

Doctors in training feedback will lead to an improved assessment experience

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Health Education England (HEE) has today unveiled recommendations ^[1] to improve how doctors in training are assessed, appraised and receive feedback. It includes proposals to allow trainees to pause and re-enter training more easily, improve the feedback they receive on their progress and to increase support for those professionals who support their training.

The announcement follows HEE's year-long review of the Annual Review of Competency Progression (ARCP) process ^[1], which was started after doctors in training raised concerns about inconsistencies in how their performance is assessed in the current system. This is part of HEE's Medical Education Reform programme and will help to safeguard high quality patient care provided by highly skilled healthcare professionals who feel motivated and valued. Throughout the review, trainees have given their views and there has also been active engagement of bodies such as the BMA, GMC, Medical Royal Colleges and others.

Planned improvements include:

- Making the process more uniform across the country, with assessment requirements that do not change during the training year, ensuring that trainees and those who support them know what they have to do to prepare for their ARCP, how the process itself will work and what feedback and support they can expect, whether they work full time or part time.
- Making it easier for trainees to temporarily come out of their training, for example to undertake research or for family reasons, and then restart training without losing credit for skills already gained
- Development for doctors not in formal training to enable progression within the profession, and enhanced support for those doctors who are preparing to re-enter training after time out;
- Ensuring every doctor in training gets feedback on their training, clarifying the support around doctors in training and the role of educational supervisors and ensuring trainers have sufficient time and training to deliver
- Applying the principles established through the review about high quality appraisal and assessment to benefit other healthcare professionals who wish to train to expand their skills and scope of practice as part of multi-disciplinary teams.

Professor Wendy Reid, Executive Director of Education and Quality and National Medical Director, Health Education England said:

This is about wanting to be assured that the system is fair and consistent across

the country. Our doctors in training don't need a process that is overly burdensome and adds additional pressure to what is already a very challenging front-line job.

The assessment process remains an important part of ensuring patient safety, as it provides evidence of the progress doctors in training are making and assures the public that they are in safe hands. What we have to make sure is that it works for all involved.

The review has highlighted what we can do to improve things to make doctors in training feel valued, such as not waiting until the end of the year for feedback and support, but having more regular face to face feedback and support that also acknowledges where they are excelling.

We know there is variation in how the system works across the country and there are many reasons for that. There needs to be a more standardised and consistent approach so doctors in training go through the same process regardless of where they are based and what hours they work.

We are working towards consistently applying the gold guide by the end of the year. We will start work immediately with our colleagues across the system to look at the educational supervision roles. Further changes to the process will take longer and we will work with the system to make sure this happens

The [review](#) ^[1] is part of HEE's partnership work with other national bodies to enhance the working lives of doctors in training by making sure they have access to high quality learning environments so that they feel supported, valued, and provided with the means to become competent and versatile clinicians, integrated into multi-professional teams.

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Annual Review of Competency Progression (ARCP) is the means by which doctors in postgraduate training are reviewed each year to ensure that they are offering safe, quality patient care, and to assess their progression against standards set down in the curriculum for their training programme.

[Read more](#) ^[1]

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