

# HEE south east COVID-19 update bulletin (Issue 2) 7 April 2020

## **This update covers education and training**

HEE's priority is to ensure trainees and learners are kept informed of immediate changes to their training and recruitment as a result of COVID-19. Therefore, we have developed this bulletin, which should be read in conjunction with the [National HEE COVID-19 webpage here](#).

In this bulletin we will provide:

- Signposting to wellbeing tools and support resources, encouraging you to take a moment for yourself
- An overview of HEE and our partner's national response to COVID-19
- An update from the south east local offices across Kent, Surrey, and Sussex; Thames Valley and Wessex
- Signposting to useful resources and contact information.

### **All staff wellbeing:**

COVID-19 is having an impact on all of us and has affected how we work and live our lives. For many healthcare professionals, this may be a time of increased pressure and stress. It is essential during this time that you take time to prioritise your mental health and wellbeing, recognising that it is more challenging to provide outstanding care for others when you are not adequately cared for yourself.

#### **Wellbeing for staff e-learning programme**

This wellbeing programme has been created for the health and care workforce by HEE's e-Learning for Healthcare (e-LfH) in response to COVID-19. The wellbeing programme includes key topics such as mindfulness, mental health and wellbeing, the worried child, loss and grief and many more. The [wellbeing programme can be accessed here](#) and does not require a login.

#### **Free wellbeing apps**

All NHS staff have been given [free access to wellbeing apps](#) from now until the end of December 2020 to support their mental health and wellbeing during the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

These apps include:

- **Unmind** - a mental health platform that empowers staff to proactively improve their mental wellbeing.
- **Headspace** - a science-backed app in mindfulness and meditation, providing unique tools and resources to help reduce stress, build resilience, and aid better sleep.
- **Sleepio** - a clinically evidenced sleep improvement programme that is fully automated and highly personalised, using cognitive behavioural techniques to help improve poor sleep.
- **Daylight** - an app that provides help to people experiencing symptoms of worry and anxiety, using evidence-based cognitive behavioural techniques, voice, and animation.

To access the apps please visit your app store on your smartphone or tablet device. You can find out more information by visiting the [NHS Employers website here](#).

### **Joyful doctor**

Dr Caroline Walker of The Joyful Doctor, an expert in doctors' wellbeing provides top tips for doctors during the COVID-19 pandemic. You can view [useful wellbeing materials and resources here](#). You can also follow [The Joyful Doctor on Twitter](#) or visit [The Joyful Doctor website](#).

### **British Medical Association (BMA)**

The BMA's [wellbeing online support services](#) is available to all UK medical students and doctors, regardless of membership, 24/7 and free of charge. These services are also open to spouses, partners and children of those doctors and medical students.

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## **Medical training:**

HEE is continuing to work with stakeholders and adding to the suite of resources supporting the medical workforce with the response to COVID-19. Please visit the [HEE COVID-19 information for trainee webpage here](#) for regularly updated content and resources.

### **HEE's commitment to supporting doctors in training**

HEE's Professor Wendy Reid has written a [letter to trainees](#) to provide reassurance on how HEE and NHS England and Improvement (NHSE/I) are supporting doctors in training through the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Returning in the pandemic**

HEE has created [SuppoRTT guidance and resources](#) to help those who have returned to training through the SuppoRTT process. HEE will also be hosting [a series of webinars for doctors returning](#) during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **Medical training rotations**

In a recent communication to trainees, there was a reference to trainees who have not transferred to their planned training rotation but were due to receive a higher payment rate and that they will still receive payment at the higher rate as planned. We would like to clarify that pay arrangements remain under discussion between the BMA and NHS Employers, and we will provide an update in due course.

## **Specialty recruitment plans**

Following the cancellation of all face-to-face recruitment, contingency plans have been reviewed for all medical and surgical specialties by senior clinical representatives from across the four nations, and junior doctor representatives from the BMA Doctor Committee and the Academy of Medical Colleges trainees' committee, supported by the Medical and Dental Recruitment and Selection team.

