

DEPARTMENT OF POSTGRADUATE GENERAL PRACTICE EDUCATION

WORK EXPERIENCE IN GENERAL PRACTICE - A GUIDE FOR THE PRACTICE



<http://www.nwpgmd.nhs.uk/general-practice/sixth-form-placements>

An Introduction to 6th Form Work Experience

The Postgraduate Department for training in General Practice has been a longstanding supporter of the concept of facilitating entry to undergraduate training. We feel that in order to ensure high quality General Practice in the future we should encourage an understanding of what it means to be a modern day GP.

We are supportive of anyone who has serious intent to apply for Medical School and needs to gain exposure to General Practice as part of their portfolio of experience to assist in their application. We feel the best experience in Primary Care is provided by a training practice.

The application process for medical training at university comprises of the following components-

- Predicted grades and results from A Levels
- Reference from school / college
- Personal statement

Unlike many university courses, medicine is considered to be a vocational degree and this selection is not purely based on academic ability but also on demonstration of a deep understanding of the work of clinicians and of personal attributes that would make a good candidate for a career in medicine.

Medical work experience is an ideal opportunity to achieve a better understanding of the roles of clinicians and how they fit in with other health care professionals. It is an opportunity to gain insight into the rewards and challenges facing clinicians. The student can explore why the attributes of a good candidate have been so defined and how they can identify those attributes within themselves.

Planning your work experience placement

A work experience placement in General Practice is usually for one week. When providing a work experience placement there are a few basics to remember. Firstly and foremostly the respect of patient confidentiality, dignity and autonomy are overriding considerations. We suggest to students that they do not apply to their own practice, a practice they think they might have friends or relatives registered at, or one very close to their home.

We would suggest devising a timetable for the placement in order to expose the student to all aspects of General Practice. Ideally, this should involve spending some quality time with the GPs, Practice Nurse, Practice Manager and administrative staff. It is entirely up to you if you decide to allow students in with the GP / Practice Nurse during consultations. There are suggested timetable templates available to download on our website.

A work experience placement could be a potential opportunity for the FY2 and GPST doctors to supervise and mentor a 6th form student and to demonstrate some of the competencies required in the curriculum. Devising a work experience week would enable the trainee to think carefully about how he/she could demonstrate modelling of the attributes of a good doctor e.g. communication, team working, patient-centred care etc. It would also enable them to develop teaching / mentoring skills and would encourage them to reflect on what it means to be a doctor and to have this discussion with the work experience placement.

Health, Safety and Insurance Guidelines

The student will be covered by your Public Liability Insurance.

During the work experience placement, the Practice must provide the student with the following -

- A risk assessment outlining any potential hazardous activities that the student may be involved with whilst on work experience
- A safe workplace, including safe entry and exits
- Safe equipment with which to work
- Work procedures and systems which are safe to use and that cause no risk to health
- Sufficient training to allow the student to work competently and safely
- Safe arrangements for using, handling, storing and moving things
- Adequate facilities and arrangements for the student's welfare
- A healthy working environment
- Safety clothing, if required
- A programme of suitable activities

Whilst on work experience the student is treated as an employee and their responsibilities include-

- A duty of care of their own health and safety
- A duty to take care of the health and safety of others who might be affected by their actions

- Getting to know their employer's safety policy and rules and abiding by them
- Ensuring that the way they are dressed is safe for the sort of work they are doing
- Behaving safely at work
- Immediately reporting any accident, damage to equipment or hazardous situation to their supervisor in the Practice

At all times the student must-

- Respect and protect confidential information
- Respect patients' dignity and privacy
- Make sure their personal beliefs do not prejudice their behaviour towards patients

How does the student apply for work experience?

A list of practices who take 6th formers for work experience is available on the Deanery website. Students are asked to approach the practice directly. If you decide to accept the student then we suggest you ask them to complete an application form and sign a confidentiality agreement.

Student Feedback and Reflection

Students are encouraged to provide feedback to the practice using the Evaluation Forms provided by the Deanery. This is useful to the practice but also helps the student to reflect on their placement. The Deanery also provides an evaluation form that the student can complete following each session in their timetable.