

Policy for Career Support in the Health Education England, North West



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“A career is a sequence of a person’s life and work experiences over time”

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Introduction

The original policy document was written in 2008 and while the Health Education England, North West has always regarded supporting the career development of doctors in training as part of its core functions, it takes this even more seriously now in the light of current changes most notably the recently published foundation review.

There is likely to be increasing diversity of employment, increasing emphasis on adaptability in the workplace, more part time employment and portfolio careers. The reconfiguration of services also makes careers skills more important to the individual, particularly those relating to career resilience and management.

The original reference document providing guidance for PGMDE was produced by Modernising Medical Careers¹, whilst it did not define standards for PGMDE, it did lay out certain responsibilities. These were:

- Liaising with medical schools to guide transition into Foundation Programmes
- To work with other stakeholders to support the careers of doctors in training by providing:
 - Focussed career activities
 - Information
 - Facilitation of on-line, peer group and 1:1 activities
 - Career support for sub-specialty training
 - Development opportunities for those with enhanced career management roles, eg training programme directors
 - Training and support for career management delivery
 - Career support that addresses the needs of all
 - Information on key issues, eg shortage specialties

All recent reports on both undergraduate and postgraduate training have emphasised the need for career support but again guidance for careers standards for Postgraduate Medical and Dental Education department (PGMDE) are limited but most closely defined in the new foundation document.

For undergraduate provision, “Tomorrow’s Doctors” (GMC - 2009) requires that: “Students will have access to career advice and opportunities to explore different careers in medicine. Appropriate alternative qualification pathways will be available to those who decide to leave medicine” (Criterion 125, page 61)

For foundation training the recently published foundation programme review (HEE 2019) states :

Recommendation 6 - HEE will establish a common framework for early years careers support, in line with NHS People Plan, to better inform the expectations of doctors in training about the changing needs of the NHS in England and continues’ Supported transition to specialty training and improved support for the workforce could be facilitated by

¹ “*Career Management – an approach for medical schools, PGMDE, royal colleges and trusts*” published in 2005

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an appropriately trained and qualified regional careers lead to coordinate local careers support, signpost careers resources, encourage the use of 'taster' weeks, deliver careers advice/planning and support individuals or groups as well as facilitate training of supervisors to provide careers advice. They could also work with specialities which struggle to fill all core and speciality training places to ensure that doctors in postgraduate training have enough information to be able to make careers decisions. A regional careers' specialist should be supported by a nationally agreed central suite of careers resources. Undergraduate and postgraduate careers resources should be aligned to provide realistic and consistent ongoing careers advice throughout the continuum of medical education'.

For all trainee provision, Promoting Excellence (GMC- 2016)

R3.2 Learners must have access to resources to support their health and wellbeing, and to educational and pastoral support, including:

a confidential counselling services
b careers advice and support
c occupational health services.

"The Trainee Doctor" (GMC - Feb 2011) goes into a little more detail:

- Requirement 6.9: Trainees must have relevant, up-to-date and ready access to careers advice and support
- Requirement 6.16: Trainees must be able to access training in generic professional skills at all stages in their development
- Requirement 6.20: Information must be available about less than full time training, taking a break or returning to training following a career break for any reason including health and disability
- Requirement 6.26: Trainees must be made aware of the academic opportunities available in their programme or specialty
- Requirement 6.27: Trainees who believe that their particular skills and aptitudes are well-suited to an academic career, and are inclined to pursue it, should receive guidance in that endeavour
- Requirement 6.31: Trainers must regularly: [...] identify [the trainee's] development needs, advise on career progression [...]

In a "Recognising and approving trainers: the implementation plan" (Aug 2012), the GMC states "guiding and supporting personal and professional development" as one of its standards for trainer appraisal.

The Academy of Medical Educators' document titled "A Framework for the Professional Development of Postgraduate Medical Supervisors" (AoME Nov 2010) breaks down this area into more detail, giving the following careers related standards for the effective supervisor:

- Understands when and where to refer on to other agencies e.g. occupational health, counselling, PGMDE careers unit
- Signposts the trainee to sources of career support.

The excellent supervisor takes this a little further, providing "timely and appropriate career guidance and advice".

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“Tomorrow’s Doctor” also gives some guidance on supporting trainers:

Requirement 6.34: Organisations providing medical education and training must ensure that trainers have adequate support and resources to undertake their training role

Postgraduate PGMDE must have structures and processes to support and develop trainers, and must provide trainers with information about how to access training and support to help them to undertake their roles and responsibilities effectively.

