

Quality

HEE's approach to quality assurance and quality improvement in healthcare education and training is driven by its over-arching strategy for quality, its quality standards and its guidance for undertaking quality management across England. These are supported by the collection and analysis of quality data (for example, via the National Education and Training Survey) and through collaborative processes of quality monitoring and escalation. Details can be found here: <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/quality>

However, the Coronavirus outbreak (COVID-19) has brought about unprecedented pressure on the whole healthcare system. This may require learners/trainees to work outside of their usual training pathway and/or contracted duties. HEE has developed guidance, including links to other useful sources of information, which can be found here <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/coronavirus-covid-19>

Key **principles** for healthcare learners/trainees in clinical environments underpin HEE's Quality Strategy and Quality Framework and remain just as critical during these challenging times. These are:

Learner/trainee safety should be maintained at all times

Learners/trainees deserve to be kept safe, including their safety from unnecessary harm (including exposure to Coronavirus), and to receive sufficient support and guidance for the roles they are asked to take on.

Induction is a key element of quality and patient safety

Induction during the Coronavirus outbreak may be very different from the ideal. However, learners/trainees still need to receive an induction to the area where they will be working and learning. As a minimum this should include an orientation to key staff (including who to approach for help and who to notify of concerns); key equipment and facilities; electronic systems and IT).

Working within competence

Learners/trainees should not be asked to undertake tasks beyond their level of competence/training or which they do not feel confident to undertake. Learners/trainees should have received mandatory training relevant to their roles.

Supervision for learners remains paramount

No matter how challenging service pressures are, clinical supervision for the healthcare learner/ trainee workforce is paramount. They need access to the advice, guidance, support and training necessary for them to perform safely for their patients and themselves.

Raising concerns is supported

The learner/trainee workforce must continue to be able to raise concerns regarding individual and system safety issues, using both organisational policies and procedures when required and escalating more widely if necessary.

Health and wellbeing need to be maintained

The health and wellbeing of our staff is always a priority but is even more critical during the current exceptional circumstances. Learners/trainees may face new clinical challenges, excessive workloads, unfamiliar circumstances and high mortality rates. Learners/trainees should have access to support, through debriefs, regular discussions and conversations with seniors in the clinical environment. Learners/trainees should be supported to recognise, understand and seek help where necessary. Where it is recognised, either by the individual or others working alongside that learners may require additional support, they should be signposted to the relevant sources of such support.