

## GLOUCESTERSHIRE GP EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

This newsletter is to keep you informed about activities and developments in GP Education in your county. The GP Team has responsibility for all aspects of GP Education from the first post-graduate years through to retirement. The focus of our attention is frequently in the training years or VTS but we are aware of the large population of GPs working in practices and also those moving into the area and looking for work or re-training. Do consult our website and the GGPET website regularly to keep up with opportunities locally.

There have been many structural changes to our organisation in the past 12 months. We are now part of the Severn GP School which is based in Bristol. The School lives within the Severn Institute with all the other Schools e.g. surgery, medicine. The Severn Institute is part of the SW Strategic Health Authority [SHA] based in Taunton.

The Gloucestershire GP Team is based in the Postgraduate Centre at Sandford in Cheltenham. You can see a who's who on our web-site [www.gloucestershirevts.co.uk](http://www.gloucestershirevts.co.uk)

News this month;

1. Recruitment to GP training. We are now approaching the final stage 3 of the annual recruitment process. This takes place in the first week of March in Bristol. We are assessing candidates who have placed the Severn School as their first choice on the application form. Training schemes are currently highly sought after and we anticipate a full complement of trainees which will fill almost all of our GP practices and all of our hospital rotations.
2. Training practices. We are looking to expand our training places in Gloucestershire and are actively encouraging existing training practices to expand trainer numbers if possible. We are also keen to encourage non-training practices to seek approval for training. There is a new trainers course running in May and June, details on the Severn School web-site. If you are interested and would like to discuss this further please contact Hilary Carter at Sandford and arrange to meet with us or invite your Patch Associate Director, Dr Kim Hearn, to your practice for an informal visit.
3. 18month GP training and 18month hospital posts. A recent Government initiative has cemented the much discussed 18-months in GP as part of the GP vocational training scheme: this has been permitted, although not funded, for years but suddenly became policy in the autumn. This welcome change has made huge amounts of work for GP teams and hospital tutors. All trainees entering StR2 in August 2008 have been given the choice of changing one of their six-month hospital posts for an additional placement in General Practice. Nine of the 20 trainees in Gloucestershire have opted to change –

they will be placed in training practices for six months with a different trainer which will give them experience of another practice. The trainer for the StR3 year will remain the Educational Supervisor for the entire training. The trainee will remain a Trust employee for this six-month attachment; this is different to the StR3 year when the trainee is employed by the practice. This arrangement will be familiar to some trainers who have experience of working with F2 GP's and PRHO doctors where the Trust holds the contract and the trainee is on placement to the practice.

4. Educational Supervision. The StR3 trainer is the Educational Supervisor for the entire three year training scheme: this was started in 2007 and seems to make sound sense to trainees. It has been a largely unfunded extra activity for trainers but we are very grateful for the support that all our Gloucestershire have given to this important role. As the end of the financial year approaches, the GP School has identified some savings and there is a small increase in the educational supervision funds to practices for this year only. It is a reality that funding for Education is less than we would like – as a GP team we will continue to do our best to support trainers and trainees and develop the most comprehensive local system that time and funding will allow.
5. Research and good ideas. There is a small budget available to fund research and support the development of good ideas in training – if you have something that you would like to pursue please contact the GP office at Sandford with your proposal and we may be able to help with some funding.
6. E portfolio. The nMRCGP went live in August 2007 and replaces Summative Assessment as the statutory approval process for competency at the completion of training. StR3 doctors this year have had to complete the portfolio in a very short time and have managed to navigate their way around the electronic documentation with little or no training for this: a less than ideal situation. We have all been learning and if you would like input from the team with this new activity, do get in touch. The RCGP website has a lot of useful information and the trainees have become our local experts. StR1 and StR2 doctors also have to input data and complete assessments on a regular basis: please make sure that you enquire of your trainees in your educational supervision sessions. We are aware that some trainees are not keeping up with this and missed deadlines will cause them problems in the future.
7. Curriculum. The official GP curriculum was published this year – it weighs 3.5 Kgs and has been summarised to make it a more useful document. We anticipate that it will be widely used and we will be encouraging consultants to map their hospital training to the relevant parts of the curriculum. GP trainers should be familiar with the summarised form and discuss this with trainees as part of establishing learning needs.
8. ARCPs. The GP School has to review a proportion of the e-portfolios – panels met in January for the first time and there will be a second panel in June 2008. 10% of portfolios will be chosen at random and trainers and trainees need to be familiar with the dates and the process. We were advised last week that panels will be locally based and we have been buddied with Bath and Swindon patch. We will agree on dates in the next few days and you will be notified and given information about the process. It is essential that trainees and trainers are aware that trainees will fail if they have not completed their assessments and kept to the deadlines for submission and it is important that the e-portfolio is completed 6 weeks before the end of training in order to get certification for work in August 2008.

