

South West COVID-19 Workforce and Training Cell Bulletin – 1 May 2020

This weekly bulletin aims to provide a summary of key information and updates on COVID-19 guidance that has been shared to date. It should be read in conjunction with the national COVID-19 advice and guidance hosted by [Health Education England](#) and [NHS England and NHS Improvement](#).

COVID19workforce.sw@hee.nhs.uk / Out of hours emergencies: 01454 252 679

This bulletin covers:

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Medical

Medical Intensive Care Medicine Training: extra training places funded: intensive care medicine is a speciality that recruits at higher training level, which means doctors are already experienced in areas like medicine, anaesthesia and acute care. The investment in training will help sustain critical care and increase the ability to keep critical care beds open by increasing the appropriate medical staffing available. [Read the story here](#)

HEE SupportTT team rises to COVID-19 challenge to help doctors returning to training: news story featuring the SupportTT Fellows' work bringing a series of online learning to doctors returning to training. [Read the full story here](#)

If you missed our knowledge refresher and wellbeing webinars for doctors returning to training - [you can now watch them online](#)

Medical trainees: BMJ article published on 27 April 2020 with Acting Director of Education and Quality, Sheona MacLeod offering advice and guidance for trainees – [Read the article here](#)

GP trainees: an update for GP trainees on our efforts to address the current issues for trainees in their final year of GP specialty training is available through the link below. The RCGP, the GMC, the BMA, NHS England, HEE and DHSC have been working hard to determine a way forward. We have also been working with GP

trainees' elected representatives and trainee concerns have been heard across all organisations. More here <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/coronavirus-information-trainees> (under training and progression).

GP specialty training: "training during and after the COVID Pandemic - an opportunity for flexibility" a blog by Professor Simon Gregory
<https://www.hee.nhs.uk/news-blogs-events/blogs/gp-specialty-training-during-after-covid-pandemic-opportunity-flexibility>

Midwifery Students

HEE's Chief Nurse, Mark Radford, and Senior Midwife, Sally Ashton-May, will be hosting a webinar on Friday 1st May at 7pm – answering queries from student midwives about their options in supporting the Covid-19 effort. They will be joined by the Chief Midwifery Officer, Jacqueline Dunkley-Bent, two student midwives and a representative from the Royal College of Midwives. Follow us on Twitter for the link to the webinar.

Allied Health Professionals

Health Education England is continuing to ask universities to contact their eligible Allied Health Professional (AHP) students to discuss their options for using their education programme to help with the response to the COVID-19 pandemic – [you can find the Student Support Guidance and joint AHP leads letter on under the Student Support Guidance during COVID-19 drop down here](#).

Health and wellbeing

Alongside Matt Hancock's announcement of a new life assurance scheme that will offer a £60,000 payment to families of NHS and social care workers who have died after contracting coronavirus in the course of their duties, NHS England and NHS Improvement have put together a suite of compassionate resources that aim to help you access support during what will be a difficult time for our staff, given the restrictions and changes to normal grieving patterns and processes for our diverse workforce. In recognition of this, the suite of resources includes practical support and will signpost you appropriately to additional resources noting the cultural diversity of our workforce. You can access all the bereavement support resources [here](#).

The resources include:

- A guidance note outlining the process to take after a death in service
- Covid: Leading during bereavement - a guidance document on good leadership during bereavement
- Losing a colleague – a quick reference on how to access support when you have lost a colleague

- A bereavement toolkit drafted by the DHSC (this guidance has some really helpful content, however please note the contact details for accessing support are specific to DHSC staff)

We can also offer access to the Stay Alive app for all NHS and social care staff as we recognise that those with existing mental health concerns and others that are struggling in self isolation, would benefit from this positive self-help app which can positively support individual staff members. Stay Alive is an easily accessible suicide prevention resource, packed full of useful information to help colleagues stay safe. Colleagues can use it if they are having thoughts of suicide or if you are concerned about someone else who may be considering suicide. Stay Alive is available for free through the App Store and Google Play. Once downloaded, the app is fully functional for offline use. Users also have the option to create a profile to synchronise their data for use with the online version at www.stayalive.app

NHS staff can also access a range of mental health self-help apps for free until 31 December 2020 via the following link: <https://people.nhs.uk/help/>

If you have any feedback or there are further resources you would like us to develop nationally, please email claire.parker10@nhs.net

e-Learning for Healthcare (e-LfH)

The COVID-19 e-learning for healthcare programme is still being well used by the health and care workforce. It has been launched over 880,000 times since it went live mid-March 2020.

Recently added content includes:

- New learning pathway for nurses deployed into a primary and community care setting [here](#).
- New webinar for pharmacists supporting 111 via the Returning Clinicians (excluding GPs) programme. This resource can be found [here](#).
- Updated standard operating procedures (SOPs) for NHS London Nightingale within the “Resources for Staff Working in Critical Care Setting” folder and can be accessed [here](#).
- New resource for AHPs into the “Resources for Staff Working in Acute Hospital Setting” folder. The new content can be accessed [here](#).
- New content for radiographers has been added to the “Resources for Specific Professions” folder, which can be accessed [here](#). The resources include radiographs of the adult chest and COVID-19 Radiography Journal articles.
- New webinar for pharmacists supporting 111 via the Returning Clinicians (excluding GPs) programme. This resource can be accessed [here](#).

For more information about the programme including a drop-down list of resources available by role select [here](#).

