees have plentiful opportunity to achieve independence in both the generic and specialty-specific Capabilities in Practice through a combination of specific rotations, local and regional teaching and opportunities to develop areas of particular interest to enhance career development.

Support if offered to enhance training through out of programme opportunities alongside flexible working and training opportunities through individual hospitals and Wessex deanery.

## Curriculum experience: rotations

The mainstay of clinical and laboratory experience is gained is via rotations between and within hospitals within the Wessex region to provide exposure to and confidence in the full range of specialty capabilities across laboratory, liaison, outpatient, day unit and inpatient haematology. There is also significant exposure in every placement to haematological emergencies and end of life and palliative care.

The Wessex haematology training programme provides key curriculum-defined experience in:

1. Haematological emergencies

Trainees fully participate in management of haematological emergencies in every placement both during daytime and out of hours. On call arrangements vary by hospital trust but all are fully supported by consultants.

### 2. Laboratory haematology

All ST3s will undergo a period of laboratory induction to achieve basic competencies in laboratory haematology. During the training programme each hospital will offer additional laboratory exposure to enhance knowledge including dedicated laboratory posts in. These enable additional experience to be gained in specialist areas such as immunophenotyping, genomics and specialist haemostasis as well as laboratory management skills.

### 3. Blood transfusion

All trainees are exposed to Blood Transfusion during every hospital rotation. Wessex trainees are strongly encouraged to attend the NHS Blood and Transplant Essential Transfusion Medicine 5 day course within the first year of training and Intermediate Transfusion Medicine 15 day course and FRCPath 5 day revision course in preparation for FRCPath part 1 and part 2 examinations. A new 3-month rotation in Red Cell and Transfusion has commenced at UHS in 2022 to provide additional focussed experience in these areas including laboratory transfusion management. Trainee doctors are encouraged to attend one of the NHSBT transfusion courses appropriate to stage of training during their transfusion block.

### 4. Haematological malignancies

There is extensive exposure to the full range of haematological malignancies in every centre in the Wessex region. Patients are increasingly managed in consultant-led specialist teams with disease-specific clinics and inpatient teams in many of the trusts in which trainees play a pivotal role. There is an annual systemic anti-cancer therapy (SACT) study day to support all trainees in gaining competence in SACT prescribing. The rotations give ample opportunity to gain experience in both the common and rarer haematological malignancies including access to regional expertise either directly or via the well-established multi-disciplinary team meetings. There are three haematological malignancy multi-disciplinary teams: Dorset, West Hampshire (including Salisbury) and East Hampshire. All make up the Wessex Haematology Network. There is good clinical trial exposure across the region including a full range of both early and late phase clinical trials. Trainees are strongly encouraged to be actively involved in recruiting and treating patients on clinical trials.

### 5. Bone marrow failure syndromes

There is opportunity to gain experience in both congenital and acquired bone marrow failure syndromes across the region. Paediatric cases and those considered for stem cell transplant will often be treated in Southampton but diagnosis and treatment takes place at every trust in the Wessex region with cases discussed in the regional MDTs as needed.

### 6. Haemostasis and thrombosis

Trainees have exposure to haemostasis and thrombosis in all trusts in the Wessex region. Recognising the need for trainees to obtain focussed specialist training in haemostasis and thrombosis, there are dedicated training posts encompassing specialist haemostasis and thrombosis in both Basingstoke and Southampton, both of which are Haemophilia Comprehensive Care Centres. Both trusts host MDT meetings for different aspects of haemostasis, thrombosis and immune haematology. There are clinical trials encompassing a wide range of disorders including access to gene therapy. Southampton is also the NHS England commissioned TTP specialist centre for Wessex in close collaboration with Oxford.

### 7. General and liaison haematology

Exposure to general and liaison haematology with both primary care and other hospital specialties takes place in every trust during daytime and on call hours. Referrals to haematology are managed in a variety of ways across the region but all are supported by consultants. There is a dedicated training post in Southampton focused on consultative and liaison haematology and gives additional opportunity to participate not only in telephone advice but written advice and guidance as well as service improvement. Southampton also hosts the Wessex Maternal Medicine Network and MDT in close collaboration with other trusts in the region.

### 8. Haemoglobinopathy

Whilst Wessex is a low prevalence region for haemoglobinopathy, the majority of cases managed in Portsmouth and Southampton. Southampton is the NHS England commissioned Regional Haemoglobinopathy Centre for Wessex and works closely with Oxford and London for supra-regional support and MDT working. There are adult, paediatric and transition clinics and access to automated red cell exchange supported by the red cell and transfusion StR in Southampton. Additional haemoglobinopathy experience outside Wessex will be supported for interested trainees.

