

Career Planning Support During Foundation Years

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



Health Education England

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Why Plan?

By Christmas of your Foundation Year 2 you will 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 with the career planning process, HEE (NW) makes available a wide range of supporting material and provides access to careers advisers who will work in conjunction with your educational supervisor, clinical tutors and postgrad education centre staff to support you during your Foundation years.

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.

Interview Practice

It may seem a long way off but in the next 18 months you will be attending interviews for specialty training. HEE (NW) has bought a video interviewing system whereby you can practice developing your interview skills in the comfort of your own home in front of your pc/iPad etc.

Careers Information on the Health Education England NWPGMDE Website

We have a dedicated [careers section on our website please click here to view](#). There are resources on career planning, decision making, CVs, applications and interviews. There are also a growing number of careers related videos that are hosted on intranet - go to 'Careers Video Library' on the right hand side menu. You will need a password to view the videos. The password and login details can be easily obtained by following the instructions. Please do let us know if there is any specific information that you think may be beneficial to be made available on the website.

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Health Careers website

The Health 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. Please see the [specific part of the website dedicated to doctors](#); a calendar of careers events is also available.

The Roads to Success by Dr Caroline Elton and Joan Reid

This book should be available in your library.

The *Roads to Success* 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](#).

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](#), 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.

Time 'out' after Foundation

Many trainees are deciding not to apply for specialty training in FY2 and are keen to have at least a year doing something different. This can include locum work, a fellowship, working abroad as a doctor (usually Australia or New Zealand), or other specific opportunities that come up. [See our website](#) for ideas on the sorts of activities trainees have done. Whatever you decide, you need to plan for this and reflect on how you might sell the experience to a potential recruiter when applying for specialty.

Tasters

It may be useful for you to undertake a career '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](#) from the UK Foundation Programme Office.

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. [Click here to access their site](#)