Dear colleague

Health Education Wessex Statement regarding long term sick leave implications for supervisors and their trainees

It has come to our attention that there have been very rare occasions where a trainee’s named educational supervisor has been off sick for a period of time without the Wessex postgraduate training programme team being made aware. Although in these incidences the Trust has invariably put temporary support in place, this has not always been in conjunction with the Programme teams to ensure that any temporary supervision meets the trainee’s needs. This may be a real issue for smaller departments where there is not necessarily anyone else to take on this role, albeit on a temporary basis.

Health Education Wessex wants to ensure that help is given to Trusts to make sure that suitable arrangements are in place for trainees in these circumstances, and is circulating this statement to highlight expectations in this area. We ask that all Trusts, Programme teams and trainees kindly note the following:

- When a supervisor is off sick, for any period, temporary arrangements should be put in place by the Trust to ensure adequate support for the trainee.

- When a supervisor (clinical or educational) is off sick for more than one month and is unable to provide supervision, the Director of Medical Education will inform the relevant Head of School, Training Programme Director and Programme Manager of this absence by email. The Programme team will then liaise with the Trust regarding temporary solutions they may have put in place or offer support where these solutions may not be immediate.
• Trainees should highlight the absence of their supervisor to their departmental lead educator.

It is key that all trainees receive the required supervision for each post. As this will vary by trainee it is important for key parties to be aware of any potential risks to this so that they can be mitigated.

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

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