



Supporting trainees in Pharmaceutical Medicine Specialty Training

Contents

PART 1 – Introduction and overview of support available to trainees	3
1. Introduction	3
2. Support from the Pharmaceutical Medicine Deanery	3
3. Support from your specialty trainer	4
4. Support from the local education provider	5
5. Health and wellbeing	5
6. Bullying, discrimination and undermining	5
7. Raising concerns and whistleblowing	6
8. Support from your LEP's Specialty Adviser	6
9. Support from FPM's Trainees' Committee	6
PART 2 – Thresholds for deanery intervention to support trainees	7
PART 3 – Useful websites and resources	12

PART 1 – Introduction and overview of support available to trainees

1. Introduction

1.1. The purpose of this document is to explain how the Pharmaceutical Medicine Deanery (the deanery), your educational supervisor or associate educational supervisor (whom we will refer to collectively as specialty trainers in this document) and your local education provider (LEP) can support you while you are enrolled on the Pharmaceutical Medicine Specialty Training (PMST) programme.

1.2. The document is split into three parts:

- Part 1: provides an overview of the support that a trainee can expect to receive from the deanery, their specialty trainer and their LEP.
- Part 2: explains when and how the deanery will intervene to support trainees.
- Part 3: provides a list of websites to organisations, professional services and support and additional information that trainees can access.

1.3. This document will be reviewed periodically. Please send us your feedback and suggestions to pmst@fpm.org.uk.

2. Support from the Pharmaceutical Medicine Deanery

2.1. We are responsible for making sure you are supported so that you can:

- 1) achieve the competencies and high-level outcomes (i.e. capabilities in practice) of the PMST curriculum
- 2) progress satisfactorily through your programme of training, and
- 3) achieve your Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) or Certificate of Eligibility for Specialist Registration (CESR).

2.2. We also want to make sure you enjoy your learning experience while you are enrolled on the PMST programme.

2.3. We can direct you to appropriate sources of help and advice or help facilitate your access to some of these sources. We have included a list of useful websites towards the end of this document that you can visit for professional advice and support.

2.4. The PMST programme has a network of people and groups where you can get advice and/or support such as:

- your specialty trainer;
- your line manager if they are not the specialty trainer, human resources etc.;
- your LEP's Specialty Adviser (SA);
- the Postgraduate Dean for the Pharmaceutical Medicine Deanery;

- FPM’s Director of Specialty Training;
- the Annual Review of Competence Progression (ARCP) panel;
- FPM’s Trainees’ Committee; and
- FPM Specialty Training Manager.

2.5. We encourage trainees to discuss any concerns about their training with their specialty trainer in the first instance and at an early stage to ensure those concerns are addressed in a timely manner. However, trainees can contact any of the other people or groups listed above if they prefer.

2.6. We will intervene if we identify a trainee needs our support. We will decide whether to intervene using our threshold and categorisation table (see Part 3 below) and various sources of information such as:

1. Information from an ARCP panel.
2. Information arising from complaints and significant incidents.
3. Fitness to practice concerns.
4. Trainees self-referral.
5. Information from the GMC.

2.7. The level of support we can offer a trainee will depend on the nature of the concern. We might decide that it is appropriate that a trainee contacts their LEP’s human resources department, Health Education England London and South East’s (LaSE’s) Professional Support Unit (PSU) or their defence union if the concern relates to an employment issue for example.

2.8. Below is a list of deanery and FPM contacts that trainees, ESs and AESs can contact:

Contacts	Email address
Postgraduate Dean	deanery@fpm.org.uk
FPM Director of Specialty Training	pmst@fpm.org.uk
FPM Trainees Committee	traineescommittee@fpm.org.uk
FPM Specialty Training Manager	pmst@fpm.org.uk

2.9. We will treat what you tell us in confidence and will not disclose the contents our discussions with you without your consent. However, we might have to disclose confidential investigations to the GMC, but we will make sure that the GMC treats the information confidentially.

3. Support from your specialty trainer

3.1. A trainee’s specialty trainer has a key role in supporting them. The trainee should speak to their specialty trainer in the first instance if they need support with their programme of training. We encourage trainees and their specialty trainers to have regular educational meetings; this is a good place to discuss any additional training needs for example. The specialty trainer should record the outcome of the educational meeting on the trainee’s e-portfolio.

