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Gloucestershire GP Education & Training

June Newsletter 2010

We are sending this to all GPs in Gloucestershire, since education will be of interest to all of you, and we hope you will be interested in relevant aspects of Vocational Training.

Continuing Professional Development for GPs

GGPET have just completed the 35th String of Pearls. Highlights were many – particularly Leslie Smith's talk on medieval contraception, dressed as Mary Queen of Scots and Richard Cooper's biochemistry results session which had heads reeling! Helen Gray managed to explain diabetic drugs in a way everyone could understand. Martin Ansell entertained enormously while educating all about various aspects of psychogeriatrics.

There is another “Hot topics session on 23rd June, based on the RCGP’s Essential knowledge Update (EKU) and there are two Joint Injection Technique sessions on the evenings of 9th and 23rd June. In the autumn is an exciting Neurology day (22nd Sept), which will be used as the basis for some research with UWE on the impact of trained GPs and GPs in training learning together. GGPET is hoping to put on an annual Women’s Health Day (date to be confirmed).

Remember GGPET exists for, and is run by, its members...and at £150 to access a year’s education from any of the Severn Education Trusts, offers extraordinary value for money.

Training in Gloucestershire

Severn Deanery School of Primary Care have been active in encouraging new training practices to cope with expansion (yes indeed! When have you seen that word recently??). A huge welcome therefore to the cohort of new trainers in Gloucestershire, and if you’re reading this and still wondering about training, now is an excellent time to come on board. There are some contacts at the end of this newsletter.

GP Training has been somewhat protected from other recent cuts in public spending, which has affected, most notably, the surgical specialities. Following on from the expansion from 12 to 18 months training in GP, this year sees Gloucestershire achieving the minimum target of 55% of Foundation Doctors experiencing 4 months in General Practice. All this needs space and capacity. We have the trainers, but dedicated training space is at a premium, and it is difficult to see where subsidies from the public purse are going to come from to support further premises expansion.

MSc in Primary Care (University of Bath/Severn Deanery)

Perhaps the most exciting educational development of the moment is the inception of the Masters Course in Primary Care. The GP School have been working with the University of Bath (already leaders in higher education areas such as Sports Medicine) to develop this innovative project which is designed to sit flexibly alongside training for nMRCGP. While trainees are working towards their nMRCGP, they will also be building credits towards initially a Certificate, then Diploma and for those motivated enough, the full Masters. This will allow GPs to extend their breadth of knowledge in particular areas of Primary Care, and will give the movers and shakers of the next generation of GPs the opportunity to “rise to the surface of the pool”. Exciting times...if you are involved with training, please encourage your new trainee to engage with this. Those already in training, or indeed those who have already trained, will also be welcome to join this project as it develops over the next couple of years.

New GP School Administrator

The GP School at the Deanery has a new administrator, Shara Paulo, who has taken over from Janis Kirk. Shara has already had extensive experience in the School of Medicine and I'm certain will quickly make her mark in the GP School administration.

Attendance at Day release Course (DRC) – School policy

School policy is that trainees are expected to attend 100% of DRC. Legitimate, evidence-based absences are accepted. Failure to attend 70% will trigger a "Level One Trainee in Difficulty report". Trainees need to notify Hilary in the School Office with their reasons for non attendance. This may seem bureaucratic but it is based on firm evidence of a link between Day Release Course attendance and failing trainees.

Money

The SHA have told the school to find £120,000 of savings this year. Needless to say, with steady numbers of GP trainees and an increase in placements for Foundation Doctors, this will not be a painless process. The need will be to preserve the experience for individual trainees. We will, however, lose the annual day for Retainer Doctors and residential aspects of Trainers Courses will be curtailed. In addition we are going to have to cope with a 20% cutback in local Patch expenditure....watch this space I'm afraid!

Furthermore, this will have an impact on the Deanery's ability to respond to those wanting flexible working. These doctors will have to undertake jobs that fit in with rotas that already exist. The opportunity to fund these posts using "spare" money (supernumerary funding) is just not there anymore. I am already aware of the distress that this is causing some individuals, and the situation is no less difficult in other patches. The key element of this will be that flexibility must be a reciprocal process. I think the transition time to that state will be hard.

ePortfolio and ARCP panels

The major summer round of ePortfolio screening and ARCP panels has just happened. The quality of entries overall is noticeably improving and reflects greater familiarity with ePortfolio, as well as the ironing out of glitches.

