Supporting Trainees in Difficulty

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September 2012
Expected learning outcomes

*Having attended this workshop you should be able to:*

- Recognise the signs and symptoms of a trainee in difficulty
- Understand the potential causes of difficulty for trainees
- Be confident in supporting trainers to engage with a trainee in difficulty
- Form an appropriate management plan with a trainee in difficulty
Trainees in Difficulty

- Most trainees progress without difficulty
- Some make one serious error
- A small proportion have prolonged difficulties
- Very few are untrainable
- Rates of progression vary
- Support begins at induction
How do problems present?

• Poor timekeeping
• Trainee “never around”
• Sickness
• Behind with paperwork, clinical and non-clinical
• Failure to comply with procedures
• Poor clinical decisions
• Problems with team members
• Exam failures
More Extreme Presentations

• Complaints, formal and informal
• Grievances
• Critical incidents
Categorisation of Problems

- Conduct
- Capability
- Health
- Workplace

- Combinations are common and health is very often a factor
Scenarios

Small group work and feedback
Engaging a trainee about their difficulties

• Still a tendency for trainers to avoid confrontation. The following will enable trainers to engage more confidently:
  – Ensure trainers attend approved trainer course & diversity training
  – Ensure trainers aware of who can advise e.g. educational supervisor, tutor, TPD
  – Good practice of trainer kept supervision records
Managing trainees in difficulty

• Deanery policy for supporting doctors in difficulty, on Deanery website
• Trust policies, the Trust is the employer
• Deanery and Trusts work in partnership to support trainees in difficulty
Managing Trainees in Difficulty

• Support the trainers in documenting & collecting the evidence.
• Support the trainer in discussing issues with trainee.
• Ensure discussions are documented by trainer & copied to the trainee.
• Support trainer in developing an appropriate action plan.
Serious difficulties that may threaten patient safety

- Must follow correct procedures
- If serious, always inform Deanery
- Need to involve Management, HR
- Framework used is “Maintaining high standards in the Modern NHS”
- NCAS/GMC may be involved
- Trainee must be supported & may be excluded from workplace
Summary

• Be vigilant
• Document fully
• Be clear about roles and responsibilities
• Record carefully with feedback and recommendations
• Be clear about local frameworks and policies
Thank You

Questions?