3.2. The issues a trainee discusses with their specialty trainer might not always be about their training; it could be to discuss health issues, a life event, bullying and undermining or discrimination. The

trainee should feel comfortable talking to their specialty trainer about these issues so that they can support and advise the trainee.

3.4. The National Association of Clinical Tutors (NACT) UK has published guidance for supervisors titled 'Supporting Trainees: A Guide for Supervisors – Practical Advice for Educational and Clinical Supervisors', which we encourage both the specialty trainer and their trainee to read this document.

4. Support from the local education provider

4.1. The LEP is responsible for making sure its trainees have access to the resources to achieve the competencies of the PMST curriculum, to assign their trainees with a specialty trainer and to support their trainees if they are having difficulty completing the PMST programme. The GMC sets out the standards and requirements that LEPs must fulfil in 'Promoting excellence: standards for medical education and training'.

5. Health and wellbeing

5.1. The trainee must be registered with a general practitioner (GP) outside of their family¹. If a trainee is concerned about their health or wellbeing, they should speak to their GP in the first instance for advice. If a trainee believes their health or wellbeing is likely to have an impact on their ability to work and/or complete the PMST programme, they should speak to human resources, their occupational health service – the trainee's LEP must have an occupational health service within their organisation – or contact PSU for professional advice on how to manage their health or wellbeing while they are training. We have provided PSU's web address at the end of this document.

5.2. The LEP should also have a reasonable adjustment policy to support employees with disabilities to perform their work. We advise trainees to contact their human resources department for a copy of the LEP's reasonable adjustment policy.

6. Bullying, discrimination and undermining

6.1. Trainees are entitled to work and train free from bullying, undermining and discrimination. Trainees' LEPs should have policies to investigate complaints of bullying or discrimination. If a trainee believes they are the victim of discrimination or bullying, they should speak to either their specialty trainer or line manager if they are not their trainee's specialty trainer in the first instance. If a trainee prefers to speak to somebody outside of their department or unit, they might want to consider talking to their LEP's human resources department. If a trainee wants impartial and confidential advice, they could contact the PSU for professional advice and guidance. It is for the trainee to decide whom they feel comfortable talking to.

6.2. We will respond to and investigate complaints that are either made directly to us or via the GMC's national training survey.

¹ 'Domain 2: Safety and quality', paragraph 30, 'Good Medical Practice', GMC.

7. Raising concerns and whistleblowing

7.1. Trainees should feel safe and protected to report concerns about the activities of their employer or another professional. If a trainee is aware of an adverse event, they must report it through their LEP's reporting procedures.

7.2. The GMC has guidance on how to raise a concern; trainees can find the web address to the GMC's guidance at the end of this document.

7.3. Trainees can seek free and confidential whistleblowing advice from Protect, a charitable organisation that supports and protects whistleblowers. Trainees can also contact the [MHRA's whistleblower referral](#) if they have a concern about their organisation.

7.4. If a trainee is concerned about the fitness to practise of a healthcare professional, they should contact the relevant regulator for further advice. A trainee might also wish to speak to their defence union for advice on their legal protections. It is up to the trainee to decide whom they can trust to raise their concerns.

8. Support from your LEP's Specialty Adviser

8.1. Our SAs are allocated LEPs. The SA's role is to quality manage the LEP's delivery of the PMST curriculum and to offer the LEP's trainees and specialty trainers advice and guidance on meeting the requirements of the PMST curriculum. The SA can offer solutions to help trainees to complete the PMST programme such as identify areas of a trainee's LEP's business that the trainee could gain experience to achieve a curriculum competency or suggest alternative ways of completing a capability in practice (CiP).

8.2. The SA also investigates quality management issues brought to our attention from sources such as the results of the GMC's national training survey or information from an ARCP panel. The SA might arrange to meet with the trainee and their colleagues to discuss the issues.

8.3. LEP's should have the contact details of their SA. If they do not, the trainee can contact the FPM Specialty Training Manager at pmst@fpm.org.uk for the SA's contact details.

