

Wessex PSU update

Asperger's Pathway

Following on from the last PSU Newsletter in August the Wessex Professional Support Unit has continued to work on a pathway of support for Trainees who might be showing signs of Asperger's syndrome.

We are pleased to announce that the pathway has been approved and will be used for all relevant referrals to the PSU going forward.

Principles of the Asperger's Pathway

1. Screening will be conducted by Educational Supervisors or PSU Case Managers using the AQ10 questionnaire.
2. If the screening results indicate possible Asperger's, an assessment will be made by Dr Stefan Gleeson and information/Guidance pack will be provided to Trainee and Educators.
3. 6 hours of bespoke input will be provided by members of the Virtual Support Group, including the development of a "What you need to know about me" guide.
4. Additional support can be provided, financed by the Trainee, or the workplace.

Feature—Career Support

Many of those doctors who require professional support need to rethink their career pathway or specialty choice. For some, recognition that they may not be suited to the specialty may be the prime or only factor leading to their seeking support, for others it arises from a complex array of circumstances.

Career support is offered by the PSU to all those released from a training programme, any individuals whose career dilemma has not been able to be addressed by their educational supervisor (level 1) & others involved at level 2 (college tutor, DME, TPD, HoS) including the locality career lead. Anyone for whom the nature of their involvement with PSU requires them to review their choice of specialty or career pathway is also eligible.

The aim is to support individuals into finding a more suitable role within their existing specialty or moving into an alternative specialty. For many it is just a question of fine-tuning, perhaps an adjustment to their working pattern or context, for others it means finding a specialty or role that is a better fit for them. Many of these individuals have suffered a knock to their confidence and self esteem - particularly if the reason for referral is failure to progress in their training and potential release from a programme. The focus is in part to help them appreciate that every individual has things they are good at and/or enjoy and things they feel less comfortable with; that usually it is just a question of finding a career path that is a better fit for them. Medicine is diverse, offering areas to accommodate most preferences and fulfill most aspirations. Occasionally however individuals are supported into a role outside medicine. If a career outside medicine becomes a necessity or is the preferred choice, it is important to

realise how highly regarded a medical degree is in other fields, especially when the individual also has some subsequent experience of working in clinical practice. Many of the skills needed to be selected into and progress through medical school and to function as a doctor - team working, good interpersonal skills, high academic achievement, working under pressure, time management & prioritisation to name just a few - are areas which other industries look for in their recruits. Most doctors take these for granted but all usually have them in bucketfuls!

The approach taken is a coaching one, intended to support the individual in making the best choice or choices for them with supportive challenge and a focus on future possibilities, ensuring a clear development plan is made at each meeting. This is supplemented with information and signposting to help them make their decision. Various techniques and frameworks are used to help increase the individual's self awareness, occasionally using personality preference approaches, such as MBTI and encouraging the individual to reflect on their values, skills and attributes, and preferred lifestyle and work context. The input is based on a well-recognised 4-stage approach to career guidance: encouraging self-awareness, providing information, and supporting decision making and planning.

It is useful for all those considering their career choices to use the information and tips on the www.healthcareers.nhs.uk website and to consider some of the factors contributing to their career choice using the framework developed by Medical Forum which is available on the PSU website.

PSU Staff update:

The Wessex Professional Support Unit is very pleased to confirm that we are now restored to a full strength team. In September, Julie Worthington returned from the summer break and Anna Parsons returned from her secondment as Acting Recruitment & Workforce Manager.

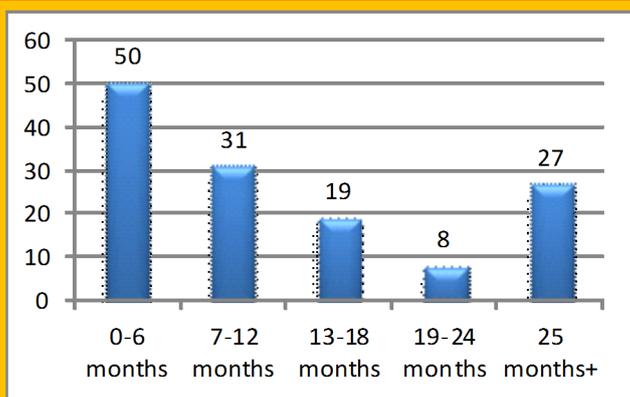
In October the PSU was able to showcase its work at the Health Education Wessex Annual Conference.