### 9. Blood and marrow transplantation

Exposure to autologous stem cell transplant is available in several trusts across Wessex. Whilst predominantly for myeloma and lymphoma, there is also access to new indications such as autoimmune disease. The Wessex Blood and Marrow Transplant service is hosted in Southampton and is the regional allogeneic stem cell transplant centre with all trainees will rotating through the service at least once in order to gain both inpatient and outpatient experience. Chimeric Antigen Receptor T cell (CAR-T) therapy is planned to be available in Southampton from 2023 to provide additional experience of this fast-moving field.

### 10. Palliative Care

All haematology departments work closely with hospital, hospice and community palliative care teams who form an essential part of the wider multi-disciplinary team. Trainees will gain experience of complex and shared decision making and end of life care. There is opportunity to undertake advanced communications skills training.

### 11. Paediatric haematology

There are opportunities to gain exposure to paediatric haematology in all rotations throughout the region, especially those rotations with a laboratory or consultative focus. In addition, formal paediatric haematology training is available in Southampton in both non-malignant and malignant haematological conditions including both neonatal haematology and teenage and young adult care. All trainees will spend some time in paediatric haematology, clinically supervised by one of the two paediatric haematologists.

## Formal supervision, teaching and additional training opportunities

### Supervision

Wessex haematology trainees are appointed an educational supervisor from the hospital in which they are working who remains their supervisor irrespective of the individual posts that they may be undertaking during that year. A new educational supervisor is appointed when a trainee rotates hospitals. Most trainees will rotate annually in September but within some trusts there are multiple posts that trainees will rotate through during the year to maximise training opportunities at a frequency between every 3 and 6 months.

### Formal teaching

There is a weekly 90-minute TEAMS-based seminar programme that all Wessex trainees attend. This has been designed to encompass all disease areas each year with the full breadth of the 2021 haematology curriculum covered over a 3-to-5-year cycle. There is active engagement of the trainees in both delivering and co-ordinating the teaching programme with contributions from consultants, clinical scientists, and biomedical scientists across the region to ensure good clinical and laboratory coverage. Feedback for this has been very positive.

There are approximately 6 Wessex regional training days per year which provide a different focus, concentrating on more generic skills including critical appraisal, consultation skills, personal development and wellbeing. These also provide opportunity for the trainees to meet in person outside the hospital environment.

In many hospitals there are additional laboratory teaching sessions incorporating morphology teaching, transfusion and specialist haemoglobinopathy or haemostasis testing.

There is a twice a year Wessex “Blood Club” meeting for consultants, trainees and scientists with a range of invited speakers encompassing a variety of different topical areas of interest. There is a weekly TEAMS-based lunchtime seminar run from Southampton that is open to all and grand rounds and other local seminars in each hospital. In addition, trainees are invited to attend a range of other educational meetings that occur throughout the year including regional transfusion seminars and disease-based evening meetings.

### Additional training opportunities

Each hospital has a range of local meetings and training opportunities open to all trainees including morbidity and mortality meetings, transfusion and laboratory management meetings and thrombosis committees. Prior to FRCPath examinations there are local additional sessions for both written and oral examinations.

Whilst Wessex can provide training and experience for the full haematology curriculum, some trainees may wish to focus the final stages of their training in a particular area of interest. Where possible every effort will be made to provide this within region however on occasion there may be experience that cannot be accommodated locally. The Training Programme Director would be happy to discuss this on an individual basis with trainees and their Educational Supervisor.

Haematology in Wessex has strong links with both clinical and basic science research. Through the standard training route, all trainees are expected to undertake Good Clinical Practice training to be able to recruit and manage patients in clinical trials. Trainees rare also encouraged to undertake Out of Programme Experience to undertake research projects in Wessex or further afield.

# Rotation information

# University Hospital Southampton 9 NTN

# BMT

# Laboratory

# Red cell and blood transfusion

# Consultative haematology

# Coagulation and thrombosis

# Lymphoid malignancy

# Combined – myeloid malignancy and plasma cell malignancy

# Paediatric Haematology

# Queen Alexandra Hospital – Portsmouth 4 NTN

# Hampshire Hospital Foundation Trust – Basingstoke, Winchester, Andover 2 NTN

# General Haematology

#  Haemophilia and thrombosis (Haemophilia Comprehensive Care Centre)

# Salisbury District Hospital - 1 NTN (Wessex genetics Lab)

# University Hospitals Dorset – Bournemouth and Poole 4-5 NTN

# Dorset County Hospital - Dorchester– 1 NTN

**Wesesx Haematology Network**: <https://www.wessexhaem.net/>

**GMC National Training Survey** – we review the feedback from the annual GMC survey and work with our Trusts to ensure that training in Wessex meets the expected standards.