

# Obstetrics & Gynaecology

## Minimising COVID-related extensions

In the West Midlands, the School of Obstetrics & Gynaecology were able to minimise COVID-related extensions compared to other areas in the country.

### Implementing the new curriculum

**Maintaining trainees' portfolios throughout the course of the year.**

Prior to the pandemic, in August to September 2019, the School had comprehensively prepared for the implementation for the new 2019 curriculum. This included:

- evening training sessions with educational supervisors (ESs);
- promotion of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG)'s e-learning package; and
- ensuring through the local tutor network and trainee committee that ES meetings took place monthly.

As a result, trainees in the locality were active in maintaining their portfolio throughout the year, rather than concentrating efforts in the run-up to their Annual Review of Portfolio Competency (ARCP).

### Targeted interventions for trainees requiring specific Advanced Training Skills Modules

**Identifying minimum curriculum requirements and ensuring that a quality, supportive training can be delivered within the service environment to consolidate essential skills.**

Some West Midlands trainees required an Outcome 10.2, as their specific Advanced Training Skills Modules (ATSMs) could not be completed due to postponement of routine surgery.

The Specialty Training Programme Director (TPD) ARCP lead therefore took a proactive approach via the tutors and TPD network to identify trainees affected before the ARCP took place.

Only two ATSMs are required for curriculum completion by the GMC. Therefore, by concentrating on ATSMs that could still be carried out in a covid environment (education and hysteroscopy outpatients), the extension time required for two trainees was significantly reduced. The two trainees affected could therefore be awarded an Outcome 6 and take up consultant posts.

### Managing programme capacity

**Maintaining a flexible programme, with OOP and other options for trainees who wish to pursue a portfolio career, to manage overall programme capacity.**

The local office encourages trainees to do Out of Programme Research (OOPR). As with much of the country, many senior O&G trainees in the area returned to clinical work during the first wave of the pandemic. These doctors required extensions to their OOPR following this return to clinical work.

Forward planning, and full knowledge of trainees scheduled OOPR and return dates allowed the office to manage overall programme capacity, as many trainees returned to their research placements. This also involved the careful management of inter-Deanery transfers and ST3 recruitment.

The lessons learned could be extended to other flexible training options, such as Out of Programme Pause (OOPP). Visit HEE's webpage on Flexibility in Medical Training for more information.

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