9. Application form for approval and re-approval as a trainer. It has been clear for some time that the application form for training is not well mapped to the criteria for training. This is a situation which has evolved over a number of years as the criteria have developed along with changes in General Practice. A new form is going to be offered for all new applicants after the summer new trainers course. Trainers seeking re-approval this year will be given a choice of paperwork. The new forms have almost found final approval, the last phase will be presented to GPEC at the end of March. The draft documents are available and I can e-mail them to anyone who would like a preview.
10. nMRCGP course. There is a Severn School course developed by our own trainers and GP teams. This course will be fully-funded for all StR3 doctors starting in practice in August 2008 – details on the GP School website.
11. National model of SLA with trainers 2008. This is an agreement between the Director of the GP School and the GP trainer. It is a SHA enforceable agreement to provide training which has recently been approved by the committee of GP Directors nationally and will be adopted by Severn from August 2008. Please look out for this additional form which will be sent with the PAY1 form to practices and should be signed and returned to the School. I will have copies of this available for anyone who would like to see the document beforehand.
12. Appraisal Associate Director. The GP School will be advertising for an AD to work in appraisal for the school for one year in the near future. The post is for 2 sessions a week.
13. Gloucestershire GP Team. Dr Judith Brooke was appointed to the team a few months ago. She is a GP and trainer in Gloucester and has worked with the educationalists intermittently over the past few years as a small group leader. She is with us for two sessions a week and has a remit to provide input in the CPD arena working with the Education Trust as well as looking after GP retainer doctors and helping with some input to our training sessions
14. GP Education day. This has been on Thursdays for many years – in August 2008 we will change to Wednesdays to bring us in line with all the other training schemes in the GP School: this will have a number of benefits and obviously some drawbacks. We are grateful to Consultants and Trusts who have had to re-organise rotas to free GP trainees on a different day and to our practices who will have to look at timetabling reschedule sessions to allow their trainee to get to Cheltenham on a different day.
15. Dates. There will be a whole day meeting on May 8<sup>th</sup> for Gloucestershire trainers. Details will follow shortly but do put the date in your diary and keep in free. The invitation will be extended to those interested in seeking training approval and an opportunity to meet with colleagues and find out what its really like to be a GP trainer.
16. GP retainer Scheme. Dr Judith Brooke has taken over the annual review of this scheme and will be contacting all doctors to arrange this – details of the re-approval arrangements are on the GP School web-site. The scheme is available for five years in total to each participant. We are interested in the educational support and development offered to doctors on the scheme from the practice as well as any ideas or questions that you may wish to ask us.
17. CPD. The Gloucestershire Education Trust has had a successful year and is enjoying a healthy membership. Details of the ‘String of Pearls’ week are being finalised and will be available soon. The Trust offers education in different locations, using a variety of different styles of input and has something for everyone. The AGM is on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> March, details on the GGPET website.

This is a lengthy up-date but much has happened this year. We hope to see all trainers at our meeting in May – please let us have your issues to discuss

Dr Kim Hearn  
Associate Director for Gloucestershire