- Enhancing supervision trainers tips (HEE 2019) clearly states
3. At the start of a post, ask your trainee for a copy of their CV. Review it before your first meeting to get an idea of their interests and career progress so far.

This document should be read in the context of the MDRS Careers Strategy produced in 2017 which highlights the need to support those considering training in medicine to the later years in a medical career and also the support those who train and those who provide career support. It also highlights the need for quality control in all aspects of career support.

As careers support is part of the trainer’s responsibilities, it follows that PGMDE and Specialty Schools must support trainers in this element of their role.

This updated policy document aims to crystallise the PGMDE’s role in defining the career support available at Trust, School and PGMDE level. It will also consider key roles in networking with other interested parties, e.g. undergraduate, and generally promoti

Aim of Career Support

Health Education England, North West is committed to supporting doctors and dentists in training posts within the PGMDE so that they are able to manage their career more effectively. We want trainee doctors to have a realistic and flexible career plan based on a frank appraisal of the options open to them and a rational assessment of their current situation.

We aspire to deliver career support to all doctors and dentists working in Health Education England, North West so that they are encouraged to truly develop their potential within their working environment.

Framework for Career Support

In Health Education England, North West, the framework for career support is that of Information, Advice and Guidance. This structure is well recognised and reflects the readiness of the individual to make their career decisions. Definitions for the terms used can be found in the Glossary of Terms in Appendix 1.

Career information

This refers to the provision of information that is accurate, up to date, accessible, objective and relevant to trainees. It should be available in a variety of formats, such as, the internet, books, pamphlets etc.

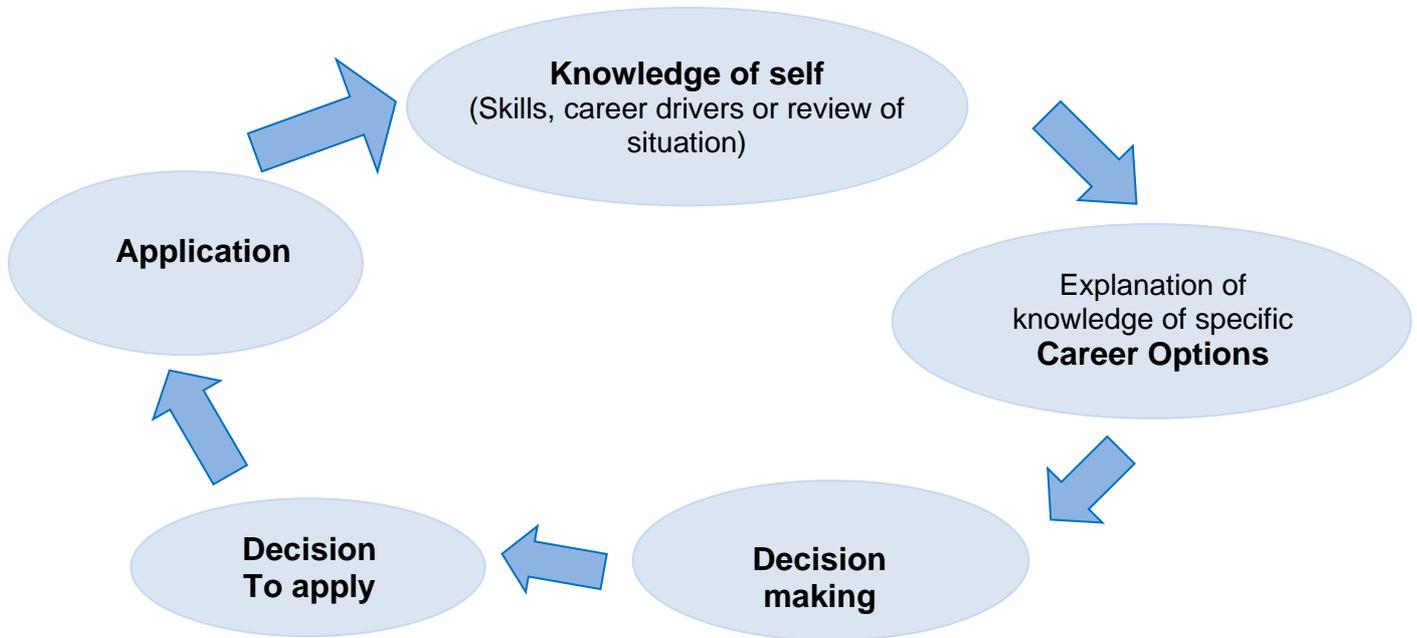
It broadly falls in the following areas:

1. Informing current situation:
 - Eligibility for training programmes
 - Person specifications
 - Requirements for training programmes
 - Career paths
 - Competition ratios for training programmes
2. Informing career options:
 - Range of training programmes available
 - Other career opportunities
 - Personal perspectives of different specialties and training grades
 - Specialty based information
 - Availability of taster experience
3. Informing next steps:
 - Career management skills e.g. interview skills
 - The structure of career support in the NW PGMDE
 - Other resources, e.g. available books, courses etc.
 - Links to other sites

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Career advice

This can be delivered on a one to one basis or in group work. It is based around helping an individual to use a structured approach to understanding and developing their careers, as shown in the diagram below



This is based on a career coaching model and encouraging the individual to take the lead for their career and for the approach to be non-directive and impartial.

Opportunities for career support are:

- 1) Sessions on careers within teaching programmes
- 2) Discussions during teaching programmes on careers
- 3) Career discussion at critical education reviews:
 - Educational supervision
 - Portfolio review
 - ARCP
- 4) Peer group discussions and activities
- 5) Specific tools such as:
 - Sci 59
 - Windmills website
 - NHS Careers website
 - BMA careers facilities on line

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- 6) Selection of specific training placements
- 7) Taster experience not just at foundation level
- 8) Out Of Programme opportunities
- 9) Career Surgeries
- 10) Career Fairs
- 11) Skills development:
 - Interview preparation
 - Communication skills
 - Self knowledge
 - Applications support
 - Portfolio development
 - Resilience skills
 - Assertiveness
 - Leadership & Management
 - Time management, etc.

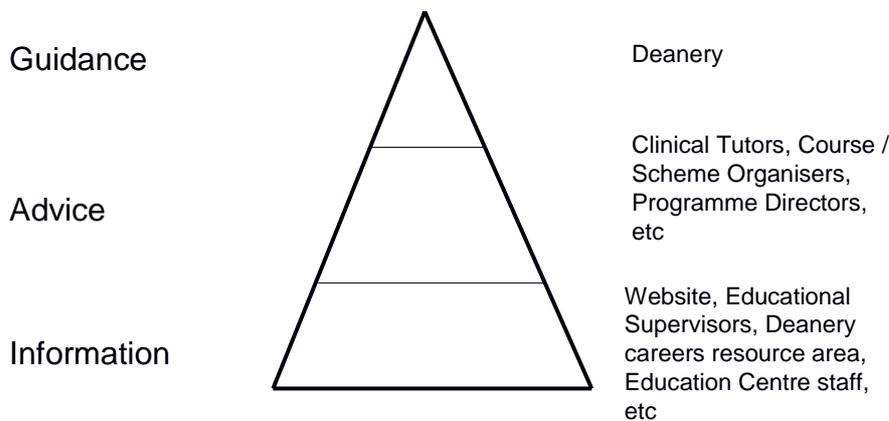
Career guidance

This can be given to those who need extra support, either to change career direction, develop specific skills or who have special needs which mean refocusing their career plans. It is generally coordinated at PGMDE level.

Delivery of Career Support

The different elements of career support are delivered in different ways. These are summarised in figure 1.

Figure 1: Career Support Delivery in the North Western Deanery



The PGMDE provides information predominantly via the careers section of its website and trainees should be initially directed here. Information is also available from colleagues and trainers within NHS organisations, postgraduate centre staff and other doctors who will be able to signpost trainees to information on the PGMDE website. Information is also available at the careers reference library in the Manchester premises. This area contains books, papers and other materials on careers and related subjects for reference purposes only. A list of these is available on the PGMDE website.

Those offering career advice will vary with the organisation and programme structures but will include:

- The trainee's Educational Supervisor
- The Career Lead/s for the Specialty Training Programme
- The Trust Clinical Tutor or Director of Medical Education
- The School Programme Director of the Specialty or Foundation training programme
- The Trust, Foundation or Specialty Career Lead

The pathway for accessing career support is described later.

Within each training programme, career support is led by named individuals who are full members of the training committee.

- For Foundation Training programmes, there is a Foundation Programme Career Lead.

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- For specialty training programmes, there is a named individual who leads for careers within each programme.

