

Supported Return to Training (suppoRTT)

Guidance for Trainees, Trainers, and Employers within Health Education England – West Midlands.

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Public Sector Equality Duty

On 5 April 2011, the Public Sector Equality Duty (the equality duty) came into force. The equality duty was created under the Equality Act 2010. The equality duty was developed in order to harmonise a number of pre-existing pieces of equality legislation and to extend protection across what the Act described as “protected characteristics”. Protected characteristics is the term used to describe groups that may be discriminated against because they possess one or more of these characteristics and the Act identified nine protected characteristics and these are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) will be carried out on an annual basis and/or following any amendments to ensure that this policy will not have a positive or adverse impact on any trainee groups with protected characteristics.

1. Introduction

This guidance is intended to provide a practical overview of the professional support available to trainees in the West Midlands when returning to training (SuppoRTT).

In order to ensure trainees are confident and fully supported when returning to clinical practice following a sustained period of absence, HEE WM is committed to offering a number of SuppoRTT mechanisms:

- Opportunity for trainees to complete an individualised SuppoRTT plan, which includes structured planning and review meetings with the trainee’s Training Programme Director and/or College Tutor.
- Access to ring fenced places on pre-existing specialty specific courses and regional teaching days.
- Opportunity to participate in a period of enhanced supervision for 2 weeks on the trainee’s return.
- Access to local Return to Clinical Practice Days.
- Access to internal or external bespoke training courses (the funding available for this is limited)
- A contribution towards childcare costs when attending SPLIT & KIT days may be available.

In order to stay up to date with training whilst away from clinical practice, trainees are encouraged to continue accessing any other educational initiatives they may find beneficial in addition to the above.

This document should be seen in the wider context of the on-going work to enhance junior doctors working lives and the reform of approaches to training. It should be noted that SuppoRTT funding is non-recurrent and cannot be guaranteed from year to year.

2. Principles of SuppoRTT

- Seeks to ensure that there are transparent, robust, evidence-based procedures for identifying and supporting trainees following a period of absence.
- Places patient safety first.
- Ensures funding is accessible and is responsibly utilised.
- Seeks to ensure that, where appropriate, trainers who are working directly with trainees requiring additional support are also able to access relevant support themselves.
- Recognises the principles of acting confidentially, fairly and in a supportive manner for both trainees and their trainers.

3. Eligibility

Access to SuppoRTT in the West Midlands (WM) is available to all trainees in the WM who are planning to take, or are already on, an approved period of time out of training for one or more of the following reasons:

- Parental / maternity leave exceeding 3 months
- Out of Programme for Research (OOPR) or a Career Break (OOPC)
- Global Health Fellowships
- Sick leave exceeding 3 months
- Having been out of training for more than 3 months and having accepted an WM training post

4. Supported Return to Training (SuppoRTT) Plan for Individuals

Trainees should begin planning their time away from training with their Training Programme Director (TPD)/College Tutor at the earliest opportunity and no later than 3 months in advance of their intended leaving date. If the absence is unplanned leave trainees are still eligible to join the process at any point.

Trainees will complete an individualised SuppoRTT plan and participate in structured planning and review meetings with their TPD/College Tutor when leaving and returning to training. This will enable trainees to document any plans to stay up to date with training whilst away from practice and to identify any anticipated support required upon their return.

5. Access to pre-existing Local Courses

It is expected that there are a number of pre-existing courses locally which could be beneficial to returning trainees. If funding is required to attend existing courses, a funding request (Form 4) should be completed by the Trainee and the TPD and then submitted to the local postgraduate centre for reimbursement after attendance.

6. Return to Clinical Practice Days

A number of Return to Clinical Practice days will be organised centrally for returning trainees to attend. The courses will be listed on our Website page for the Trainee to register their place.

Topics covered will include:

- Wellbeing
- Human Factors
- Resilience
- Mentoring
- Less Than Full Time (LTFT) training workshops

7. Enhanced Supervision

In order to rapidly regain clinical knowledge and confidence, doctors returning to training following a sustained period of absence will be strongly encouraged to participate in a period of enhanced supervision for 2 weeks on their return.

