

Wessex Head of School Newsletter

March 2024

Welcome from Dr Manjiri Bodhe (Head of School) & Dr Nick Moore (Deputy Head of School)

Welcome to our March edition of the Wessex newsletter. I wanted to update you on what is being offered in Wessex for our Trainers and our Doctors in Training (DiT).

We are pleased to announce that Mary-Rose Shears has been appointed as our new Primary Care Dean and we welcome her to Wessex.

It was fantastic to see so many of you at our Trainer's conference in February, we hope you got as much out of the day as we did.

Contact Updates

Since September 2023, our contact details have been updated, please ensure you are using the up-to-date email addresses going forwards.

GP School england.gp.wx@nhs.net

Dorset england.dorsetgptraining.se@nhs.net / england.dorsetgptrainers.se@nhs.net

Mid-Wessex england.mwgpe.se@nhs.net

Portsmouth england.portsmouthgpenquiries.se@nhs.net

Southampton inga.janmere1@nhs.net / s.lambrou@nhs.net / carol.reed12@nhs.net

Welcome to Wessex

We will be running our virtual Welcome to Wessex event on the morning of the 15th of April 2024 and our Speciality Induction for all our new Cohort of DiTs will follow in the afternoon, we look forward to meeting you all.

Good News

We had 6 sites and 19 new trainers approved at the December PCSB meeting. We are always in need of new trainers and new sites, if you know any practices or GPs that are interested more information can be found on our website - <https://wessex.hee.nhs.uk/general-practice/gp-educational-supervisors/>

Less Than Full Time Training (LTFT)

There are two application windows per year, applications need to be received 16 weeks prior to the rotation change over. The window for August 2024 will close on the 17th of April 2024.

Please see our LTFT guidance on our website below:

<https://wessex.hee.nhs.uk/general-practice/gp-training/>

<https://wessex.hee.nhs.uk/trainee-information/trainee-journey/less-than-full-time-training/>

I would urge all ES/CS's to support their trainees on their application where they can, but please do not promise DiTs space in your practice. This piece of work is part of a larger placement work done by our Associate Deans and TPDs for each patch. Reducing percentage means that trainees must stay with that ES for longer periods of time which can impact on other placements. In addition, payroll cannot implement this immediately either.

We require details on DiTs application as to why they are applying regardless of which previous category it fell into. If there is not enough detail, we may email to ask for further details - you will need to have had a discussion with your Patch AD prior to submitting your application.

OOP

If you are considering taking time out of training, first explore the website to gain further information. <https://wessex.hee.nhs.uk/general-practice/gp-training/> DiTs must approach their ES, TPD and Patch AD, in the first instance to discuss a potential application. We would implore you submit your application in a timely manner, as the process can take several weeks, we encourage you to submit your completed application no later than 3 months prior to the start date of anticipated OOP. As per Gold Guide 9th Edition, OOP should not be used to manage ill health. If you are considering needing time off, please speak to your trainer about support available.

<https://wessex.hee.nhs.uk/trainee-information/trainee-journey/out-of-programme/>

Trainer & Trainee Support

In addition to the Trainers Grant, we also have several other resources to support trainees. The Professional Support and Wellbeing Service (PSW) can provide pastoral support to trainees. We now have two additional Associate Deans, one with responsibility for specialist exam support and the other for international medical graduates, and each Patch now also has their own Training Programme Director with specific responsibility for looking after our growing number of international trainees. In addition to this we also have some funding to pay for an experienced trainer who can come in and work alongside a trainer and trainee to provide advice, additional tutorials and help with triangulation of assessments. Most deaneries use this multi-disciplinary approach such that the additional work is not entirely on the trainer's shoulders.

If you feel you or your DiT would benefit from additional support, please speak with your Patch Associate Dean who can advise on the best way we can help.

A referral to The Professional Support and Wellbeing Service (PSW) should be jointly conducted by the DiTs and the Trainer. If you feel as you may benefit from support, please have a discussion with your Trainer and they can submit the referral.

The PSW team help with all aspects of support this includes Supported Return to Training (SRTT), exam support, Dyslexia Screening, as well as many specialist support groups.

Upon referral to PSW you will be assigned a case worker for more information about the PSW team please see the website. <https://wessex.hee.nhs.uk/wellbeing-and-support/psw/>

Specific Learning Differences Screening

All new GP DiT starting training in Wessex are invited to complete a short questionnaire to help identify any doctors, at an early stage of their training, who may have a specific learning difference, specifically dyslexia.