Several general principles have been agreed to support the appointment of doctors to Medical training programmes, which will allow August 2020 start dates to be maintained. You can read the [specialty recruitment plan update here](#).

HEE is also working on some FAQs to support this information which will be uploaded to our [FAQ page by clicking here](#).

## **Psychiatry specialty trainees**

HEE has published a [statement confirming core and higher specialty psychiatry trainees will not be redeployed or rotated from mental health placements](#).

## **General Practice national recruitment**

Recruitment into General Practice is one of a few specialties which will recruit in the re-advertised round. A reduced format of the Multi-specialty recruitment assessment (MSRA) using only the Situational Judgement Test (SJT). This will be delivered through an online platform and used in isolation to rank applicants and offer to posts. There is a clear evidence base for this decision, which shows that SJT acts as a strong indicator of overall performance at selection centre. A [statement for applicants and revised recruitment timeline](#) has now been published.

## **Pregnant trainees**

HEE has been contacted by pregnant trainees wishing to support the NHS COVID-19 response while also ensuring their own protection. New advice for pregnant women who are working in the NHS and other work settings has been published by the [Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynaecologists](#).

## **COVID-19 NHS indemnity**

NHS Resolution has confirmed that clinical staff at NHS trusts in England will still be protected by the Clinical Negligence Scheme for Trusts (CNST), if they are deployed to a

new area of work at the trust, including one which is outside their normal speciality, or at a different trust, during the pandemic.

Under section 11 of the Coronavirus Act 2020, the government will provide indemnity for clinical negligence liabilities associated with Coronavirus which are not covered by alternative indemnity arrangements such as those provided by the CNST, insurance companies or medical defence organisations. The [full indemnity statement by NHS Resolution can be accessed here](#).

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## Pharmacy training:

HEE has launched an [anonymous survey for pharmacy trainees and tutors](#) to submit questions and concerns around the impact of COVID-19 on their training programmes.

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## Dental training:

A new section has been added to the HEE COVID-19 webpage [for dental trainee FAQs here](#). The webpage will be updated regularly with information and resources. The FAQs cover topics such as recruitment, study days exams, redeployment, pregnancy and many more.

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## Nursing and Midwifery:

HEE is continuing to work with stakeholders and adding resources to support the nursing and midwifery workforce with the response to COVID-19. Please visit the [HEE COVID-19 information for nurses and midwives webpage here](#) for regularly updated content and resources.

On 26 March HEE published full national guidance, with NHSE/I and NMC, for nursing and midwifery students considering taking part in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The [full national guidance can be viewed here](#).

On 27 March, the Chief Nurse of Health Education England, Mark Radford, in partnership with NHSE/I, wrote to all nursing and midwifery students to set out their options for using their education programme to support NHS services and the fight against COVID-19. The full [update and letter can be viewed here](#).

An [update from the NMC about midwifery and nursing students](#) in all fields, who are not in the final six months of their programme and responding to COVID-19.

HEE has also worked on [a joint statement](#) signed by the Chief Nursing Officers for England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland with other partners, around developing immediate critical care nursing capacity.

The accompanying [guidance on Coronavirus](#): principles for increasing the nursing workforce in response to exceptional increased demand in adult critical care.

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## Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC):

The HCPC is continuing to work with the government to enable the following groups to practice temporarily. The [HCPC policy position to COVID-19 can be viewed here](#).

### Allied Health Professions (AHPs)

HEE has supported cross-system work augmenting and safely redeploying the AHP workforce, as well as starting several other pieces of work aimed at supporting learners, trainees and staff in different ways to be part of the fight against the pandemic.

HEE has developed a [COVID-19 AHP specific webpage](#) with regularly updated information and resources. This page currently includes information on how HEE has and will support new and existing AHP returnees, optional deployment of final year AHP students and redeployment of AHP staff working in the arms-length-bodies.

