

Trainee mentorship programme: 'Mentor-us'

Author: Hiten Patel

Aims

To encourage progression of training from core medical training to higher specialty training, thereby reducing attrition rates of trainees.

Methods

Current attrition rates experienced by the acute medical specialties have been a cause for concern for the last few years. Without adequately investing in and supporting our trainees, this is likely to continue.

Survey results conducted in our local trust concluded that up to 40% of our trainees were considering a break or not proceeding onto specialty trainee (ST) 3 at all. After delving into the root causes of this, it was shown that lack of support, careers advice and poor morale were contributory factors.

Each of our core medical trainees (CMTs) were paired together with a specialty registrar of their choosing in their corresponding specialty of interest.

The aim was to provide support for trainees undergoing specialty interviews. Mentors were able to provide assistance and guidance for portfolio development, interview preparation and overall clinical support.

Mentors were encouraged to meet with their mentees at core trainee (CT) 2 level on at least a 2-weekly basis to provide support and enhance development over a 4–6 month period leading up to interviews. For the CT1 doctors, the mentorship programme would be implemented for longer.

Results

In our current cohort of 10 CT2s, seven were eligible to progress onto specialty training. Six have applied for higher specialty interviews, giving an 85% progression rate from core medical training to higher specialty training. The remaining four intend to progress once exam and portfolio obligations have been met.

Out of our current cohort of CT1s, all six are intending to apply for higher specialty training.

Conclusion

There is a place for in-house mentorship programmes in order to help guide our current CMTs onto higher specialty training. This can

enhance interaction between various grades of trainee, as well as help with applications and interview preparation and ultimately improve morale. This programme can easily be implemented to cater for foundation year trainees progressing onto core training. ■

Conflict of interest statement

None.

Author: Royal College of Physicians chief registrar, East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust, UK