Each NHS organisation and each Training School should also have a named individual who leads on career issues and who has Board representation and appropriate governance arrangements. Documents outlining all these roles can be found in the Appendix.

Career Guidance is coordinated centrally at Health Education England, North West by the Associate Deans with responsibility for careers and depends on the individual's particular needs.

Staff delivering career support

Those delivering career information, advice and guidance should be competent to deliver this support at an appropriate level. An outline of suggested levels can be found in Appendix 2. From this table, an individual can be at different levels in the different areas and a focus for development can be identified. Resources available to trainers to support their development such as:

- Career information on website and NHS careers website
- Training opportunities
- Career lead network
- Online course "Supporting Others' Careers" on the PGMDE VLC²

Career support should be addressed as part of a Trainer's induction as a trainer and their knowledge and skills developed through their Personal Development Plan and appraisal. The time commitment to career support should be acknowledged in their job plan. Trainers and others involved in career support should also be encouraged to develop their ability to use the resources available to them. Trainers should recognise the limits of their competence in career support and know how and where to refer a trainee for further support (see section on Access Pathways).

Opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills in career support are available to career leads through the PGMDE. It is the responsibility of individual training programmes to ensure that their trainers are competent in relevant aspects of career support. Organisations and Training Schools are responsible for ensuring that trainers have time to undertake career support and opportunities to develop their ability to do so.

Access to Career Support

Target group

Health Education England, North West is primarily responsible for the postgraduate education of medical and dental trainees within the geographical boundaries of the PGMDE. It also has a responsibility to develop the educators who lead its training programmes. Career support is targeted at all medical trainees in the North West and is delivered within a framework of equality and diversity. Over the past few years, support has

² Virtual Learning Centre: <http://vlc.nwpgmd.nhs.uk>

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also been extended to SAS Doctors. There is also a commitment to work with local universities on seamless support from undergraduate to postgraduate medicine.

The target group of medical and dental trainees should be aware of the career information, advice and guidance available to them through Health Education England, North West, what they can expect from the system and its limitations. They should also be aware of how career support is delivered and accessed.

Access Pathways

Career support can be accessed through two main routes; these are summarised in figure 2. This diagram includes the available options but not all of these are available or relevant to a particular individual. Similarly, the pathway describes the route of enquiry; the individuals approached may not themselves deliver career support. They should, however, be able to signpost the trainee to the most appropriate source of support.

Figure 2. Career Access Pathway



Trainees wishing to discuss their career should first inform themselves using the information available. They should then discuss their career issue and the information they have gained with their educational supervisor. If they require further support, two routes are available.

- The route through the Trust or organisation where they are working involves the Foundation Programme Director or Foundation Career Lead, for Foundation trainees; the General Practice Tutor for issues regarding General Practice or speciality lead for education (college tutor) for other specialty issues. If further support is required after these have been approached, the trainee can be referred to the Clinical Tutor, Director of Medical Education or Trust Career Lead.

³ There are Trust level Career Leads, Speciality, Foundation, GP and SAS Career Leads. For more details: <http://www.nwpgmd.nhs.uk/careers/access-pathway>

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- The route through the training programme involves the Trust Specialty lead locally as an initial contact. If further support is required, the trainee can be referred to the School career lead, Training Programme Director, Training Programme Career Lead or Academy Lead for General Practice. Unresolved issues can then be referred to the Head of School.

Should additional guidance be required after this, the trainee can be referred to Health Education England, North West through the Associate Dean leading for Careers. At all stages, a non-directive coaching approach is recommended to ensure that the trainee retains responsibility for their career decisions.

Information on access

Information on how to access the career support system is provided

- On the Health Education England, North West (PGMDE) website
- In the induction information provided by training programmes
- In a variety of formats
- At assessments and formal training opportunities
- Within Education Centres or their equivalent at NHS organisations

Career information is available 24 hours a day on the Health Education England, North West website. The website is also available on a 24 hour basis to submit email questions. Career advice from the trainee's educational supervisor will depend on the availability of both trainer and trainee.

Management of Career Support

Career support is coordinated and quality managed by Health Education England, North West, led by the Associate Deans responsible for Careers.