In particular, it is worth noting how great the quality of evidence is that is used to support Educational Supervisor reports. Bland unsupported statements of the "Has progressed well" variety are now unusual. Well done to everyone.

There are very few absolute barriers to satisfying the Panel (the obvious AKT/CSA failures etc). Occasional areas of "soft" evidence that are not demonstrated may be acceptable within an overall portfolio that is otherwise satisfactory. Issues such as the extent of the "Needs further development" or the degree of non-engagement with the learning log – or indeed the quality of entry in the learning log, were the commoner reasons for concern.

The Panel felt that the Educator Notes section was not being exploited. This is particularly useful for trainees who are in some way not straightforward, for example, those who have had training breaks, or illness or personal circumstance change that may have affected their training. Please make better use of this if you can.

It was a relief at Panel Screening to see the quality of Out-of-Hours entries. Well done to all, although the issue that drew the South West to the attention of the Counter Fraud squad had not been a Gloucestershire problem.

It is worth pointing out where failure has occurred and what help the Deanery offers. CSA appears the biggest hurdle. Extensions are usually offered to trainees who fail CSA in order for them to have one further retake (but usually only one!). There is an opportunity to have further Deanery sponsored CSA training through courses run by the Severn Faculty RCGP.

What has been slightly disappointing has been the uptake for the **International Medical Group**, run by Louise Remedios and Armeet Deshpande. A wealth of evidence exists that non-UK medical graduates have an enormously disproportionate likelihood to fail CSA. The Deanery has addressed this issue (highlighted in previous newsletters) and Louise and Armeet's experiences are written up in the current "Education for Primary Care" (The Green Journal) (2010 21:143-4) and as they say "our experience has highlighted... a lack of interest in further training on the part of some of those that need it most". If you have a non-UK graduate, don't just lead the horse to the water, push him/her in!! Waiting until they've had a CSA failure is just a huge missed opportunity

OOH

It seems to be much in the headlines since the issue with the German doctor in Cambridge (who was on one of the South-West's PCT Performers Lists I believe). This has impacted to the Deanery as well who have been asked to Quality assure GP ST training in OOH. I think it is apparent that Robin Holland and those trainers and clinical supervisors working in OOH provide a great service and I feel confident that the Deanery QA visit to the OOH service that will happen later this year will produce many examples of good practice to disseminate through the Region. It seems likely that trainees requirements to participate in OOH will rise substantially soon

Appraisal

It's now over 10 years since Medical Appraisal was first intimated. The exact nature of revalidation has still to be finalised. And during that time, the IT revolution has come of age. We all need to learn how to embrace change ("He who stops learning has grown old" – Henry Ford). It's been fantastic how the On-line Appraisal toolkit is now used by almost all local GPs. But once again, change is around the corner – and it will be in the form of how Appraisal and Revalidation link together in electronic format.

Different toolkits are under development to cope with this change.

I have been an admirer of the Welsh Deanery's appraisal toolkit, which has been in existence now for 8 years and is continually becoming more sophisticated. The beauty of it is that it links together Appraisal administration, the requirements of Revalidation and (to my mind the most important bit!) the professional development needs of individuals and the resources available to fulfil those needs.

Severn Deanery is piloting its own version of this toolkit in Wiltshire and (just launched) in Somerset. Its major competitor is likely to be the RCGPs ePortfolio for post training GPs. The RCGP has the resources to develop this, but it has some way yet to catch up. This will affect us all over the next few years, and is something to watch!

GP trainers may also be interested in notes that Richard Wharton has written to help prepare GPs at the end of training for appraisal. FAO GP Trainers & ST3 Trainees: Registrar Appraisals http://primarycare.severndeanery.org/display?itemfeedid=6370_76

Nurse Training in Primary Care

The Department of Health has at last grasped the nettle that nurses will have a key role in a Primary care led NHS, and that maybe we ought to be offering undergraduate nurses just a tad more experience in GP!

The Deanery will lead on this and through its APD for Nursing (Tina Fear) will propose to the department ways to make it happen. This will necessitate the need to identify training opportunities for undergraduate nurses undertaking practice attachments. This will likely come with funding – one of the few developmental areas that may not be a victim of the current financial climate.