There is clear evidence that, despite numerous great capabilities, GP DiT with unrecognised dyslexia can find computer-based exams harder.

It might mean that for exams, such as the MRCGP Applied Knowledge Test, important reasonable adjustments are recommended. For example, extra time has been shown to level the playing field in terms of improved success rates for doctors with dyslexia.

Dyslexia can also impact on organisational skills and learning in the workplace, so early recognition and coaching from our dyslexia specialists can be of benefit both during training and post-qualification.

If we are informed as early as possible in the ST1 year of any trainee with a high score on the questionnaire, indicating that more in-depth assessment is needed, we will offer referral to one of our dyslexia specialist coaches.

The provision of this service is funded without cost to GP DiT by the GP School. If you are offered screening and agree to accept the offer of an appointment, be mindful that this is an expensive resource to run, so please make the best use of any offers.

AKT Exam

If you are a GPST2 please speak to your Educational Supervisor about the best time for you to sit your AKT exam. Please see the RCGP AKT pages for further information

<https://www.rcgp.org.uk/mrcgp-exams/applied-knowledge-test>

SCA Exam

The RCA has now been replaced by the Simulated Consultation Assessment (SCA). You can view recorded SCA webinars and Q&A sessions for Trainers and Trainees here.

<https://www.rcgp.org.uk/mrcgp-exams/simulated-consultation-assessment>

Exceptional Fifth Attempts

If a trainee wishes to apply for a 5th exceptional attempt to the RCGP for the AKT or SCA, please see the current RCGP page <https://www.rcgp.org.uk/mrcgp-exams/mrcgp-important-info>

The Head of School will normally complete and submit the application but will require initial information from the Associate Dean and the DiT as documented in the guidance below.

- [MRCGP exceptional fifth attempts policy \(PDF file, 646 KB\)](#)
 - [MRCGP exceptional fifth attempts form \(DOC file, 59 KB\)](#)
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Time off due to sickness

We occasionally come across issues where the lead employer or local patch team are unaware of trainees having had time off due to sickness. Please can practices ensure that they inform the local lead employer via their local returns process of any time trainees have missed. If there are concerns regarding a prolonged period of sickness or if a trainee may need support, it is also always helpful to flag this to your local patch team at an early stage. Trainees are obliged to record any time out of training on their annual Form R for their ARCP, but this process only takes place annually. Therefore, it is important that the employer and if appropriate, patch teams are also kept informed. If you are not sure if there is something that needs to be flagged, please check with your local patch team who will be able to help.

Periods of sickness over 30 days need to be added to the Eportfolio and TIS record, please ensure that any periods of sickness are also forwarded to the Patch Admin Team, Medical Hr, and the Deanery.

ARCP

Please note ARCP is an integral process in training and is not optional for either ESs or DiTs to complete. The final ARCP is particularly important as this is the DiTs pre CCT ARCP which

recognises completion of all components of training and their ability to practice safely as an independent GP.

We have had many GP DiTs getting Outcome 5s for incomplete portfolios, missing Form R's and missing annual updates.

The Deanery team send out reminders pre ARCP and there is a checklist on fourteen fish to ensure that this is as easy as possible. Please use this checklist to ensure that you have everything in place prior to your ARCP.

Since August 2022 Hands on BLS with AED for adult and child has been a mandatory requirement, once attended ensure you upload the certificate to your compliance passport.

If there are mitigating circumstances, such as illness or bereavement, ensure there is a portfolio entry recording this and ensure the Form R is completed with all sick and absence days documented. If this is not recorded accurately there is a risk that you will be unable to CCT on time or that you will not receive your CCT certificate from the GMC. Please see all ARCP information here:

<https://wessex.hee.nhs.uk/general-practice/gp-training/>

<https://wessex.hee.nhs.uk/accreditation-and-revalidation/arcp/>

<https://www.rcgp.org.uk/mrcgp-exams/wpba/annual-review-of-competence-progression>

Placements

Please note placement planning is currently being underway for August and all DiT will be informed in line with CoP timescales (12 weeks in advance). Please do not contact the deanery or your patch team in advance as they will not have been finalised.