Useful links:

- Email from Danny Mortimer at NHS Employers [on enhancing risk assessments to support staff placement](#) during COVID-19
- Guidance on [deployment of nursing, midwifery and AHP students](#)
- The [Physical Health Competency Framework for Mental Health and Learning Disability Settings](#) has now been published. This framework incorporates elements of the knowledge and skills needed for registered clinical staff working in mental healthcare and/or learning disability settings to be able to meet the physical health needs of service users with serious mental illness and/or service users with a learning disability. HEE continues to evaluate the framework and will publish the final version later this year. If you have any questions regarding this framework email: mentalhealth@hee.nhs.uk.
- MECC – providing support in everyday practice: two resources have launched to support behaviour change as part of everyday practice. [MECC Evaluation Guide](#) is a practical toolkit developed by Public Health England, Health Education England and London South Bank University, based on insights from local MECC leads, gathered during the planning and running of their own project evaluations.
- MECC - '[Everyday Interactions](#)' toolkit provides clear and concise guidance for health and care professionals wishing to record and measure their public health impact based on a Making Every Contact Count (MECC) framework. This work has been undertaken by the Royal Society for Public Health, Public Health England and partners including the Royal College of Nursing.
- Behaviour Change Development Framework webinar: a beta version of the [Behaviour Change Development Framework and Toolkit](#) has been launched, which aims to enable and empower individuals and workforce leads to assess and develop behaviour change skills which are appropriate and proportionate to their service users' needs. Colleagues are invited to a special webinar to introduce the framework and toolkit. It is aimed at all those involved in behaviour change development working at system/organisational levels and those involved in commissioning behaviour change services or workforces. The webinar is scheduled for Tuesday 5 May (13:30-15:30). To register your interest email PHNetwork.WX@hee.nhs.uk.

FOR ANY QUERIES OR ISSUES, PLEASE EMAIL:
COVID19WORKFORCE.SW@HEE.NHS.UK

SOUTH WEST COVID-19 WORKFORCE CELL

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Contents:

- Working from home costs
- Staff stranded abroad
- Student nursing contract
- Agency nursing
- ICU support from veterinary colleagues
- Midwife returners
- NHS staff accommodation booking
- Visas for overseas clinical staff

Q: Some organisations are paying staff an additional amount per month to cover working at home costs, based on information from [HMRC](#).

Organisations can provide the following information to staff to enable them to claim tax relief against increased costs. Please see form of words and a link below:

When your employer requires you to work from home (as we currently do) you can claim tax relief against the increased costs of electricity, heating etc. From Monday 6 April 2020 (the new tax year) you are able to claim £6 a week. This is above the normal rate of £4 per week for home workers.

You can claim it via your self-assessment form if you normally complete one, or if not, you can fill in a P87 form. This can be accessed online through your [Government Gateway account](#) or by filling out a [postal P87 form](#).

Q: An employee is stuck abroad to a travel ban or quarantine and unable to return to work, what should they be paid?

Employers should explore the individual circumstances with the employee. Where staff are in quarantine, they should be treated as self-isolating and paid accordingly. Where employers are satisfied an employee is stuck abroad due to COVID-19 and there is no reasonable prospect of them being able to return to work, the national temporary COVID-19 special leave should be used.

Q: How do we get a copy of the national contract for student nurses starting work? We have some 3rd year students starting locally.

Guidance from NHS Employers on the job descriptions and bandings for the potential paid placements that students could be deployed into during the pandemic period can be found [here](#).

Q: Trusts have reported cases agencies charging enhanced rates for non-ICU staff who are currently coming from other areas to assist in critical care.

National guidance has been issued on agency use during COVID-19 pandemic and can be found [here](#).

This includes a section specially on pay rate escalation. The guidance also requires that candidates are required to be asked specifically about their willingness to work on wards impacted by Covid-19.

If these issues continue to cause problems they should be escalated to the workforce cell at: COVID19workforce.sw@hee.nhs.uk.

Q: Is it possible to get support from veterinary colleagues? They are a group well versed in anaesthetic and cannulation skills, triage, prescribing, independent practice, and EOL care.

Yes, they can be a clinical support worker and London response teams are developing a job description. More information to follow.

Q: What is required from midwifery colleagues in helping to bring NHS staff back?

Local arrangements are now well established to process the expressions of interest from retired staff who are prepared to return to work in the NHS. The pre-employment checks for returners are being undertaken at a regional level and then staff are deployed to the organisations that they have specified an interest in working for. In addition, some individuals are contacting their local Trust directly and joining the Trust bank.

Q: We are having difficulty getting through to the hotel booking line for NHS accommodation

We know there have been a high volume of queries from HRD colleagues and NHS organisations about the hotel booking line for NHS staff. The CTM call line and booking remains in use, however they now have online booking available at: https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/NHS_Hotel

Q: We have a qualified, overseas doctor who is unable to return to their home country but wishes to help in the NHS. How can we get them working in our Trust?

The status of the doctor will need to be checked with the GMC, more advice can be found [here](#). If the doctor is not eligible to practice in the UK, it might be possible to offer them work in other non-qualified roles.

UKVI has set up a dedicated email account for customers with immigration queries related to coronavirus, including questions about urgent, compelling, compassionate cases. Customers can contact: CIH@homeoffice.gov.uk

[Changes to the VISA process have been introduced as a result of COVID-19 and information on the current position is available here.](#)