

Placement / NHS Guidance as at 17th March 2020

Meeting the requirements and passing the programme

We know that many of you will have significant anxieties about how you will be able to meet various requirements for the programme given the restrictions and adaptations during the Coronavirus outbreak. We have had reassurance from the HCPC acknowledging there may be deviation from usual practice for programmes and encouraging the use of flexibility and sensible professional judgement, and this is the principle we will operate. The BPS have also been in contact to indicate that they will support necessary changes to assessments, teaching or placement, as long as overall the programme remains in line with their standards and the learning outcomes are met and that disruption to programme delivery at this time will not disadvantage students. We are committed to ensuring that trainees are fit to qualify by the end of their training.

Placements

We understand that NHS Boards are making contingency plans for delivering out-patient appointments in different ways. It will be hard to provide guidance to cover all of these but we hope that this covers most situations.

Continuing to have contact with your clients by phone or video link provides good opportunities to continue to develop and demonstrate your competences. We recommend that you record (audio or video) as many sessions as possible, including phone contacts, to assist with evaluation of experiences and competences. Please ensure that you follow any local NHS guidance on seeking consent for recordings and storing these.

We are aware that some learning opportunities and clinical work cannot be undertaken by phone or video link, such as cognitive assessment, groups and training. We know that this may mean that some trainees with specific Learning Objectives may not achieve these in their current placement. For the moment, all we can do is reiterate our understanding of this concern and our commitment to ensuring that training proceeds successfully, as well as noting that both the HCPC and the BPS have acknowledged that our usual procedures may need to be altered in these circumstances (see "Meeting the requirements and passing the programme above").

Please ensure that you keep accurate records of all work undertaken using your Weekly logs. Your Weekly logs for the placement so far should already be up-to-date and signed by your supervisor. If they are not, please make this a priority and complete them weekly from now on.

Your supervisors may have other demands on their time, but whilst you are continuing to have clinical contacts (by phone or otherwise), you will still need supervision of this work. Please be considerate of your supervisors' time but not to the extent that you are working without sufficient supervision. If this becomes a problem, for example if your supervisor is off work for any reason, please contact your Local tutor in the first instance about cover supervision.

Whilst we cannot be sure what the next few weeks or months will look like, we will continue to plan for placements 2, 4 and 6 to take place at the dates planned. This may be superseded by future guidance.

End of placement meetings

We will be in contact with you to arrange End of Placement meetings as usual with your Clinical tutor and Personal Tutor. These will take place remotely, so be prepared to send in your paperwork in advance of the meeting – either electronically or through the post, bearing in mind time for posting.

Guidance to work from home on placement days

All trainees should follow the NHS Inform guidance (see link below) about the circumstances which require self-isolation, in relation to their own health or the health of someone in their household. Relevant local NHS policies (eg Sick, leave, Special leave and Carer's leave) should be used for these

circumstances and your line managers will give you guidance on these. In the absence of illness (either self or household member) or caring responsibilities, some trainees have asked us what action they should take, particularly following recent Government guidance. Although you are registered on the Programme as University postgraduate students, this decision about working from home on placement days will be taken by your NHS Board and line managers. Please follow their guidance in this. Again, please ensure that you record what you are doing clearly in your Weekly logs.

Redeployment

You may have heard discussion in NHS Boards about staff being redeployed to other roles. We will be working with HOPS to agree what this might look like for trainees. It may result in your supervisors being absent from their usual workplaces and you should ensure that if you are continuing to work, you have sufficient supervision in place. Redeployment may also affect trainees and all we can say at this point, is that this may provide opportunities to develop and demonstrate competences, albeit in different ways to the placement that you were currently on or the placement that you were scheduled to undertake. Make sure that you have sufficient supervision for any work that you undertake and please log all activities on your Weekly logs.

The HCPC Guidance on conduct and ethics for students (<https://www.hcpc-uk.org/globalassets/resources/guidance/guidance-on-conduct-and-ethics-for-students.pdf>) is helpful in stating:

- Work within the limits of your knowledge and skills.
 - You should make sure that you are appropriately supervised for any task that you are asked to carry out.
 - You should ask for help when you need it. (page 11).

Your supervisors are bound by the HCPC standards of conduct performance and ethics (<https://www.hcpc-uk.org/globalassets/resources/standards/standards-of-conduct-performance-and-ethics.pdf>) which state:

- Delegate appropriately Delegation, oversight and support
 - You must only delegate work to someone who has the knowledge, skills and experience needed to carry it out safely and effectively.
 - You must continue to provide appropriate supervision and support to those you delegate work to.” (page 7).

It will be important to work flexibly as the whole NHS manages such a significant national challenge.

Clinical Tutor Team

If there are any queries about placement not covered in this document or your individual circumstances are different, please contact your Clinical tutor. At the moment the Clinical Tutor team are contactable by email. Trainees in Fife and Forth Valley you will continue to have the Clinical Tutors who carried out your mid-placement visits most recently.

If one of the Clinical tutors is unable to work, they will indicate this in their out of office message and any cover arrangements will be described.

Adam Conlin is also contactable by email (clinical.tutor.admin@ed.ac.uk) and will have access to the Tutors diaries if this would be helpful.

Useful links

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/coronavirus>