Unfortunately, with pressures on General Practice, we may not always be able to place DiTs in their ideal post and this situation may continue, please do not ask for changes in placements for choice. If there are occupational health needs, then of course we will try our absolute best to accommodate this with the reasonable adjustments put in place.

IMG

IMG doctors who are new to the Wessex region are required to attend a Wessex IMG Induction Programme (for doctors who are new to the NHS) further details can be found on our website.

<https://wessex.hee.nhs.uk/trainee-information/trainee-journey/international-medical-graduates/>

We hope you found the first session informative and are looking forward to the second session later this month.

Doctors who are new to the UK may find it beneficial to attend one of the GMC's FREE Welcome to the UK Practice workshops. Further information on these workshops including booking arrangements can be found here <https://www.gmc-uk.org/about/what-we-do-and-why/learning-and-support/workshops-for-doctors/welcome-to-uk-practice>

As of December 2023, we now have an IMG Welfare Service who can support new-to-UK GP trainees across the whole of Wessex Deanery with practical aspects of settling into a new country and community. For further details (including self-referral form) please see <https://www.hiowpeople.nhs.uk/img-welfare-service/> or <https://wessex.hee.nhs.uk/trainee-information/trainee-journey/international-medical-graduates/>

Visa Sponsorship

Have you considered becoming a visa sponsor?

As you will be aware, increasing numbers of GP trainees, both nationally and here in Wessex, are international graduates. Whilst some of our IMGs have been in the UK for many years, increasing numbers are new to the UK at the start of GPST1.

As GP training is only three years, and it takes five years to qualify for “Indefinite Leave to Remain,” IMGs who are new to the UK when they start their GP training require ongoing visa sponsorship when they complete their training.

As announced in May 2023, CCTing GP trainees are now eligible for a 4-month extension to their visas whilst they arrange substantive post-CCT employment with a new visa sponsor.

For new trainees, including Feb 2024 new starters, this additional four months should be added to the visa automatically when the trainee first applies for the visa. Existing trainees who wish to do so (i.e. those who have not already finalised a post-CCT job with a sponsoring practice) must apply for this extension when they are nearing the end of their training. More details are available in the attached document.

There is work ongoing nationally to push for all CCTing GPs to automatically qualify for Indefinite Leave to Remain on completion of GP training; however, we are not there yet. In the meantime, practices may want to consider becoming registered as visa sponsors.

Information on becoming a visa sponsor is available from <https://www.gov.uk/uk-visa-sponsorship-employers>.

Wessex GP School are also working with Wessex LMCs to record a podcast on becoming a visa sponsor, which we will share further details about in the next newsletter.

In the meantime if your practice is already registered for visa sponsorship please do make sure that your details are on Wessex LMCs' list <https://wessexlmc.sharepoint.com/:x/g/EThRInNldi9Jk4yZg6r49WcBD5xhjiINb2eEwbaObFE5dw?rtime=A7ljsb033Eg>

The Home Office has [announced](#) that from 6 April 2024, employers that already hold a sponsorship licence will no longer be required to apply for a licence renewal after four years.

There is no action needed for employers. If a practice has a sponsorship licence that is due to expire on or after this date, the Home Office will automatically extend the expiry date on the licence by 10 years.

This will help reduce visa sponsorship related admin and costs for practices.

MPS Indemnity

As a doctor, you have a professional responsibility to ensure you are indemnified for your full scope of practice as a doctor in training. (Please see the guidance on the [GMC website](#))

Doctors who undertake training in General Practice or in a non-NHS setting (e.g. local authority, voluntary and third sector, hospice etc) need to arrange for additional indemnity cover.

NHS England has an arrangement with Medical Protection Society (MPS) which gives all Wessex GP Doctors in Training with access to free medical indemnity. NHSE provides details of new trainees to MPS who make direct contact.

If you are a current DiT and haven't already signed up more information can be found, <https://wessex.hee.nhs.uk/trainee-information/employment-matters-2/medical-indemnity/> there are steps you need to take to register to gain your indemnity cover.

MPS members also have free access to a variety of courses and webinars created to educate, strengthen your essential skills, and reduce your professional risk.

<https://www.medicalprotection.org/uk/professional-development-courses/webinars>

Good luck to those DiTs who are due to take exams this Spring. Thank you once again to all Trainers for all the great work you are doing in medical education.