Trainees Acting up as Consultants

Wessex Deanery Guidance

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Introduction

This document provides guidance for trainees intending to Act Up as a Consultant. This would occur within the last twelve months of their training whereby a trainee may be asked, by the Trust with whom they are employed or another Trust, to act up into the role of a consultant. This can be for a maximum of three months (whole time equivalent) and will count toward the trainee’s CCT/CESR, if approved by the Postgraduate Dean and subject to a satisfactory Educational Supervisors report. This is not the same as taking a Locum Consultant post.

The guidance is based on GMC requirements and the principles outlined in the Gold Guide Seventh Edition.

Scope

Invitations for trainees to act up as consultants are issued in exceptional circumstances. These may include, for example:

- The Consultant going on maternity leave or extended sick leave
- The Trust inviting the trainee to act up prior to being offered a substantive Consultant appointment

Opportunities to act up are not available to all trainees and are only possible if the opportunity arises and the employing trust, or another trust, extends an invitation.

Invitations to act up are normally only issued within the Deanery area, not within a hospital covered by another Deanery.

Duties and responsibilities

The Trainee

For periods ‘acting up’, the following conditions apply:

- Trainees must be progressing and be in possession of a satisfactory outcome from their ARCP and, if applicable, be on track for meeting their PYA targets by their CCT date
- An ‘acting up’ application form (http://www.wessexdeanery.nhs.uk/policies__procedures/acting_up.aspx) must be completed and returned to the relevant Programme Manager providing 3 months notice unless there is mutual agreement between both parties i.e. Trusts and Supervisors prior to the proposed start date of the acting up period
- Trainees cannot ‘act up’ during their period of grace; trainees who are within their period of grace will be expected to take up the post as Locum Consultant and resign their NTN
- Trainees retain their NTN during the period of acting up. They remain a trainee.
- When in post the term ‘acting up’ and not ‘locum’ must be applied
- The post a trainee ‘acts up’ into must be within the UK
- The trainee must have a named Clinical Supervisor in the hospital where the ‘acting up’ is taking place
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- The trainee must have a named Educational supervisor but this need not be in the hospital where the ‘acting up’ is taking place
- It is up to the Head of School and Postgraduate Dean to make the decision on whether the acting up placement is relevant to gaining the competences, knowledge, skills and behaviours required by the curriculum
- This prospective approval application has to be consistent with other GMC post approval mechanisms. That is, applications should come to the Deanery which requires College input is assured through this mechanism
- An Educational Supervisor’s report will be sent to the Deanery at the end of the acting up period
- If the trainee is not returning to be a trainee, i.e. they have been appointed to the substantive Consultant post they must give the Deanery and their employing Trust 3 months notice of their intention
- If, in exceptional circumstances, the acting up role is within a Trust outside of the Deanery, confirmation of the invitation will be required from the inviting Trust.

The Deanery

Providing all the correct details have been completed on the application form, the Programme Manager will forward it to the Postgraduate Dean for review and decision of approval.

During the acting up period the Deanery expects the trainee to remain under an Educational Supervisor, including during out of hours or on-call work. During on-call work there must be a consultant available on the telephone for supervision.

The Deanery will receive a report from the Educational Supervisor at the end of the acting up period.

The Deanery will not organise and/or provide back-fill for the trainee who is accepting the invitation to act up.