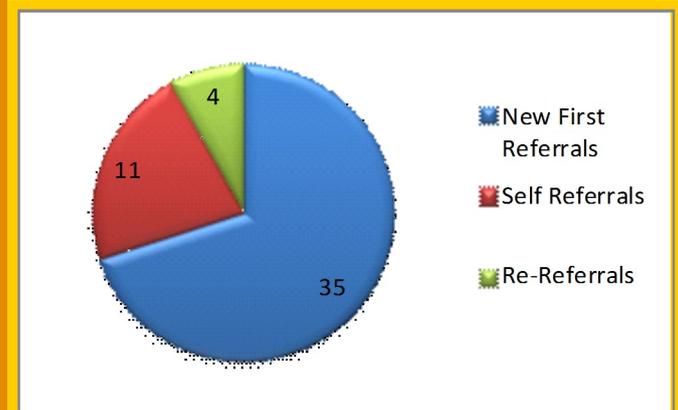
PSU Dashboard— At the mid year stage, what's happened so far?.....

So far in 15/16 we have received 50 referrals and have worked with 177 active **CASES**. (please note all data is correct as of 30/09/2015)

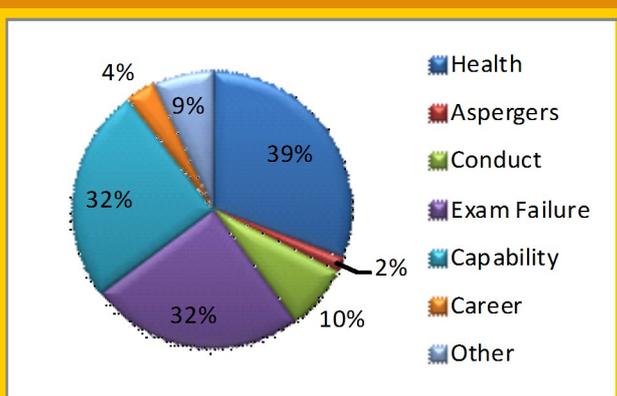
Break down of total length of active Cases as at 30/09/15:



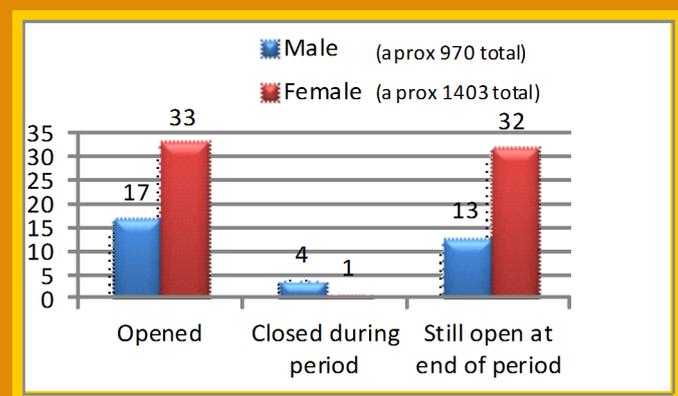
Break down of referral type within this financial year:



Open Case Referral Reason:



Male/Female Comparison Apr 15—Sept 15:



Dates for the diary

Dec 2015

2 December 2015—Quality & Governance Meeting
15 December 2015—Reference Group

2016

31 May 2016— Case Manager / VSG Development Day
22 September 2016- Case Manager / VSG Development Day

PSU Contact Details

You can contact the Professional Support Unit whenever you have a query relating to our work, or if you're looking for advice on a referral or active case.

If you have a general query you may find the answer on our web pages: http://www.wessexdeanery.nhs.uk/support/support/professional_support_unit.aspx

Alternatively you can contact us individually as below:

Mrs Julie Worthington, PSU Administrator: julie.worthington@wessex.hee.nhs.uk
or **01962 718428**

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