Guidance for Significant event analysis (SEA)

We expect that you will make at least six SEA entries in your learning log each year. These entries will be assessed by your Educational Supervisor and possibly also by the ARCP panel that views your portfolio when you are due to progress.

“Significant event” is often used as a synonym for something going wrong. You can include positive significant events if you wish. You may also include events that were consequent on the actions of someone in the team that you work in. The key thing is that they are significant to you and they affect you.

There are two essential elements in a significant event. One is the story of what happened, the consideration of how it could happen, and changes made to procedures and protocols in the light of this. The other is the emotional effect it has on the people involved. You need to write about your feelings, and those of any patient(s) and colleagues(s) affected, and how they are managed, as well as the mechanics of the event.

The data entry form on the portfolio for significant events has seven sections, here is some guidance on what is expected in each of these.

What happened?
Briefly outline the story of a significant event that affected you. The description should be clear and appropriately comprehensive.

What issues are raised by this significant event?
Explain why you chose this event, why is it significant to you? How does it affect you, in procedural and emotional terms?

What was done well?
Describe the events and your reaction to them. This description should be in terms of knowledge, skills and feelings

What was not done well?
Describe the events and your reaction to them. This description should be in terms of knowledge, skills and feelings

What could be done differently in future?
Again, answer this question in terms of the domains of knowledge, skills and feelings and include suggestions of personal change as well as possible system changes. Please describe definite plans for the future rather than a list of possibilities.

What further (personal) learning needs did you identify?
Describe needs for learning and development that come out of the significant event. Again these should be described in terms of knowledge, skills and feelings. The needs should be SMART (i.e. specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely). What you write in this section and the next should be transferable to your PDP

How and when will you address these?
The plans should be realistic and fit into your schedule, your response here should be clear not vague.