The Wessex School of Radiology

Prospectus

Introduction

The School was formed in 2009 to co-ordinate the training of radiologists in the Wessex Deanery. Geographically, the two programmes based in Portsmouth and Southampton, include placements in Poole and Bournemouth, Salisbury, Winchester, Basingstoke and Kings College Hospital in London. Trainees in Bath and Swindon are now allied with the Bristol School.

The previous association of the Severn Institute and Wessex Institute under the umbrella of the Severn & Wessex Deanery no longer exists and a separate Wessex Deanery has been re-formed. As a result of the establishment of NHS Education South Central (geographically aligned with the South Central Strategic Health Authority) the Wessex Deanery is now more closely linked with Oxford Deanery (www.nesc.nhs.uk/).

Administration of the School

Following the introduction of run-through training the structure and organisation of all the postgraduate schools in Wessex is being developed. The Regional Education Adviser in Radiology chairs the Specialty Training Committee (STC). The Executive Radiology School Board, chaired by the Head of School, aims to ensure high quality education and training, that training conforms to the requirements of the Royal College of Radiologists (RCR) and the Deanery and to quality assure it locally. The membership of the School Board includes the Head of School, the Regional Radiology Education Adviser, the Radiology Programme Directors and the Deanery Radiology Programme Manager.

Specialty Registrars (ST) years 1 to 3.

Appointment to run-through training (RTT) is a Deanery process but the RCR is looking to national recruitment from 2010. Details are available on the MMC website (www.mmc.nhs.uk/). The criteria and person specificat ions for entry to the different levels of training are available on the RCR website (www.rcr.ac.uk/).

The curriculum of the radiology training programme has been formally approved by PMETB. There are important changes to the regulations about the FRCR examinations that can be accessed via the RCR website (www.rcr.ac.uk/). The format for the first 3 years of core radiology training varies between different training programmes but conforms to the RCR Curriculum for Training. Success in the FRCR parts 1, 2a and 2b, and evidence of satisfactory progression, as evidenced by end of attachment assessments, educational supervisors report and logbook, are required for the annual ARCPs (Specialty Registrars - STs) or RITAs (Specialist Registrars – SpRs) - see below. The RCR is developing workplace based assessments. The pilot stage has been completed and the result of this will inform the assessment blueprint for the new curriculum. Pilot stage of the e-portfolio will commence in Autumn 2009 with a view to roll out the e-portfolio and electronic workplace based assessment by summer 2010.

Courses for all parts of the FRCR exam are organized and provided by the Training Programmes, via the NESC Courses Centre.
http://www.nesc.nhs.uk/pdf/NESC_courses_guide_20090624.pdf) and are available free for all trainees in radiology in the region.

In 2009, the recruitment to radiology was run on a local basis to a national timetable. In Wessex, successful applicants start in August. We have 8 posts in each year of training. The first 3 years of core training are based primarily at the main training bases in Portsmouth and Southampton with rotations to provide core training and experience in DGHs within the region as well as King’s College Hospital in London (Portsmouth core neuroradiology training).

**Appraisal**
All trainees are allocated an educational supervisor at the commencement of training. The educational supervisors are located in the base hospitals in Southampton and Portsmouth and provide longitudinal support, supervision, mentoring and careers advice throughout the 5 year training programme. (In the event that the educational supervisor interaction fails the trainee or trainer can request an alternative supervisor/supervisee). Each training department has active clinical supervision, appraisal and assessment systems in place.

**Study Leave**
For each trainee, there is an annual budget for study leave. At present the Regional RCR courses organised by the Wessex Courses Centre are free to Wessex trainees.

**Competency Based Training and Assessment.**
The Royal College of Radiologists ([www.rcr.ac.uk](http://www.rcr.ac.uk)) is developing new assessment tools (mini-IPX, Rad-DOPS, MSF, audit and teaching assessment tools) which have been piloted and will be piloted in electronic format with the e-portfolio prior to roll out in Autumn 2010. Further tools may be introduced following validation.

