**North West School of Public Health**

**Evaluation of the Part A Revision Programme: Jan 2012 Cohort**

Summary- Overview

There were ten candidates who took part in this the first systematic 16 week revision programme for the North West Public Health Specialist Registrar Training Programme. Two of the ten candidates were from outside the NWSPH. The revision programme ran from Sept 2011 to early Jan 2012.

The candidates were a mix of StRs in that some had already taken the Part A exams previously and failed or banked papers and for some it was their first attempt. Specifically it was the first attempt for six candidates; the second attempt for one candidate and the third attempt for three candidates. As a result some candidates came from the same MPH/training programme cohort whilst others did not. Six candidates had completed the MPH in the last year whilst the other four had completed it previously.

Ultimately four candidates passed both papers; two banked a paper and four failed. Of the four that failed for three candidates this was their first attempt and for one their fourth attempt.

The following evaluation findings are based on both the responses are from a web based survey completed by all the candidates prior to their exam results (end of Feb 2012) and a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis completed by some of the candidates as a group towards the end of the revision programme (Dec 2011).

Summary - Kay Findings from the Evaluation

The full revision programme is attached at Appendix 1. It is important to note that the ethos of the revision programme was to provide a weekly focus to the weeklong revision process the candidates were engaged in. There was no intention for the one day a week to be the single opportunity but rather a useful focus to ‘check back’ on progress as a group and also to organize expert help around key topics.

The most useful sessions includedHealth Protection; the University of Manchester Epidemiology and Statistics; Critical Appraisal and the University of Liverpool Management and Economics sessions. Notably the individuals who delivered these sessions were also mentioned specifically for how they taught and the tips/additional advice they could give in relation to Part A exams. The opportunity for a mock exam was seen as very useful by most candidates and that this opportunity should be planned not to coincide with the national specialised revision course (by Ed Jessop).

Candidates reported that the University of Liverpool & of Lancaster Epidemiology and Statistics sessions were fine but not geared to Part A. In fact a greater focus on the application of epidemiology and statistics was identified as needed. The session on Screening needed to be broader and the management session more applied. Gaps in the programme included support around paper 2b preparation, Genetics, Public Health assessment and evaluation and Health Promotion. Greater practice at using frameworks for questions and exam technique were highlighted as important for greater confidence and success.

A greater sense of ownership by the whole cohort and so a more even sharing of the organization of the programme amongst the candidates was felt to be needed together with a leader/facilitator who had recently passed the exam. The administrative support (organised for future cohorts) was identified as important.

Overall candidates felt supported by the Educational Supervisors but there was a variable experience in the way allowances were made in the work placements in relation to additional private study time and work allocation. An earlier start and more intensive revision programme focused on Part A application supported by more Consultants who were Part A ‘fluent’ was emphasized for the future. The detail of the evaluation responses follows.