

Guidance to Trainees – Updated January 2021

Impact on Medical and Dental Training Programmes of COVID-19 Response

Rotations from 3rd February 2021 (Updated 20/01/2021)

Following discussion with DoH and HSC Trusts, February 2021 rotation of trainees will take place as planned. Trainees due to rotate to a new Trust are encouraged to make contact with the Medical Education Team at the Trust to obtain information in relation to induction arrangements as soon as possible.

Covid 19 Vaccination (Updated 20/01/2021)

Following regional discussion, trainees are advised to attend for second vaccination in the Trust that they received their first vaccination even if they have moved at changeover.

Recruitment Processes for August 2021 (Updated 20/01/2021)

As previously advised, all specialties developed recruitment plans for 2021. These plans included alternative delivery methods if clinical staff were not available to support interviews or attend assessment centres due to service pressures. It has now been necessary for some specialties to implement these alternative plans. Specialties affected to date include recruitment to Internal Medicine Training and Intensive Care Medicine Training Programmes. Further information and details of specialties affected is published on the [Specialty Training website](#).

Redeployment of Trainees

NIMDTA has been working with Trusts to consider how future redeployment should be managed. While the loss of training opportunities during the initial phase of the COVID-19 pandemic did not prevent most trainees progressing, any further impact on training from subsequent surges will have a cumulative effect, potentially resulting in delayed progression for many trainees.

The key principles for Educational Organisations to follow for redeployment are:

1. planned for by the service and only occur where there is both service delivery and educational support
2. discussed and agreed with the Postgraduate Dean in advance of any change,
3. staged,
4. considered in consultation with the trainees involved,
5. proportionate to the clinical need,
6. of the minimum duration necessary to support essential service response,
7. supported by appropriate induction and supervision,
8. for a set period of time and not extended without further agreement of the Postgraduate Dean to minimise cumulative disruption to training for individual trainees.

Trainees should contact the Director of Medical Education at their Trust to discuss any concerns regarding redeployment or email NIMDTA ValuedTrainees@hscni.net for advice.

Principles for Educational Organisations During Pandemic Surges

The UK's Four Statutory Education Bodies have produced a document outlining the [Principles for Educational Organisations during Pandemic Surges](#). Following on from this, NIMDTA hosted a workshop with Trusts to identify ways to maximise and improve training opportunities during future surges.

Trainee Health and Wellbeing

NIMDTA will continue to provide access to Professional Support services during this crisis. Information on resources available is available [here](#). If you wish to make an appointment please email professionalsupport.nimdt@hscni.net.

Self-Isolating

If you are required to remain at home to self-isolate, you must inform your clinical supervisor and rota coordinator at work, and advise your training department at NIMDTA. Provided you remain well during isolation, trainees are encouraged to engage in remote learning activities, including hospital teaching, regional teaching and online learning. Please continue to record all activity in eportfolios.

Clinically Extremely Vulnerable Trainees (Updated 20/01/2021)

From 26 December 2020, Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) people are advised not to attend the workplace. The Chief Medical Officer has written to individuals within this category to advise of this change. As indicated in this correspondence *'It is important to note that this is advice only. People are free to make their own judgements about whether or not they should attend work, depending on the COVID security of their working environment.'*

Trainees who fall into the CEV category or have other reasons for adjustments to their duties should make contact with the Clinical Manager in the workplace where you are due to be working from Wednesday 3rd February 2021 to ensure an appropriate risk assessment (if required) has been carried out.

These trainees must inform NIMDTA of these changes via email to valuedtrainees@hscni.net. This information will be shared confidentially with the next receiving Trust to facilitate trainee and service adjustments.

Trainees who are Pregnant

All pregnant women must have a risk assessment carried out with their line manager. Risk assessments should be reviewed on a regular basis. The Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists (RCOG) have published two useful documents:

- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Infection in Pregnancy, Information for Healthcare Professionals](#)
- [Occupational health advice for employers and pregnant women during the COVID-19 pandemic](#)

The HSC has updated their advice and guidance for staff who are pregnant. The Q&A can be accessed on the PHA website [here](#).

Revalidation

In March 2020, the GMC deferred all revalidation recommendations due between March 2020 and March 2021 by 1 year. Later, this was extended to include those who due to revalidate between March 2021 and July 2021 (all dates moved back by four months). Revalidation Recommendations will continue for trainees who are obtaining CCT. Trainees should capture their full scope of practice in Section 2 of their ARCP Form R including any work in a new clinical area because of redeployment.

Study Leave, Teaching & Training Events and Membership Exams (Updated 20/01/2021)

[NIMDTA Study Leave Guidelines](#) were updated for August 2020 and include reference to Covid-19 and online events. Teaching and training events resumed in August 2020 with some events taking place socially distanced and others online only. Trainees may request study leave to participate in online training and learning events. PHA guidance on study leave is available on the [PHA website](#). Information on changes to membership examination arrangements are available at relevant College website. As service pressures increase, it is inevitable that many educational events (including membership exams) may be postponed. Up to date information on NIMDTA events will be issued via direct email and on the NIMDTA website. For other events, the relevant organisation will issue updates.

Guidance on Death Certification and Cremation Processes (Updated 20/01/2021)

The Coronavirus Act 2020 contains clauses which impact on the death certification process, the issuing of both MCCDs and Stillbirth Certificates and referrals to the Coroner. Trainees should familiarise themselves with the guidance which is available [here](#).

On 23rd December 2020, the Chief Medical Officer issued correspondence to remind medical practitioners of their statutory responsibilities in these processes during the pandemic. This can be accessed [here](#).

Other Sources of Guidance and Information

All [NIMDTA Trainee Guidance](#) is available on the NIMDTA website.

Trainees can email ValuedTrainees@hscni.net for advice on any additional queries or concerns.

The HSC has also developed advice and guidance regarding employment related issues including: annual/statutory leave, childcare arrangements and support available, advice for staff who are pregnant or with underlying health issues, support for Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) staff. The Q&A can be accessed on the PHA website [here](#).