



Support Trainee Doctors in their Career Development

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Current issues and challenges in supporting medical careers

The changing context of doctors' careers has been dramatically impacted upon by wider factors;

- ▶ Changes to career pathways (MMC, Tooke, Greenaway)
- ▶ Standardised and national recruitment processes for training
- ▶ Workforce plans, health policy and UK Immigration policy
- ▶ Diversity of medical workforce and lifestyle priorities
- ▶ Regulator standards (GMC)
- ▶ In Wales, competition from other parts of UK and the challenge of attracting and retaining talent

Career decisions at all levels are now played out in a context of wider change factors which make the process of exploring and making choices even more ambiguous and complex: the advice and guidance which you received may not be as relevant or realistic for your trainees.

'Baby Boomer' Career Values

Well defined career path; career ladders
 Work hard, be rewarded, progress vertically
 Learn a profession and stay with it
 Job security, stay for as long as you can
 Organisation responsible for training
 Good benefits, extrinsic rewards
 Generation X career values: worklife balance,
 question authority, informality, portable careers
 and skills

Generation 'Y' Career Values

Diverse career journeys; career bridges
 Work still challenging, progression often diagonal
 More frequent changes in direction or way
 of working
 Less security, stay employable
 Responsible for your own lifelong learning
 Flexible benefits, intrinsic rewards
 Generation Y career values: optimistic, nothing I
 can't do, I want gets, fun, parallel careers

So what is my role?

As an educational supervisor, being a "career helper" is part of your role (GMC Trainee Doctor D6.31). This means providing both defined and informal opportunity for doctors to talk about career needs, helping to form an action or contingency plan, acting as a sounding board and being a signpost to more specialised information or help when needed. You will often be the first point of contact for trainees, but can draw on other stakeholders in the medical education and employer framework to help you support their career thinking:

- ▶ **Local Support:** Other Educational Supervisors, Postgraduate Centres, Royal College Tutors
- ▶ **Advanced Local Support:** Local Faculty Leads, Specialty Career Leads, Foundation Programme Directors, Training Programme Directors, Mentors, LHB Human Resources
- ▶ **Specialist Deanery Support:** Associate Deans, Careers Team, Professional Support Unit

Frameworks for Career Support

The model of career support proposed in our recommended reading "The Roads to Success" provides a helpful framework to guide medical trainees, educational supervisors and other career supporters through four key stages of career progress. It can be time-effective to organise career planning discussions or workshops with small groups of doctors.

Stages

Self assessment (Taking a history)

Useful questions

What is most/least important to you in a career? How could these values and priorities change over time?
Do you know what your personal strengths and limitations may be? How is this reflected in your performance assessments so far?
Have you explored both personal and professional preferences? Are they compatible?
Are there lifestyle factors which are important to you?
How realistic do you think your career plans and goals are at this time?

Career Exploration (Examination)

Are you clear about all potential career pathways and alternatives?
What career events and fairs are you attending/have you attended?
How have you researched areas and specialties of interest?
How well do your skills, experience and interests match the roles you aspire to?
Who could you approach to find out more information?
What is your Plan B if you don't get to follow your 'ideal' route?

Decision Making (Diagnosis)

What are the plus and minus points for each of your career options?
What kind of work/doctor-patient setting you would work most effectively and enjoyably in?
Do you need the opportunity to develop research interests or specialist knowledge?
What kind of working relationships with colleagues do you prefer?
Have you assessed how personal work-style and work-life factors would narrow or expand your options?
If you had to choose between opportunities, what would be the critical factors in your decision?
Is specialty more important than location, or vice versa?

Stages

Plan Implementation (Treatment plan)

Useful questions

What research have you done into the Deaneries/locations etc you could be applying to?
How up to date is your CV and E-portfolio?
What shows 'added value'?
What have you found out about the likely application/progress review processes you may be undergoing?
How would you answer the question "why are you applying for this?"
If you had one minute to sell yourself to an interview panel, what would you say?

Best Practice Checklist

Effective behaviour from Supervisor:

- Showing real interest and insight
- Being positive and enthusiastic
- Offering constructive challenge and advice
- Using facilitative interpersonal skills
- Giving honest feedback
- Sharing networks
- Managing the discussion

Trainees Should be encouraged to:

- Be proactive about seeking help
- Consider their skills and their options
- Share career thoughts and concerns
- Be open minded to feedback
- Be adaptable and face reality if necessary
- Take ownership and follow up actions

Career choice, development and management are pro-active lifelong processes applicable to every stage of medical education. Career related activities should be fully integrated into training programmes.

As Educational Supervisor you are likely to be the first level of career support. It is not necessary to have specialist training in order to offer career help in a workplace setting but it is important to know what good or unhelpful practice is.

Your input into training programmes should incorporate opportunities for reflection and discussion regarding each individual trainee doctor's career choice and development.

Further Information

Educators can refer trainees to the Deanery Careers Team for targeted support or for guidance in helping a trainee with their career thinking.

Contact pgmedicalcareers@cardiff.ac.uk

Online resources for Trainees are on

<https://careers.walesdeanery.org/>

and for Trainers on <https://careers.walesdeanery.org/trainers>

and for students, trainees and trainers on

www.medicalcareers.nhs.uk

Postgraduate Centre Libraries have a range of medical career books including:

Elton, C. and Reid J. (2008) *The Roads to Success*. Scribe Publications: London.

Chambers, R. et al (2006) *Guiding Doctors in their Careers* (2006). Radcliffe: Oxford.

Interested in learning more about this and other educational topics? Why not professionalise your role with an academic qualification at PG Cert, Dip or MSc in Medical Education via e-learning or attendance courses.

Contact: medicaleducation@cardiff.ac.uk

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