

## Impact on Medical and Dental Training Programmes of COVID-19 Response Guidance to Trainees – Updated July 2021

### ARCP and Training Progression

During 2020, the four Statutory Education Bodies (SEBs), Medical Royal Colleges & Faculties worked together with the GMC to review how the ARCP process should be managed and a number of derogations were put in place. As the pandemic has progressed, these derogations remain in place until at least September 2021. The intention remains that all trainees will have an ARCP carried out for their training year. More information is available on the following links:

<https://www.gmc-uk.org/-/media/documents/temporary-approval-of-derogation-for-the-annual-review-of-competence-progression--arcp--may-82838951.pdf>

[https://www.copmed.org.uk/images/docs/ARCP\\_Decision\\_Aid/ARCP\\_Decision\\_Aid.pdf](https://www.copmed.org.uk/images/docs/ARCP_Decision_Aid/ARCP_Decision_Aid.pdf)

<https://www.copmed.org.uk/publications/covid-20>

NIMDTA Processes have been revised as follows:

- Trainees will be given a date for the panel to review their evidence. Trainees should ensure that all evidence is up to date before then and clinical and educational supervisors' reports are completed.
- The Outcome 10 option due to disruption from progression by COVID will still be available to panels.
- There may be updated derogations in relation to evidence required for this year written by your College / Faculty and approved by the GMC.
- Panels will not be meeting face to face with trainees. Some trainees / programmes may have follow up meetings via Zoom or phone call.
- Feedback will be provided to trainees on the outcome of the ARCP.
- New principles for supporting trainees in the final year of training will be introduced from August 2021. It is anticipated that these principles will facilitate a forward-looking discussion with trainees in the final years of training. More information will be published in the coming weeks.

### Rotations from 4<sup>th</sup> August 2021

All rotations planned for Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> August 2021 are expected to proceed. Clinical services may have moved location within Trusts in response to the pandemic, which may affect the site of some trainees' placements.

### Recruitment Processes for August 2021

Recruitment processes for August 2021 have almost concluded. Information in relation to Recruitment for February 2022 and August 2022 will be available on the [NIMDTA website](#) in due course.

## Revalidation

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the GMC moved all revalidation submission dates due between March 2020 and March 2021 back by 12 months. NIMDTA are now facing a significant increase in the number of doctors in training due to revalidate during the 2021/22 academic year. NIMDTA's Revalidation Team are reviewing revalidation submission dates in line with our capacity and resources. Trainees achieving CCT will be prioritised for Revalidation before leaving programme. Some trainees will receive correspondence from us to advise that that we need to delay their revalidation submission date until later in 2021 to allow us more time to process this high volume of work. All queries should be forwarded to [revalidation.nimdt@hscni.net](mailto:revalidation.nimdt@hscni.net)

FAQs for meeting revalidation requirements across full scope of practice for doctors in postgraduate training taking into account the special arrangements put in place during the Covid-19 pandemic can be accessed [here](#).

## Trainee Health and Wellbeing

NIMDTA's Professional Support Unit continues to provide vital services. Information on resources available is available [here](#). If you wish to make an appointment please email [professionalsupport.nimdt@hscni.net](mailto:professionalsupport.nimdt@hscni.net).

## Study Leave, Teaching & Training Events and Membership Exams

[NIMDTA Study Leave Guidelines](#) have been updated to include reference to Covid-19 and online events. Trainees may request study leave to participate in online and face-to-face training and learning events.

The [HSC Q&A](#) has been updated and the key principles to be adhered to include:

- a need to continue to focus on the mandatory/essential training required to enable the upskilling/training of staff to include doctors and dentists in regulated training programmes, those with named educational roles, those redeployed to new roles and new starts;
- Work related travel and attendance at regional, national or international courses and conferences other than virtual events should be considered in line with up to date Government guidance on travel. This guidance can change at short notice, meaning that staff could be required to self-isolate on their return to Northern Ireland, which may leave them unable to attend the workplace. Staff should discuss any plans and seek approval to attend such events involving travel outside of Northern Ireland with their Line Manager before making any arrangements.

Information on changes to membership examination arrangements is available at relevant College websites. 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.

## Annual Leave

Guidance on Annual leave for Doctors and Dentists in Training is available [here](#).

The Voluntary Scheme for the Extra-Ordinary Payment of Unused Contractual Leave closed on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

### **HSC work relocated to the Independent Sector**

Trainees may be asked to assist their supervising consultant with work in the Independent Sector that would previously have taken place in an HSC Trust. This is as part of the DoH's response to the rebuilding of service capacity for NI. This training can take place in Independent Sector facilities that are complying with the necessary RQIA governance arrangements. These arrangements include recording which trainees are attending and having a data sharing agreement in place to allow NIMDTA to communicate with the independent facility in relation to any relevant investigations, complaints or concerns involving trainees. The Independent Sector facilities that currently have these arrangements in place with NIMDTA are the Ulster Independent Clinic and Kingsbridge Private Hospital.

If trainees are asked to assist in this way they must:

- Confirm with their private indemnity provider that they have cover to do this work
- Have applied for and been granted practising privileges granted by the independent sector facility they are attending
- Be accompanying their supervising consultant

### **Redeployment of Trainees**

Throughout the pandemic, NIMDTA has been working with Trusts to agree principles for redeployment. Currently no trainees are redeployed. All future redeployment must be planned for by the service & only occur where there is both service delivery & educational support. All requests must be discussed and agreed with the Postgraduate Dean in advance of any change and considered in consultation with the trainees involved.

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

### **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**

For a definition of CEV, please follow this link [Clinically Extremely Vulnerable \(CEV\)](#).

With effect from 12 April 2021 [the current advice is](#) that CEV staff who have been at home and who are not able to do their work from home, will be able to return to the workplace. Those staff who fall into the CEV category and are able to do their work from home, should continue to do this.

All line managers of staff who are CEV must discuss the new guidance and where the member of staff is returning to the workplace, they must undertake a new [risk assessment](#) with the staff member prior to their return to the workplace to ensure the staff member is supported

appropriately, with mitigation to protect them in the workplace. Further advice and guidance can be provided by either Occupational Health or Human Resources.

Trainees who meet the definition of CEV should contact NIMDTA to advise of any changes to their work arrangements via email to [valuedtrainees@hscni.net](mailto:valuedtrainees@hscni.net). This information will be shared confidentially with the next receiving Trust to facilitate trainee and service adjustments.

### **Trainees who are Pregnant**

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

All pregnant women must have a COVID-19 Risk Assessment carried out with their line manager. The Risk Assessments should be reviewed on a regular basis and again when the member of staff reaches 28 weeks pregnant. The link to the risk assessment template can be found by clicking [here](#).

The 'Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists, Royal College of Midwives and Faculty of Occupational Medicine' (RCOG) have recently updated their advice for employers and pregnant healthcare workers – available [here](#).

### **Guidance on Death Certification and Cremation Processes**

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](#). In December 2020, the CMO issued correspondence to remind medical practitioners of their [statutory responsibilities](#) in these processes during the pandemic.

In February 2021, the NI DoH updated its published [Educational Material](#) Surrounding Death - Hospital Training & Induction Programmes.

### **Other Sources of Guidance and Information**

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

Trainees can email [ValuedTrainees@hscni.net](mailto: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](#).