**Training Records.**
All trainees are expected to maintain a logbook of their clinical activities which conforms to the patterns laid down by the College. Trainees must also maintain a record of their other activities including an account of their use of study leave. In the future the curriculum together with the associated assessment blueprint, logbook, educational resources and records will be managed via the e-portfolio.

**Registration with the College.**
It is essential that all trainees register with the Royal College of Radiologists.

**Subspecialty Training: ST years 4-5.**

**The final 2 years of training.**
The various sub-specialty groups have drawn up recommendations for the duration and content of sub-specialist training which will become familiar to trainees during the early ST years. The new radiology curriculum will outline core, Level 1 and Level 2 training in all subspecialty areas ([www.rcr.ac.uk](http://www.rcr.ac.uk)). Sub-specialty training is available within the School in all sub-specialty areas. Trainees should discuss their aims with their Educational Supervisor/College Tutor and final plans should be drawn up with the Programme Director early on during the ST3 year. Entry to subspecialty training will be subject to satisfactory progress at ARCP/RITAs. A programme for the final 2 years of training will be agreed between the trainee and the Programme Director. As far as possible, the wishes of the trainee for specialised work will be respected. If too many trainees wish to undertake the same subspecialty training the opportunities will be allocated subject to competitive
interview. Trainees intending to become a DGH radiologist may undertake training in more than one subspecialty area.

**Management training** should be obtained during the final two years of ST training although there is an introductory course that should be done earlier in training. Information is available via the [NESC Courses Centre](http://www.nesc.nhs.uk/pdf/NESC_courses_guide_20090624.pdf).

**Radionuclide Radiology or Nuclear Medicine and dual CCT.**

Opportunities for training in Radionuclide Radiology and Nuclear Medicine are available within the Radiology training programme. The requirement for dual certification is being discussed at the RCR. Radiologists not undertaking therapeutic or laboratory work do not require dual CCT and can achieve the necessary training within the final 2 years of subspecialty training (1 year required for an ARSAC license). Training guidance for PET CT is being finalised by the RCR but will be achievable within the subspecialty training.

**Neuroradiology Training**

The RCR is currently discussing the requirement for year 6 subspecialty training in interventional neuroradiology. The final 2 years of subspecialty training in neuroradiology is awarded by competitive interview.

**Appraisal, Assessment and the RITA/ARCP process.**

The progress of trainees is monitored by local appraisal throughout each hospital attachment. In addition, in May each year, each trainee should have a formative appraisal with their educational supervisor to fulfill the requirement for a reflective formative review, provide guidance to the trainee in preparing for the RITA/ARCP and inform the Educational Supervisor’s report. The Educational Supervisor’s report informs the RITA (Record of In-Service Training Assessment) with interviews performed by School representatives locally in Portsmouth and Southampton. RITA sign off takes place at the Deanery. The Programme Directors inform trainees of the date of their forthcoming RITA well in advance. A RITA is not an assessment in itself but a record of the most recent assessments performed locally. It also covers the work performed in year, an inspection of the logbook, a record of academic progress and professional development in general. A more detailed explanation of the RITA process is available on the [Deanery website](http://www.nesc.nhs.uk/courses__conferences/nesc_courses_centre.aspx).

New trainees in the programme (Specialty Registrars – STs), appointed from 2007, are subject to the new ARCP process (Annual review of Competence Progression). Although the principles are the same, the process will differ. Face-to-face ARCP interviews will occur at the Deanery, and are subject to externality with the Regional Radiology Education Adviser from a different Deanery attending 10% of the interviews, particularly the penultimate ARCP and interviews with any trainees in difficulty. The external REA quality assures the ARCP process and provides a report to the College. Trainees may be called at other times depending on circumstances.

