

Health Education England

Training Recovery Update

17th September 2021

Dear Colleagues,

'If we want doctors tomorrow, we must continue to train and support them today'

Recognising the impact the waves of the pandemic have had on the education and training of healthcare learners including postgraduate doctors in training, we have refreshed [HEE's guidance on managing the training workforce](#). This reaffirms the need to retain learners on programmes and maintain training wherever possible, and it has updated processes for decisions about deployment into service.

Redeployment should only happen when other workforce solutions have been tried and can only be arranged for postgraduate trainees after discussion about local pressures with the Postgraduate Dean. The guidance recognises the service pressures expected during the forthcoming months due to COVID, flu and respiratory syncytial virus in children, but maintaining the future workforce pipeline must also be prioritised by us all.

We recognise there has been a need for clinical staff to be redeployed during the pandemic to manage the immediate patient care issues caused by the surges of COVID-19. However, as pressures increase again, consideration of the individual trainee's needs becomes even more important as the numbers of doctors in training trying to catch up on their training competencies increases. Repeatedly redeploying doctors, over a prolonged period of time, without attention to their development needs, will result in further training extensions, significant gaps in the workforce supply and service delivery, plus the additional personal wellbeing cost on individuals.

As in the past, Postgraduate Deans are using their discretion in considering trainee redeployment requests from service, with a view to maintaining planned training wherever possible and avoiding further delays in the supply of the qualified workforce, whilst helping maintain local services. Consideration must be given as to whether individual doctors already have COVID related ARCP outcomes and a need for training competency catch up.

The recovery programme is highlighting to the Healthcare system the challenges and lessons learned during the pandemic. The core message that HEE and partners have promoted throughout the Training Recovery Programme is that we must integrate service and training recovery. As pressures increase, embedding training recovery into service delivery remains crucial in order to supply the workforce needed to deliver COVID care and recovery and to restore services and reduce waiting lists.

We are encouraging medical leaders to continue to highlight where training can support clinical effectiveness and to plan alternative solutions to training suspension and redeployment in order to ensure we can continue to deliver care into the future.

Best Wishes



Professor Sheona MacLeod
Deputy Medical Director, Education Reform
Honorary Professor University of Nottingham and University of Leicester