Career support is managed through programmes and the programme is responsible for:

- Setting measurable standards for career support that are part of a continuous improvement system and that reflect the needs of doctors in training in the programme.
- Providing a clear structure for the career support system and effective leadership
- Providing accessible career information
- Delivering effective career advice for trainees in the programme

Career support is delivered by individuals working in NHS organisations, e.g. hospital trusts. These organisations are responsible for:

- Setting measurable standards for career support that are part of a continuous improvement system and that reflect the needs of doctors in training in the organisation or Training School.
- Providing a clear structure for the career support system and effective leadership
- Supporting the provision of career information
- Supporting the delivery of career advice for trainees in the organisation or Training School

Development of Career Support

Each training programme, organisation and Training School is responsible for quality controlling and developing its areas of responsibility. The annual report to Health Education England, North West for the specialty should document careers support. A pro-forma for evaluating a career support system in a training programme or an organisation or Training School is provided in Appendix 3 with examples of evidence that may be collected.

Further Reading

- GMC. The Trainee Doctor – Foundation and specialty, including GP training (February 2011)
http://www.gmc-uk.org/Trainee_Doctor.pdf_39274940.pdf
- GMC. Tomorrow's Doctors – Outcomes and standards for undergraduate medical education (September 2009) http://www.gmc-uk.org/education/undergraduate/tomorrows_doctors.asp
- GMC. Recognising and Approving trainers: the implementation plan (August 2012)
http://www.gmc-uk.org/Approving_trainers_implementation_plan_Aug_12.pdf_49544894.pdf
- Academy of Medical Educators. A Framework for the Professional Development of Postgraduate Medical Supervisors – guidance for PGMDE, commissioners and providers of medical education (November 2010)
<http://www.rcpe.ac.uk/training/files/aome-guidance-for-PGMDE.pdf>
- Medical and dental recruitment strategy

<https://hee.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/documents/MDRS%20Careers%20Strategy.pdf>

- D Hughes, G Gratton. Performance indicators and benchmarks in career guidance in the United Kingdom. Centre for Guidance Studies, University of Derby
http://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CDAQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.derby.ac.uk%2Ffiles%2Ficegs_performance_indicators_and_benchmarks2006.pdf&ei=mORAUP-KEKTDOQX84oGoDg&usq=AFQjCNHkwDkfyYaWL05SGX3OaLWHNpF5g&cad=rja
- I Lewis. Information, Advice and Guidance for Adults. The National Policy Framework and Action Plan. 2003.
<http://www.lifelonglearning.co.uk/iag/npfreport.pdf>

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- The Matrix national quality standard for any organisation that delivers information, advice and/or guidance on learning and work.
<http://www.matrixstandard.com/>
- AG Watts, P James, J Sampson. Strategic planning and performance measurement: implications for careers services in higher education. *British journal of Guidance and Counselling* 1998; 17 (1): 34-48

Appendix 1: Glossary of Terms

Career Management

A proactive process to career development, career exploration, career decision making and personal learning which may be facilitated by a range of processes and activities

Career Management Skills

The skills used in managing an individual's career

Career Support

The provision of information, advice, guidance and resources to support an individual's career management and their development of career management skills

Career information

The provision of information that is accurate, up to date, accessible, objective, relevant and available in a variety of formats.

Career advice

The provision of support, usually on a one to one or small group basis, whereby individuals are able to understand and interpret career information in their personal situation.

Career guidance

The provision of specific activities targeted to the particular needs and concerns of an individual whose career expectations are significantly altered.

Career Resources

Resources that can be used to explore awareness, both in terms of personal awareness and awareness of career options and their pros and cons so that the consequences of career decisions can be realistically appraised.

**Appendix 2: Role description for Specialty Training Programme / School of
Consultant Career Lead**

Introduction

Each speciality should have an individual with designated responsibility for careers. This role is increasingly important with the increasing prospect of medical unemployment, more diversity of health care provision, changes in population – demographics i.e. available treatments and preventative therapeutic options and longer working lives.

The core of all career support is to help the individual trainee be self-aware, aware of all the opportunities available and how to constructively explore these, decide on a way forward, prepare for this and then deal with the mechanics of application and direct their further development to ensure career satisfaction.

The role of a specialty lead is to provide someone to support but mainly to direct the strategy of the speciality to ensure North West trainees have a mature approach to careers that will support them for their whole working lives.