Trainees are advised to maintain the Radiology Training Portfolio provided by the RCR and available on the college website ([www.rcr.ac.uk](http://www.rcr.ac.uk)) which should be brought to the RITA/ARCP. Accurate details of training modules undertaken should also be kept. For most trainees, acquisition of the First or Final FRCR remains the main educational goal during the first years of ST training. The College is developing an ARCP Decision Grid to be implemented from 2010, which will include satisfactory workplace based assessments in addition to acquisition of the FRCR 1, 2a modules and 2b. There are regular, protected time, teaching sessions directed to the FRCR examinations as well as post fellowship generic training ([http://www.nesc.nhs.uk/pdf/NESC_courses_guide_20090624.pdf](http://www.nesc.nhs.uk/pdf/NESC_courses_guide_20090624.pdf)) ([http://www.nesc.nhs.uk/courses__conferences/nesc_courses_centre.aspx](http://www.nesc.nhs.uk/courses__conferences/nesc_courses_centre.aspx)).
Post-fellowship STs are entitled to 30 days per year (see below under “study leave”). Trainees should maintain a detailed Continuing Professional Development Diary (CPD Diary) of the various educational activities (including research) in which they have participated. The RITA/ARCP is also a useful opportunity to make plans for the subsequent year or years.

The RITA (or ARCP) process is considered an extremely serious part of the training programme overall. The final RITA/ARCP is conducted within three months of the proposed accreditation date. Failure to satisfy the RITA/ARCP panel, or to provide a logbook or diary of activities at the RITA/ARCP can lead to a recommendation that the year, or part of it, be repeated and that progress to the subsequent year(s) be stopped. This should happen rarely: problems should be identified in-house well before a RITA/ARCP assessment. Trainees dissatisfied with a RITA/ARCP may appeal to the Postgraduate Dean. The “Gold Guide” (A guide to Postgraduate Specialty Training in the UK) published on the MMC website is a very useful source of information – it is essential reading for all trainees.

**Out of Programme Experience**
The 5 year ST programme is a minimum requirement. Time taken out of the School (but in programme) needs careful advance planning. Trainees who wish to undertake time out of programme for experience, training or research must submit applications (via the Programme Director) to the Postgraduate Dean, the Royal College of Radiologists and PMETB for final approval. Planning ahead is essential as this process can take up to 6 months. Application forms are available from the Programme Director or on the Deanery website. The final arrangements for such secondments need to have been completed at least 12 months in advance. The Wessex School has a number of established overseas contacts. Further information is available from the Programme Directors.

**Less than full time training LTFTT (previously known as flexible training)**
Applications to train flexibly should be made to the Training Programme Director and the Deanery. Funding for LTFTT is limited and there may be a waiting list to start LTFTT. Slot sharing is usually necessary and it is likely that the Wessex School will require new LTFT trainees to work at 50% full-time to enable this. Occasionally, a single LTFT trainee may occupy a full-time slot. It is accepted that LTFT trainees may be limited geographically and although the training content of posts must conform to RCR requirements, this will be taken into consideration when allocating placements. ([http://www.nesc.nhs.uk/about_nesc/medical_policies__procedures/flexible_training_information.aspx](http://www.nesc.nhs.uk/about_nesc/medical_policies__procedures/flexible_training_information.aspx), [http://www.nesc.nhs.uk/about_nesc/medical_policies__procedures/less_than_full_time_training.aspx](http://www.nesc.nhs.uk/about_nesc/medical_policies__procedures/less_than_full_time_training.aspx))

**The Period of Grace.**
Following the award of CCT there is a six month period of grace during which a trainee may be asked to rotate to any hospital in the Region. After the period of grace the NTN is reclaimed.

**Study Leave Allowance.**
This is under review. At present, ST1-3s are allowed 30 days per annum to include 30 half days protected teaching and 15 days leave to attend courses. ST4-5s are allowed 30 days per year to include 10 days per annum to attend appropriate external courses/conferences. The use of study leave to obtain additional clinical training is a legitimate use of that time and is encouraged. A record of research and educational activities must be kept. Applications to Postgraduate Directors of Medical Education for study leave will only be considered when accompanied by a training agreement. ([http://www.nesc.nhs.uk/primary_areas/wessex_deanery/policies__procedures.aspx](http://www.nesc.nhs.uk/primary_areas/wessex_deanery/policies__procedures.aspx))
Contact Information can be found on the School of Radiology pages on the NESC website.

School Website
Additional information about the Wessex School of Radiology is available at on the NESC website. Information about Wessex Deanery and many aspects of training locally is also available by going to www.nesc.nhs.uk.

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