9. Support from FPM's Trainees' Committee

9.1. The Trainees Committee represents the views of trainees on FPM's Education and Standards Committee and the Pharmaceutical Medicine Specialist Advisory Committee of the Joint Royal Colleges of Physicians Training Board (JRCPTB). We encourage trainees to contact the Trainees' Committee to feedback on the trainee e-portfolio and for general advice and guidance on completing the PMST programme. You can contact the Trainees' Committee at traineescommittee@fpm.org.uk.

PART 2 – Thresholds for deanery intervention to support trainees

10.1. The table below sets out the categories of areas and our thresholds (fourth column) when we will normally intervene if a trainee requires our support. Trainees should note that they have a responsibility to engage with the various processes concerning their training and revalidation. If a trainee believes that they could be approaching our thresholds, then they must speak to their specialty trainer or the deanery before the situation escalates.

Issue	Local Education Provider	FPM Director of Specialty Training/deanery team	Postgraduate Dean & Responsible Officer/deanery team	Trainee
Role in the 'trainee requiring support' process	First line support	Monitoring, facilitation and information sharing	Assessment and decision-making	Engage with process once identified and the trainee been notified that they meet threshold of a trainee requiring support
Revalidation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To ensure all trainees are regularly appraised and any complaints, serious incidents and fitness to practice issues are reported to the deanery. - Specialty trainer responsible to ensure that trainees' e-portfolios reflect any concerns (that are factual and evidenced) and the Postgraduate Dean, in their capacity as Responsible Officer (RO), is kept informed so a future LEP/employer can be notified, as and when required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To ensure that all trainees receive an ARCP and the revalidation section of the forms is completed. - To accurately maintain revalidation documents. - To ensure that all trainees are revalidated in a timely fashion by making submissions to the GMC. - To keep the RO informed of any trainees with fitness to practise issues, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GMC investigations into trainee's fitness to practise, 2) trainee declaring a closed or an ongoing investigation on their Form R or 3) LEP conducting a local investigation into a trainee's professional conduct. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trainees to ensure that they can provide evidence that they are meeting the professional standards set out in 'Good Medical Practice'. - To complete and return a Form R to the deanery on an annual basis and report any issues and concerns. - The trainee is required to engage with the ARCP process and attend an ARCP meeting, when requested. The ARCP reviews the trainee's progression. - Trainees are required to ensure their e-portfolio is kept up to date prior to the review, in line with the Gold Guide.
Knowledge, skills and performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Failure to demonstrate sufficient WPBAs and progression in these areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Any issue which is likely to lead to an unfavourable outcome at ARCP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Patient safety concerns that require adjustments to work or training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Responsible for keeping an up-to-date portfolio to

	- Time management and basic organisational skills.		(including funding for assessment or additional training time, if appropriate) - Serious patient safety concerns that call into question a trainee's fitness to practice. - GMC/MPTS proceedings.	demonstrate skills are at the appropriate grade level. - To engage with training to ensure knowledge, skills and performance are current and in line the grade being trained at.
Safety and quality	- Low-level/non-investigated incidents (trainee may include on Form R).	- Any issue which is likely to lead to an unfavourable outcome at ARCP.	- Investigated serious incidents/never events* - Serious patient safety concerns that call into question a trainee's fitness to practice - GMC /MPTS proceedings.	- To ensure professional standards meet the requirements set out in 'Good Medical Practice'.
Communication, partnership and teamwork	- Minor relationship issues between specialty trainer and trainee - Issues with acting effectively in a team or rapport with colleagues and patients (if applicable).	- Any issue which is likely to lead to an unfavourable outcome at ARCP - Relationship breakdown between trainee and specialty trainer, possibly requiring intervention/mediation.	- Investigated complaints** – both internal and external; work collaboratively to action recommendations, if required. - Specific concerns that may require external assessment or additional training time (including funding requests) - Serious patient safety concerns that call into question a trainee's fitness to practice - GMC/MPTS proceedings.	- To maintain professional working relationships in the training location as well as deanery. - To report any issues and concerns to deanery, as appropriate. - To engage with organisations such as the PSU, if advised by deanery, with regards to communication and team-working skills. - To report any patient safety issues, serious Incidents or fitness to practice concerns to the GMC.

