

Our ref: JM/eb/GPT&FS – FDGPPlacements - 2810  
Your ref:

GP Trainers & Foundation Supervisors

Sent via email

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28 October 2020

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Dear colleague,

**RE: Foundation Doctors in GP Placements**

The last seven months of the COVID Pandemic have been unlike anything our health and care systems have seen before, with unprecedented pressure on the structures and people that the public depends upon to care for them. In recent weeks we have seen a rise in COVID cases that has impacted on capacity in Trusts across the region and for some they are reaching higher levels than the peak of the first phase in April.

We should acknowledge and continue to be incredibly grateful for the enormous contribution that has been made to the health service during the first phase of the pandemic by everyone across the system including, clinicians, supervisors, educators and doctors in training. This was crucial to the NHS not being overwhelmed during this time and we would reiterate our thanks to you for your respective contributions, flexibility and leadership.

However, the challenge is not over. As we move into the predicted resurgence of COVID combined with winter pressures, seasonal flu and important business as usual essential non COVID work maintaining the health of the population; we will all need to dig deep and work to support the NHS just as we did before, working within the confines of variable risk stratification across the region.

The position now is that many Trusts across the North West are at critical capacity with increasing COVID cases and workforce shortages exacerbated by increasing staff absence due to mandatory staff testing resulting in high levels of self-isolation.

Medical Directors are reporting that they have exhausted the hierarchy of options for redeployment of trainees and therefore as other work has been stood down, the last resort to call back foundation doctors from GP placements for the final 4 weeks of their 4 month placement to support the acute medical response in Trusts should be implemented.

The escalation and re-deployment plans have been developed in collaboration with the Postgraduate Dean's Office, trainees and educators locally and give consideration to minimising time out and spreading the load equitably. In addition trainees who cannot redeploy for welfare reasons will not be required to move. Escalation and redeployment plans have been approved to enable timely implementation in the interests of patient safety.

Whilst I fully appreciate that primary care is experiencing similar pressures and demand on the service, and the loss of doctors in the final weeks of their GP foundation placements will inevitably impact on workforce capacity in GP, we are moving into exceptional circumstances and I am reaching out to ask for your understanding, help and support.

Finally, I would like to thank you for everything you are doing and the ongoing work caring for patients in the face of rising challenges from COVID-19 across the region, despite increased restrictions on our way of life as Tier 3 restrictions kick in across most of our region.

Yours sincerely



**Professor Jane Mamelok**  
**Postgraduate Dean and Responsible Officer**  
**GMC No 3127863**

**C.C** NW Medical Directors

Directors of Medical Education

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