Key components of the role

1. Develop and construct specialty careers strategy to be reviewed annually
2. Attend (or send specific deputy) to career steering group meeting (twice yearly)
3. Provide access to 1:1 counselling to trainees in speciality as required – this may be delivered by a range of individuals
4. Develop a list of available speciality tasters for medical students to access but not to organise actual placements. Provide guidance on content to trainees
5. Support activities to inform foundation trainees about their speciality training programmes – content/application process/nature of training programmes/exit exams and long term career opportunities.
6. For all speciality trainees develop and support generic career skills: eg resilience, self-assessment, decision making, communication, interview skills
7. Core trainees: Provide information and support on application to specialty training. Ensure that training programmes have access to at least one dedicated career session in a 2 year cycle: this to assist with trainee self-awareness, career choice – next steps, alternative ways of working – less than full time, non-consultant, permanent posts, support from application to speciality training
8. Specialty trainees: provide career support in early years on selecting suitable subspecialties, maximising career opportunities, self-awareness and managing career in context of whole life. This may take any of a number of different approaches and should include information on less than full time, OOP academic posts and other training opportunities.

Later years; subspecialty selection and support for the process needs to be provided if not necessarily personally. Thought should be given to provision of inclusion within the programme of a formal session on preparedness for consultant selection, use of locum posts for further career development post exit from training, interview and CV preparation skills and equipping trainee to develop within the consultant role.

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9. Trainees exiting programme not through choice: provision should be made to offer counselling to these trainees on a 1:1 basis – again not necessarily by the lead themselves but initially within the speciality. It is visualised that this would be primarily from those exiting due to failure to achieve educational goals and not as the result of a disciplinary process.
10. Trainees with specific need. Where trainees have developed issues with career choice in a speciality, the careers lead should coordinate appropriate support/advice as required.
11. Health Education England, North West website: the speciality career lead should provide the careers team with links to college career information and inform them of changes to this as well as of any events of career interest to trainees at any grade in their specialities.
12. Explore with trainees at all levels their requirements for career support and advice to inform further developments within career support for their speciality
13. Quality control the programme of career support given.
14. Produce a short report on career activities for the speciality annual report

Selection of individuals for role

This will often be experienced trainers with other specific roles in training particularly for small specialities. They should at least have the skills required for an educational supervisor and in addition should aim to develop their knowledge of career theory. They should also be able to assist with development of suitable individuals to give necessary support on a 1:1 basis to trainees and should themselves be able to give simple 1:1 advice on careers. There is career support for trainees available in the VLC⁴. The nature of selection into the role should be at the discretion of the speciality with support from PGMDE career lead.

Term of role

This needs to be up to the speciality but consideration should be given to a review process once every 3 years.

Conclusion

The major thrust of this role is coordination ensuring the inclusion of careers within educational activity plans and that trainees have access to support. It is not intended that these individuals give extended personal career counselling but that they ensure access to standard information and direct access to appropriate resources for all their trainees appropriate to their needs.

⁴ Virtual Learning Centre: <http://vlc.nwpgmd.nhs.uk/>

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Appendix 3: Evaluation of Career Support in Specialty Training Programmes / Schools

Career Support Criteria	Sub-criteria	Examples of evidence
The specialty set measurable standards for career support that are part of a continuous improvement system and that reflect the needs of doctors training in the organisation or school.	The specialty has a stated aim for your career support system and set precise standards to meet this.	Policy document for career support Other documents with careers standards
	The specialty uses these standards to quality control and develop your career support system	Strategy for review of standards Previous standards Audits of performance against standards Annual report on career support activity
	The specialty identifies the career support needs of trainees in the programme	Feedback from trainees regarding their needs for career support.
The specialty has a clear structure for career support and effective leadership	The specialty has clear leadership of the career support system in the programme	Named career lead for Health Education England, North West who is a member of the training committee
	The specialty has a clear structure and access points for career support	Career support policy document
The specialty provides accessible career information to trainees.	The specialty provides career information that is accurate, up to date, objective and relevant to trainees	Examples of information provided and how it is relevant to trainees Access of information Strategy for ensuring information is up to date Policy for taster experience and its uptake Audits of trainee knowledge of information available and their frequency of access Satisfaction questionnaires of whether the information provided met the

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		trainees' needs
	Information should be available in a variety of formats, such as books, pamphlets or the internet	Examples of information provided and how to access them
The specialty delivers effective career advice for trainees in the programme	The specialty makes available resources to support career decision making	Examples of resources available and how to access them
	The specialty ensures that trainers are competent to deliver effective careers advice	Database of attendance at training opportunities Feedback from trainees on effectiveness of career advice
	The specialty trainers know their limitations and how to refer trainees for further career guidance	Network of those offering career advice to discuss issues Established pathway for advisors to access support Established referral routes for trainees requiring further guidance