Maintaining trust / professionalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minor issues e.g. punctuality, documentation, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Informal probity/conduct concerns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LEP probity/conduct/disciplinary investigations calling into question a trainee's fitness to practice - Police investigations, cautions and convictions - Substance abuse (including probity concerns) - GMC/MPTS proceedings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To maintain professional working relationships in the training site as well as deanery. - To engage with the training site's processes and policies in the event of an investigation. - To report any appropriate issues to the GMC.
Progression in training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low level issues relating to progression monitored by local governance structures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exam failure which may affect progression (single and multiple attempts) - Any issue which is likely to lead to an unfavourable outcome at ARCP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Non-engagement with revalidation (persistent non-engagement with curriculum requirements (including WPBAs and the ARCP process) - Prolonged absence, including without consent (AWOL) - ARCP appeals - Requests for supernumerary training if necessary, i.e. The programme cannot support the trainee requirements and all other avenues exhausted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To engage with the FPM curriculum and the relevant e-portfolio to record progression. - To maintain training standards appropriate to grade to ensure progression. - To attend annual ARCPs. - To engage with their specialty trainer, FPM's Director of Specialty Training, FPM and the deanery - To report any absences and record as appropriate on the Form R.
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low-level health issues which are unlikely to affect progression. - Tracking any absences relating to health. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Any absence longer than 14 days - Health issues which may require some short-term adjustments to a programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health issues where there is a concern that the trainee is not appropriately managing their health - Health issues that may result in removal from training - Health issues which may require long term adjustments to programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To report any health concerns and issues with the deanery. - To engage with occupational health and other health support organisations, as required.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health issues which call into question a trainee's fitness to practice. - Addiction / substance abuse. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To report specific health issues which may call into a trainee's fitness to practice, for example, addiction / substance abuse, to the GMC.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trainee uncertain about career options. - Low level personal issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Personal issues which may: impact on progression; require an adjustment or change to post / programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trainee allegations of undermining, bullying or harassment* - Personal issues which may impact on a trainee's ability to continue the programme. - Revalidation 'cause for concern' issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To engage with the deanery and the GMC, as appropriate, with regards to any other issues or concerns that could affect a trainee's fitness to practice, ability to continue in the training programme and 'cause for concern' issues.

* To feed into quality management mechanism.

** Complaints – Neither the deanery nor FPM operate grievance procedures because neither organisation is an employer for trainees. If a trainee has any concerns that relate to their employment, the employer's policies must be followed – this should include any concerns with their specialty trainer in the first instance. Any issues that a trainee experiences via the ARCP process are addressed in the Gold Guide.

PART 3 – Useful websites and resources

11.1. The following is a list of organisations and resources where trainees can find professional support and assistance.

Academy of Medical Royal Colleges

The Academy has produced a list of organisations that can offer support to doctors in areas such as mental health and financial support

<https://www.aomrc.org.uk/supportfordoctors/#1465858640552-4ee2b70e-5fbc>

Equality and Human Rights Commission

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en>

GMC – raising and acting on concerns about patient safety

<https://www.gmc-uk.org/ethical-guidance/ethical-guidance-for-doctors/raising-and-acting-on-concerns>

Gold Guide

<https://www.copmed.org.uk/gold-guide-8th-edition/>

HEE London and South East Professional Support Unit

<https://www.lpmde.ac.uk/professional-development/professional-support-unit>

MHRA whistleblower referral

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/contact-mhra#whistleblower-referrals>

Protect

A charitable organisation that offers free confidential whistleblowing advice

<https://protect-advice.org.uk/>

Raising and acting on concerns about patient safety, GMC

<https://www.gmc-uk.org/ethical-guidance/ethical-guidance-for-doctors/raising-and-acting-on-concerns/part-1-raising-a-concern#paragraph-9>

Supporting Trainees: A Guide for Supervisors: Practical Advice for Educational and Clinical Supervisors, National Association of Clinical Tutors (NACT) UK

<http://www.nact.org.uk/documents/national-documents/>

Welcomed and valued: supporting disabled learners in medical education and training, GMC

<https://www.gmc-uk.org/education/standards-guidance-and-curricula/guidance/welcomed-and-valued>

11.2. The websites were accessible on 29 March 2021. Please contact us at deanery@fpm.org.uk if any of the website addresses are out of date or if you can recommend other support services and organisations that might be useful to trainees.