### Healthcare Scientists

HEE is supporting efforts to allow final year Healthcare Scientist trainees to progress into service as soon as possible in partnership with the HCPC.

HEE is working closely with the Chief Scientific Officer's office in NHSE to identify how the transferrable skills of healthcare scientists across the many specialties can be identified and called upon so that healthcare scientists of all specialties can be redeployed against the virus.

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## Primary Care:

HEE is continuing to work with training hubs and other stakeholders and is adding to the suite of resources supporting the Primary Care workforce with the response to COVID-19. Please visit the [HEE COVID-19 information for Primary Care webpage here](#) for regularly updated content and resources. This page currently includes information on Physician Associate recruitment, local HEE contacts and signposting to resources and online material. The information will be added to on a regular basis, particularly as BBS processes become clearer.

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## Apprenticeship updates

Skills for Care have a dedicated to [COVID-19 resources and guidance webpage](#), which is regularly updated regarding apprenticeships.

If you need any further guidance or support on anything related to apprenticeships and COVID-19, please get in touch with Elaine Lancaster, south east Relationship Manager via [elaine.lancaster@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:elaine.lancaster@hee.nhs.uk).

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## COVID-19 simulation community:

The [COVID-19 simulation community](#) is now live on Future NHS Collaboration Platform with more than 90 registered users. The forum is to encourage the health and care workforce to share experiences and examples of education and learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Those with an NHS email address can self-register and colleagues with other email addresses can request registration.

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## COVID-19 e-learning:

HEE e-Learning for Healthcare has created an [COVID-19 e-learning programme](#) in response to the COVID-19 that is free to access, without logging in, for the entire UK health and care workforce, including those working in the NHS, the independent sector and social care.

The [COVID-19 e-Learning programme](#) includes key materials to help the health and care workforce respond to COVID-19.

Content within the [COVID-19 e-Learning programme](#) currently includes:

- Essential Guidance from the NHS, UK Government, WHO and BMJ
  - Public Health England - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
  - Infection Prevention and Control
  - Resources for Staff Working in Critical Care Setting
  - Resources for Staff Working in Acute Hospital Setting
  - Resources for Staff Working in Primary Care and Community Setting
  - Resources for Return to Work Healthcare Staff
  - Resources for Staff being Up Skilled or Redeployed
  - End of Life Care COVID-19
  - Wellbeing for Staff
  - Resources for Pharmacy Staff
  - Resources for Paramedics
  - Equipment Quick Guides
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## Quality information and guidance:

As previously advised HEE has stopped all routine education quality activities during the Covid-19 pandemic. Our focus remains on the quality of the clinical learning environment and its impact on the safety of learners and patients.

HEE's principles, expectations, and information on how to raise concerns during this time are set out in the documents below:

- [HEE's statement on stopping quality visits during COVID-19.](#)
  - [HEE's escalating concerns process during COVID-19.](#)
  - [HEE's Quality principles during COVID-19.](#)
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## Kent, Surrey, and Sussex (KSS) office:

Kent, Surrey, and Sussex staff continue to work remotely, they are well equipped and are available on e-mail, mobile, Microsoft Teams and Skype.

Relevant KSS medical and dental COVID-19 response and trainee updates can be found [online here](#). The Healthcare Education Team can be contacted for any medical and dental trainee enquires via the [support portal here](#) in the first instance. Trainees should be aware that the HET team are working around the clock to respond to queries, and that they should explore the FAQs available first to see whether their query has already been raised and addressed by someone else.

All students, trainees and learners have been informed of how they can raise any concerns related to their clinical learning environment via their professional/educational networks. In the case of significant or urgent concerns which have not been possible to resolve using local or usual routes, trainees can contact HEE KSS directly via the emerging concerns email for all learners on [EscalatingConcerns.KSSQuality@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:EscalatingConcerns.KSSQuality@hee.nhs.uk). This email will be monitored closely by the Senior Dean team and should be used only where local resolution hasn't been possible.