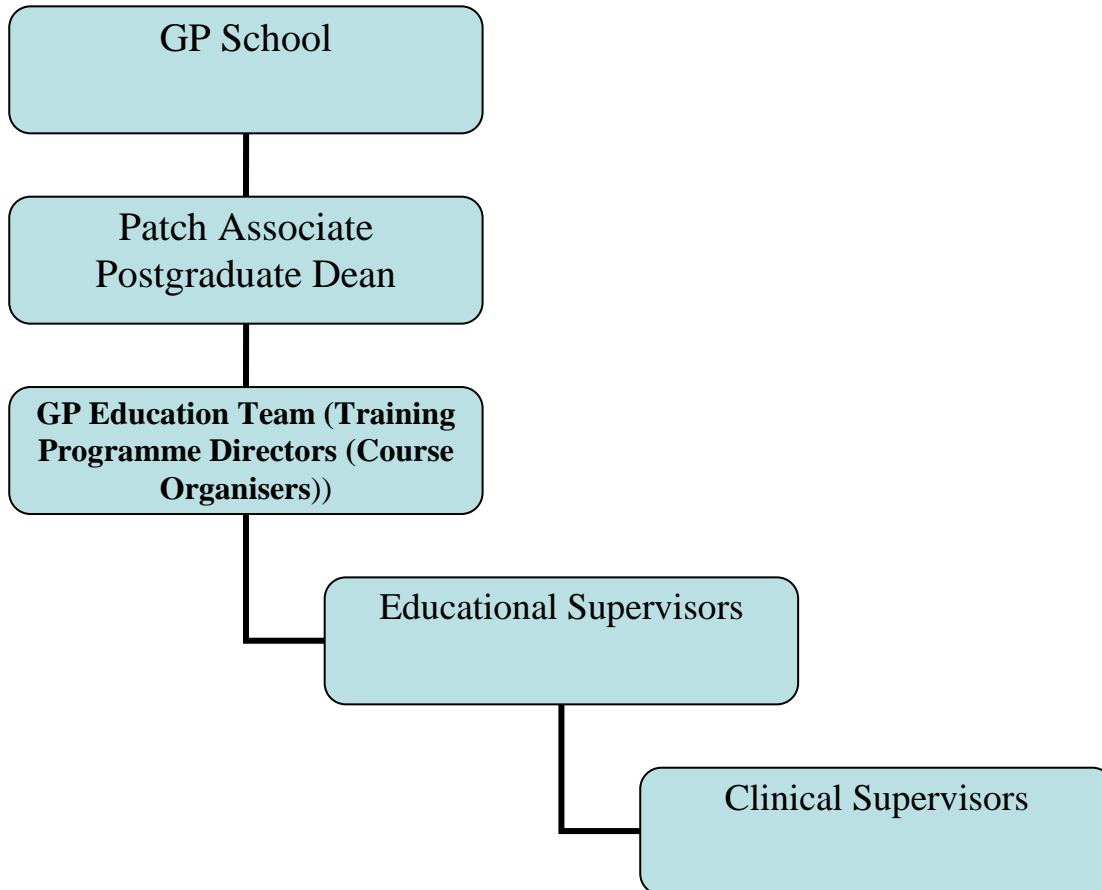
Innovatory training posts

The Deanery is continuing to support trainees in each Patch undertaking Leadership and Scholarship posts. This year also sees the introduction of a Sustainability post (to develop the "Green" agenda). These are 13 month GP posts with the trainee expected to use the extra month spread evenly throughout the year to extend themselves beyond basic training requirements. Please contact myself or one of the GPE Team for further details.

Are you an ES, CS (or both)? (And does it matter?)

Educational Supervisors (ES) have overall responsibility for a GP trainee (or in some circumstances a Foundation Doctor) throughout their period of training. They should have an overall responsibility for progress through training, and be the first level of pastoral support for that trainee.

Clinical supervisors (CS) are responsible for individual teaching during an attachment but without necessarily an overall view of trainee’s progress. In hierarchical terms (if you like that sort of thing):



GP Education Team changes

We welcome Tom Agombar to the GPE Team. Tom trained locally and will take over as Training Programme Director from Brendon O’Leary. Tom is also going to lead on the MSc pilot and I’m sure will be an enormous asset to GP education management in the County.

And finally, finally.....

If you would like to comment on the newsletter, or would like further information on any aspect, please contact myself or one of the GPE Team.

Who’s who?

Please see <http://www.ggpets.org.uk/admin/who.shtml> or www.gpvts.org/AboutUs.aspx

Jim Morrison, Associate Postgraduate Dean for Gloucestershire, June 2010

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