If a trainee feels enhanced supervision is unnecessary, they should discuss this with their TPD/College Tutor during their return to training meeting 3 months in advance of their anticipated return date. The trainee's intention to opt out should be clearly indicated on Part 2 of the SuppoRTT plan form.

Trainees must contact their HR/rota coordinator and TPD/College Tutor at least 3 months prior to their return date to arrange enhanced supervision and negotiate their start date.

Trainees will be surplus to the rota at their employing Trust for the enhanced supervision period and can work out of hours/on-call providing a peer or consultant colleague is identified to offer supervision. If trainees wish to volunteer to participate in OOH/on-call this should be discussed in advance with their TPD/College Tutor.

The two weeks' enhanced supervision period is whole/full time equivalent. Trainees will be paid basic salary for any work undertaken during this period via the usual pay mechanisms at their employing Trust.

The period of enhanced shadowing will be reviewed at the trainee's ARCP and the ARCP panel will decide whether this time should count towards training.

It is anticipated that most departments will be able to support 2 weeks enhanced supervision using careful rota co-ordination, however if this is not possible there will be some funding available to facilitate this. If funding is required the trainee's employing Trust will complete HEE

WM's SuppoRTT funding return and submit for reimbursement of the trainee's basic salary for the two weeks' enhanced supervision period, excluding any OOH/on-call payments. HEE WM will arrange for the Trust to be reimbursed via the Learning and Development Agreement (LDA).

8. Bespoke Training

Attending pre-existing local/regional courses is the preferred method for re-developing competence and confidence, however, if there are no suitable local/regional courses available there may be a small amount of funding available for returners to attend external courses.

A SuppoRTT funding request form should be completed by the TPD or CT, after discussion and agreement with the trainee. The funding request (form 4) must be approved and signed by the TPD/College Tutor and submitted to the Local Postgraduate Team for reimbursement with evidence of payments and attendance.

Trainees should be aware that it may not always be possible to reimburse the full cost of an external training course. In some instances, a contribution towards the full course fee will be paid.

The course attended should occur no earlier than three months before and no later than three months after the planned return date.

Trainees should claim approved funding for external courses, including standard class travel costs, via their employing Trust's usual expenses process.

The trainee's employing Trust will complete HEE WM's SuppoRTT funding return and email it to HEE WM on a quarterly basis for reimbursement of approved bespoke courses and associated standard class travel costs. HEE WM will arrange for the Trust to be reimbursed via the Learning and Development Agreement (LDA).

9. Reimbursement

For trainees taking maternity leave, Keeping in Touch (KIT) days may be used to attend any relevant training courses, regional teaching or departmental meetings. For trainees taking shared parental leave, Shared Parental Leave in Touch (SPLIT) days may be utilised in the same way.

A small amount of funding may be made available to reimburse childcare costs incurred whilst trainees attend KIT or SPLIT days. Any planned KIT/SPLIT days should be documented by the trainee on their SuppoRTT plan form.

A SuppoRTT funding request form should be completed by the TPD/CT and submitted to the employing Trust. Trainees should be aware that it may not always be possible to reimburse the full cost of childcare. In some instances, a contribution towards the full expense will be paid.

Trainees should claim any approved childcare costs, including standard class travel, via their employing Trust's usual expenses process. The trainee's employing Trust will complete HEE

WM's SuppoRTT Funding Return and email it to HEE WM on a quarterly basis for reimbursement of approved childcare expenses and associated standard class travel costs. HEE WM will arrange for the Trust to be reimbursed via the Learning and Development Agreement (LDA).

10.Trainee Responsibility

Trainees should ensure any time out of training is planned in good time. The SuppoRTT planning process should be started at least three months in advance of the anticipated date of departure, where possible. OOPC and unplanned sick leave may be an exception.

Trainees should understand that the date in which they choose to return to training must be negotiated and confirmed with HR/Medical Staffing at their employing Trust and their TPD, three months in advance of their anticipated return date.

