

Planning your medical career – don't leave it to the last minute!

Career Planning Support During Your Foundation Years

Why plan?

By Christmas of your Foundation Year 2 you'll be applying for your specialty training. So by that stage you need to know which specialty you wish to enter, plus have a plan B in case your first choice doesn't work out.

So, not long then!! – but help is at hand.....

To assist you with the career planning process Health Education North West makes available supporting material and provides access to careers advisers who will work in conjunction with your educational supervisor, clinical tutors and postgraduate education centre staff to support you during your Foundation programme.

So what careers support is available?

- **Career Workshops, Events, Fairs**

Workshops will be run by your Trust to suit your needs. Workshops can be run on a variety of areas but will cover topics such as choosing a specialty, self-awareness, decision-making, as well as how to compile a CV, write a good application form and preparing for interviews and assessment centres. Some trusts may also hold specific careers events and fairs to help you. Do keep an eye out for these.

- **1:1 Careers Advice and Guidance Meetings**

For specific one-to-one advice the first point of contact for you as Foundation doctors is your educational supervisor or local Foundation career lead. It may be that some of you need more specific help with your career and the careers adviser will be available to discuss issues including career change. To request a meeting contact the careers team through your Foundation Programme Director.

- **Careers Information on the Health Education Website**

The former NW Deanery and Mersey Deanery careers website are in the process of being amalgamated. Until further notice you should familiarise yourself with the information on each site including resources on career planning, decision making, CVs, applications and interviews, see <http://www.merseydeanery.nhs.uk/md-careers-advice> and <https://www.nwpgmd.nhs.uk/careers-north-western-foundation-school>. There are a growing number of careers related videos that are hosted on the Mersey Deanery site at present, go to 'Careers Video Library' on the left hand side menu. You will need a password to view the videos. The password and login details can be easily obtained by registering via the 'register details' button. Please do let us know if there is any specific information that you think may be beneficial to be made available on the website.

- **The Roads to Success by Dr Caroline Elton and Joan Reid**

This book should be available in your library. The book aims to support both trainees and their supervisors throughout the career planning process. This is a practical handbook packed with essential information, self-assessment exercises and insightful tips to ensure that every junior doctor is heading in the right direction career wise. An online version of the book can be found here <http://cmec.info/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/Roads-To-Success1.pdf>

- **Medical Careers website**

The Medical Careers website contains a wealth of helpful information on planning your medical career. It includes detailed specialty information, a four-step career planning tool based on the 'Roads to Success' model, a guide to making the most of foundation training plus video case studies. The website can be accessed at: www.medicalcareers.nhs.uk. A calendar of medical careers events is also available on the website.

- **Career Tools**

There are some online tools available that will generate lists of specialties to consider based on the information you provide about yourself. Remember they are just tools to provide some assistance – the final choice is yours! You will be able to take one of these tests Sci 59 free via the BMA website if you are a member. There is also a USA developed tool which is free to access see <https://www.med-ed.virginia.edu/specialties/> though do bear in mind that there will be differences in roles and titles of some specialties as it's a very different health care system.

- **Tasters**

It may be useful for you to undertake a 'taster' in a specialty you are interested in. Trainees will normally do this at the end of Foundation Year 1 and/or beginning of FY2. There is some useful information here:

http://www.foundationprogramme.nhs.uk/download.asp?file=Tasters_guidance_2011_final-2.pdf

- **Applying to Specialty**

It's never too early to have a look at the process of applying to specialty. It's also useful to have a look at scoring criteria and the sorts of activities that you will encounter at a specialty assessment centre. See www.specialtytraining.hee.nhs.uk

- **E Portfolio and Foundation Forum**

The careers team will communicate with you in a variety of ways depending on where you are based. This may be via your 'e portfolio' system, email from your Foundation Programme administrators, as well as details on the careers part of the website. Information we send to you could include details of relevant careers fairs, courses, events etc. There is also a Foundation Trainee Forum made up of foundation trainee representatives from each trust. The forum meets on a regular basis to discuss careers related issues that Foundation Trainees may face. You might want to volunteer to join this group to represent your trust or alternatively provide your representative with feedback to help us develop our service.

Contacts

Dr Shirley Remington: Associate Dean, Lead for Careers, Health Education North West

Foundation leads

Dr Ella Checkley: North West area

Mrs Christine Waddelove: Mersey area

Contact us: nwd.careers@nw.hee.nhs.uk