

Supporting the COVID-19 response in Wales Through Managed Education and Training Programmes – Guidance for Health Boards in Wales

1. Introduction

As the COVID-19 outbreak enters an emergent phase, Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) recognises there may be circumstances when Medical, Dental or Pharmacy trainees may be required to offer assistance/support outside of their usual training pathway and contracted duties. In these circumstances it is essential that systems are in place to ensure trainee welfare, that trainees continue to practice safely and are not exposed to risks to themselves, their families, colleagues and patients through their work or training. This document provides operational guidance to Health Boards on trainee related issues and will be updated as required throughout the outbreak period.

2. Training Programme Management Processes

HEIW is working closely with stakeholders (including HEE, NES, NIMDTA, Royal Colleges) to review processes in training programme management such as recruitment and Reviews of Competence Progression (ARCP), to mitigate against any negative impact on trainees' progression through the training programme if learning opportunities to gain required competences are frustrated by the Coronavirus outbreak e.g. an exam or mandatory course is cancelled. HEIW will provide regular updates as the situation changes.

3. Movement/Re-distribution of trainees- General Principles for all Doctors in Training (Medical Trainees) and Dentists (employed by NHS) in training

There may be occasions where due to increases in local demand, there are requests to move trainees to provide additional support in other clinical areas/specialties.

- Where movement of trainees might be required, arrangements should be discussed prospectively with:
 - the Postgraduate Dean (PGD) for Medical Trainees - HEIW.postgraduadedean@wales.nhs.uk.
 - The Postgraduate Dean (PGDD) for Dental Trainees - HEIW.dental@wales.nhs.uk

The PGD/PGDD will ensure that there is a senior member of the team available for advice with decisions made in a timely manner.

- Rotations scheduled to take place between April and August (for example Foundation and Core Surgery) may be subject to change and we will update you if and when a decision is taken regarding this.
- HEIW will notify Health Board Faculty Teams of changes in trainee locations and scope of work. Faculty Teams will provide support where required. (Applies to Medical Trainees only)
- Planned transition to a different environment must be accompanied by a robust induction to that area. This must be undertaken by a senior doctor familiar with the new area of practice.
- Movement of trainees should only be for the short to medium term and should not impact on long term training progression

- Any movement of trainees must be subject to regular review with updates provided to the PGD/PGDD at least fortnightly. It is the responsibility of the Associate Medical Director for Education or delegated deputy, in each HB to provide these updates
- Trainees must not be asked to undertake any activity beyond the limits of their competence appropriate to their level of training and must be advised that they should seek senior workplace guidance if that arises.
- Trainees moved to a different clinical area/specialty must be adequately supervised and be informed of the identity and contact details of their clinical supervisor.
- Criteria and arrangements for exceptional cancellation of protected teaching should be considered.
- All clinicians should be reminded of the Public Health Wales advice about safe practice during the COVID-19 outbreak. <https://phw.nhs.wales/topics/latest-information-on-novel-coronavirus-covid-19/>

Foundation Doctors (Medical trainees only)

- Only Foundation trainees who have been involved in the care of medical patients previously in their training should be asked to cover medical patients. This includes both F1 and F2 trainees
- The workplace supervisor must have sufficient time to provide supervision, and if feasible should support any educational requests for undertaking WPBAs as required by the curriculum to maximize the learning opportunities.
- Only trainees who are progressing in a satisfactory way and identified as likely to have a satisfactory end of placement report should be considered for a placement move.

Specialty Trainees (Medical trainees only)

- Where elective or outpatient activity has been cancelled Educational Supervisors and trainees should assess the impact this will have on the trainee's ability to progress in training and where applicable develop an action plan to participate in these educational activities at the earliest opportunity.
- Trainees who have not participated in an acute intake for the last 12 months should not be asked to undertake such activity without a robust induction programme and assessment of their skills and abilities to ensure patient and trainee safety.

General Practice Trainees

- The role and scope of practice of GP trainees will be kept under regular review by HEIW

4. General Principles for all Pre-registration Pharmacy technician and Pharmacists in training

HEIW will work in partnership with Health Boards and the General Pharmaceutical Council to provide support and guidance on the management of trainees currently in training. In addition, HEIW will monitor and provide information on any impacts on start dates for future trainees.

5. Trainee Welfare

Health Boards across Wales are asked to ensure Trainees have access to:

- Clear communication and guidance on
 - a) conditions and criteria for self-isolation,
 - b) advice for those with chronic conditions or who are pregnant
 - c) information flows between employee (trainee), employer and training programme faculty
- Clarity about arrangements for self-isolation/sickness absence and eligibility for pay and sickness benefits
- Appropriate rest facilities and food

6. Teaching and study leave

It is likely that scheduled teaching may have to be cancelled as pressures on service increase. We would ask Health Boards to review planned teaching activities over the next 3 months and decide whether it is feasible for them to continue so that trainees can be notified of changes well in advance. Please consider whether it might be possible to deliver teaching via a webinar or through an online medium which offers options to record sessions which can then be subsequently made available to those trainees unable to attend. Local circumstances will determine whether teaching activities and planned study leave can continue for trainees.

We would ask that where cancellations occur the following are notified:

- for medical trainees - HEIW.postgraduatedean@wales.nhs.uk
- for dental trainees - HEIW.dental@wales.nhs.uk

HEIW is reviewing the situation daily and will provide further updates as the situation changes on aspects of training such as study leave, course and conference attendance, recruitment and selection processes, rotation dates and ARCPs.

12th March 2020