Trainees are responsible for ensuring any SuppoRTT planning documentation is shared with SuppoRTT.WM@hee.nhs.uk and uploaded to their e-portfolio in a timely manner.

11.Employer Responsibilities

In order for trainees to rapidly regain clinical knowledge and confidence, doctors returning to training following a sustained period of absence are strongly encouraged to participate in a period of enhanced shadowing for two weeks prior to their return date. Trainees will need to negotiate this with HR/rota coordinator at least three months prior to their return date.

There is an expectation that Trusts will accommodate the two weeks' enhanced shadowing period and a suitable start date should be negotiated with the returning trainee.

KIT and SPLIT days should be well advertised across the Trust for any trainees requesting parental leave.

The employing Trust should ensure any approved SuppoRTT expenses incurred by trainees are reimbursed in a timely manner.

Any SuppoRTT funding relating to enhanced shadowing (excluding OOH/on call payments), funding for external individual courses, and funding for childcare costs should be added to the SuppoRTT funding return and emailed to HEE WM on a quarterly basis, or as requested. HEE WM will then arrange for the Trust to be reimbursed via the Learning and Development Agreement (LDA).

12.Trainer and Educator Responsibilities

Training Programme Directors (TPDs) should allocate appropriate time to meet with trainees in order to complete their SuppoRTT plan or, in some specialties, train College Tutors to do this on their behalf.

Heads of School (HoS) and TPDs should be proactive with identifying appropriate pre-existing courses and teaching for doctors retuning to training to attend and ensure these are identified in their Annual Development Plans.

TPDs/CTs are responsible for ensuring any HEE WM funding application forms and local Trust claim forms are completed in line with given timeframes and guidelines. TPDs and College Tutors are responsible for approving the funding form 4.

Trainers and educators are expected to stay up to date with HEE WM initiatives and policies and engage in any HEE WM training sessions, as required.

If at any point a trainer feels a trainee may benefit from more intensive support this should be escalated to the Head of School, Relevant Deputy Dean and/or the Professional Support Unit (PSU).

13. Health Education England Responsibilities

HEE WM is committed to offering SuppoRTT to as many eligible trainee doctors as possible. This includes promoting the mainstreaming of the SuppoRTT process and providing awareness training to trainers and educators.

HEE WM will manage SuppoRTT in such a way that information pertaining to an eligible trainee flows between all relevant parties. “Relevant parties” include, but are not limited to; the trainee, Training Programme Directors, College Tutors, HR/Medical Staffing Departments, Finance Officers and internal HEE teams.

HEE WM will ensure any funding payable to Trusts for SuppoRTT expenses incurred by trainees is reimbursed in a timely manner.

HEE WM will treat all trainees, trainers, and colleagues equally, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/belief, sex/sexual orientation, or any other discriminatory factor.

Further Information and Guidance

SuppoRTT in the West Midlands

Further information regarding SuppoRTT in the West Midlands, including FAQs, events calendar, and funding forms can be found on our website. Please click [here](#) for SuppoRTT

Parental Leave – KIT and SPLIT Days

Trainees are strongly encouraged to plan the utilisation of any KIT or SPLIT days with HR at their employing Trust. <https://www.gov.uk/employee-rights-when-on-leave>

Out of Programme

For trainees taking OOPR, OOPC, OOPT, and OOPE the West Midlands OOP process should also be followed.

LTFT

For trainees wishing to apply for less than full time training, the West Midlands LTFT process should also be followed.

Sickness Absence

For trainees returning from sickness absence guidance from the trainee's GP or Occupational Health regarding a phased return to work may be required. Further support for sickness absence can also sought from the HEE WM Professional Support Unit (PSU) via the usual channels. PSU.wm@hee.nhs.uk

Enhancing Junior Doctors Working Lives

<https://hee.nhs.uk/our-work/doctors-training/enhancing-working-lives>

The Gold Guide

A Reference Guide for Postgraduate Dental Specialty Training in the UK. Please click [here](#) for The GG7