The KSS pharmacy team is working to ensure that trainees, educators, and pharmacy leads are kept informed of any changes to the programme of activity in the short term and have also created a dedicated [COVID-19 webpage on the pharmacy website](#) which is updated daily. The team can also be contacted via [lasepharmacy@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:lasepharmacy@hee.nhs.uk).

For all other KSS learners (incl. SAS Doctors), stakeholder or business support enquiries the team can be contacted via [Business.KSS@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:Business.KSS@hee.nhs.uk).

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## Wessex office:

Wessex staff continue to work remotely, they are well equipped and are available on e-mail, mobile and Skype.

Wessex quality team will continue to liaise with trust providers to keep up to date where concerns exist, particularly where triggered visits have been cancelled. This will be done in a proportionate way to reduce the workload for providers. The Wessex Quality Committee will

continue to meet virtually to review current educational quality issues and deal with new concerns. The quality team can be contacted with any concerns via [quality.wx@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:quality.wx@hee.nhs.uk).

Wessex has set up a COVID-19 wellbeing service for trainees run by the professional support unit. The service includes online self-help advice and information for trainees and trainers as well as a self-referral for counselling and support by an experienced case manager or coach. The case managers and coaches are receiving specific induction and training specific to psychological support during this unprecedented time.

The support offered is specifically for psychological wellbeing and coping with anxiety, stress, and uncertainty.

The HEE South pharmacy team is working to ensure that trainees, educators, and pharmacy leads are kept informed of any changes to our programme of activity in the short term and will be communicating accordingly with the relevant groups in the coming days and weeks. The HEE South pharmacy team can be contacted on [Pharmacy.South@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:Pharmacy.South@hee.nhs.uk).

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### Thames Valley office:

Thames Valley staff continue to work remotely, they are well equipped and are available on e-mail, mobile, and Skype.

Trainees will continue to be able to report any concerns directly as per the [Thames Valley escalating concerns process here](#). For further information please contact the Thames Valley quality team on [escalatingconcernstv@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:escalatingconcernstv@hee.nhs.uk). The quality team can be contacted on [quality.TV@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:quality.TV@hee.nhs.uk).

The HEE South pharmacy team is working to ensure that trainees, educators, and pharmacy leads are kept informed of any changes to our programme of activity in the short term and will be communicating accordingly with the relevant groups in the coming days and weeks. The HEE South pharmacy team can be contacted on [Pharmacy.South@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:Pharmacy.South@hee.nhs.uk).

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### Useful resources:

**HEE's national COVID-19 page:** <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/coronavirus-information-trainees>

**Primary Care COVID-19:** <https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/primary-care/>

**Secondary Care COVID-19:** <https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/secondary-care/>

**UK Government:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance>

**General Medical Council – information and support news:** <https://www.gmc-uk.org/news/news-archive/coronavirus-information-and-advice>

**General Dental Council:** <https://www.gdc-uk.org/information-standards-guidance/covid-19-latest-guidance>

**Health and Care Professions Council:** <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/registrants/updates/2020/how-we-will-continue-to-regulate-in-light-of-novel-coronavirus/>

**Nursing and Midwifery Council:** <https://www.nmc.org.uk/news/news-and-updates/how-we-will-continue-to-regulate-in-light-of-novel-coronavirus/>

**General Pharmaceutical Council:** <https://www.pharmacyregulation.org/>

**The Joyful Doctor:** <https://www.joyfuldoctor.com/>

**e-learning for Healthcare COVID-19 programme:** <https://www.e-lfh.org.uk/programmes/coronavirus/>

**COVID-19 Simulation Community:**  
<https://future.nhs.uk/system/login?nextURL=%2Fconnect%2Eti%2FCovid19simulation%2FgroupHome>

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## Thank you for reading

If you found this update useful or have any other suggestions for future updates, please send us your [anonymised feedback here](#).

Any direct queries can be sent to [HEEKSSProgrammes@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:HEEKSSProgrammes@hee.nhs.uk).