

FAO All GP Trainees  
(cc all GP educators)

Directorate of Education  
and Quality  
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Dear Colleague

Firstly, we would like to thank you for all that you have done to support the NHS and General Practice in particular, to support our patients and the public in general with the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We are writing to you now to update you on our plans to increase support to you with your GP Specialty Training. We are conscious that for many of you the uncertainty around the final MRCGP examinations has increased your concerns. By now you should have received updated communications from all involved in seeking a pragmatic legally acceptable solution. These can be found at <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/coronavirus-information-trainees>.

As you are aware, formal education and training across all medical and dental specialties was suspended at the outset of the pandemic to maximise front line services. Thank you for stepping up to that challenge. Guidance on Supervision/Support for GP Trainees in GP Placements During the Covid-19 Emergency was also published seeking to ensure your continued support and maximising educational opportunities during this period (at the same HEE website location).

As the COVID curves flatten and with planning for the examinations it is vital now that your training rapidly normalises. COVID has changed the way General Practice operates, with most consultations currently delivered online or by telephone. As well as changing trainees' clinical experience in GP posts it has also resulted in new models of supervision and support. A GP Specialty Training Recovery Plan is currently being finalised

A key priority area will be supporting those ST3 Trainees who have been unable to take their exams. The uncertainty over the CSA, changes in working patterns and the reduction in face to face consulting have made it particularly difficult for them to prepare as they might for the MRCGP assessments

It is important therefore that your training now reverts to the 7:3 model with dedicated time for training including personal development time as a matter of priority. We will be working with your trainers (educational supervisors) and Training Programme Directors to ensure that this happens.

We are also conscious that some of you may be shielding, or self-isolating, including due to pregnancy. Your health and wellbeing are vital. We recognise that this will also have impacted on your training, your ability to continue consulting and the type of supervision you receive. It is vital that, wherever possible, remote consulting and supervision is supported to enable you to continue your training and if you were to have taken the CSA to submit for a 'recorded clinical assessment'. Our teams will work with you to support solutions.

Finally, in these difficult times we are keen that you have access to excellent wellbeing support. In addition to the pastoral support you would normally have please also do use the resources available to you at <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/wellbeing>, including the helpline on 0300 131 7000, 24/7 text support and free access to wellbeing apps. In addition you are entitled to access the Practitioner Health Programme <https://www.practitionerhealth.nhs.uk>.

We hope that this update is helpful. Do please talk with your trainer or TPD if you have any concerns. We wish you well with your GP training and your careers as fellow GPs.

Yours faithfully,



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