



# Developing A Mentoring Programme For Higher Trainees In Psychiatry

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## BACKGROUND

- Mentoring is a partnership in which a more experienced mentor provides support and guidance to someone less experienced who is in a similar role to themselves.
- Mentoring plays an important role in supporting doctors and helping them to develop. The Royal College of Psychiatrists encourages mentoring at all stages of a psychiatrist's career, particularly at times of transition to a new role.
- Prior to 2020, there was no mentoring programme in place for higher trainees joining the North, West and East Yorkshire Higher Training Scheme.



## AIMS

- To establish a new mentoring programme within the North, West and East Yorkshire Higher Training Scheme
- For mentors to offer new trainees an informal source of support and guidance as they move into higher training, providing benefits for both mentors and mentees.
- For mentors to gain experience in working with colleagues and supporting others, to help meet training curriculum competencies.

## DEVELOPING THE MENTORING PROGRAMME

- A pilot took place with one higher trainee who joined the scheme in February 2020, who was mentored by a current higher trainee.
- Following positive feedback from this trial, and with further interest from other trainees, the mentoring programme was introduced across the whole scheme.
- Current higher trainees were asked to volunteer as mentors. They were matched with new ST4 mentees based on their experiences and interests – for instance, the subspecialty they were training in, the location they were working or being an international medical graduate.
- In August 2020, 8 trainees were matched with mentors. In February 2021, a further 4 new trainees were matched with mentors and in August 2021 a further 8 trainees began mentoring.

## EVALUATION

- Feedback from mentors and mentees was gathered in December 2020.
- 6 responses were received from mentors and 6 from mentees.

### Feedback from mentors

- 100% of mentors said that the programme had been valuable for new trainees.
- Benefits identified of being a mentor included:
  - *Developing experience in medical education*
  - *Getting joy from supporting others and being able to pass on knowledge*
  - *Good to be able to pass on knowledge and feel able to help*
- Difficulties identified included:
  - *Not being able to meet in person, which made developing a relationship harder*
  - *Not being experienced enough in certain areas to offer support to a mentee*
  - *Working in different geographical areas*

### Feedback from mentees

- 100% of mentees reported that they had found having a mentor very useful.
- Benefits identified of having a mentor included:
  - *Feeling supported and able to share concerns*
  - *Having a designated person who had been through similar experiences to help ease the transition to a new job role*
  - *Getting practical advice on maternity leave and managing a career and children*
  - *Getting tips on how to approach the e-portfolio and meeting curriculum competencies*
- Difficulties identified included:
  - *A lack of time to catch up*
  - *Being unable to meet in person, due to Covid restrictions*

## CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

- The mentoring programme has been a successful addition to the North, West and East Yorkshire Higher Training Scheme, with benefits identified for both mentors and mentees.
- Uptake of the offer for mentoring has been high amongst new trainees. There have been good numbers of trainees volunteering to be mentors, enabling mentees to be matched with a mentor who can support their needs.
- The programme is continuing as a trainee-led project, with a higher trainee coordinating the programme.
- The programme has been extended to offer mentoring to trainees returning from a period of statutory leave such as maternity leave, and will continue to be developed according to the needs of the trainees in the scheme.