

<b>Name of Document</b>	<b>Professional Support for Doctors in Training</b>
<b>Category</b>	Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) - Trainee Management
<b>Purpose</b>	<p>This document is one of a suite of Standard Operating Procedures to support the management of doctors in training across England. This SOP is aligned to the principles of 'A Reference Guide for Postgraduate Specialty Training in the UK' (The Gold Guide). This SOP does not apply to Foundation and Dentistry trainees who are managed under separate Guides ('The Foundation Programme Reference Guide' and 'A Guide to Postgraduate Dental Specialty Training in the UK').</p> <p>Within the SOP, whenever reference is made to the Postgraduate Dean, it refers to the Dean or their nominated representative who will be responsible for managing the process on their behalf.</p> <p>This SOP is intended to be a guide to encourage consistency of practice across England. Due to the complex nature of Postgraduate Medical Training, there will be occasions where local Postgraduate Deans will apply their discretion in enacting this SOP to take account of individual circumstances and varying local structures (e.g. Lead Employer).</p> <p>This suite of SOPs will be screened against relevant Equality and Diversity documentation.</p>
<b>Authorised by</b>	Health Education England Deans (HEEDs)
<b>Date Authorised</b>	27/06/2017
<b>Next Review Date</b>	SOP to be reviewed in line with any future Gold Guide revisions, or every 12 months, whichever comes first
<b>Document Author</b>	HEEDs

Version	Date	Author	Notes Reason for Change, what has changed, etc
1	27/06/2017	HEED	Document signed off at HEED

Related Documents

Gold Guide Version 6 <https://www.copmed.org.uk/publications/the-gold-guide>

HEE Whistleblowing Guidance

<https://www.hee.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/documents/BMA%20HEE%20whistleblowing%20guidance%20-%20final%20%2828%2009%202016%29.pdf>

## **Background**

Professional support for doctors in training comes in many forms, including support from faculty, employers and services specific to individual issues. Professional support may be delivered locally, regionally or nationally.

### **1. How does Health Education England (HEE) provide professional support?**

Professional support may be offered, sign-posted or provided by the Postgraduate Dean to trainee doctors:-

- To facilitate links with employers to access to Occupational Health services, Access to Work, etc;
- To offer pastoral support and/or coaching and/or mentoring;
- To provide guidance and support for those considering less than full time working patterns;
- To provide career guidance;
- To support professional development;
- To ensure support for both personal and educational issues.

A professional judgement is made to identify how best to support doctors in trainees who are facing challenges. In some cases, more than one intervention may be appropriate.

### **2. Accessing Support**

Trainees experiencing issues should normally seek guidance from their local Educational Supervisor or Training Programme Director in the first instance, and may additionally seek support from their employer directly (via the Human Resources department, Director of Medical Education or other local contacts within the local education provider dependent upon the nature of the support required).

Trade unions are an additional, helpful source of support.

Trainees are encouraged to discuss any concerns with faculty at any early stage to ensure any issues are addressed in a timely manner.

### **3. Identifying Trainees Requiring Professional Support**

The Postgraduate Dean has a range of mechanisms to identify and monitor doctors in training who are facing challenges and may require professional support. These mechanisms are in place with the intention of ensuring that doctors in training who are facing challenges receive the support and care that they need.

Methods of identifying those that require professional support include but are not restricted to:

1. Information from an ARCP panel
2. Information arising from complaints and SUIs
3. Fitness to Practice concerns
4. Trainee self-referral
5. Information from Occupational Health reports
6. Information from the GMC

It is the Postgraduate Dean's responsibility to have oversight of all these sources of information whilst overseeing a programme of education for an individual for which they are the Responsible Officer. Therefore, any operating model within HEE must allow for this governance and oversight,

Reasons for establishing appropriate educational/professional support will prevent premature termination of the educational contract, withdrawal of the NTN (see SOP) and so termination of employment. Mechanisms for professional support being correctly and appropriately provided therefore prevent legal risk to HEE from employment tribunals.

### **4. Professional Support in the context of Whistleblowing**

HEE has granted, as a third party right, the ability for postgraduate trainees to advance claims as a breach of contract directly against HEE. This means that if a trainee considers that they have suffered whistleblowing detriment by HEE they can mount a claim in the Courts. This change does not detract from the current relationship between trainees and employers and any whistleblowing cases against employers will remain available to be advanced in the Employment Tribunal.

This decision was made to illustrate that everyone involved in postgraduate education, from whatever perspective, works openly and collaboratively to minimise whistleblowing detriments and to increase the confidence of those who are encouraged to raise issues if they find them.