



North West Supported Return to Training (SupportRTT) Mentoring Guidance

Introduction and Aims

It has been recognised that returning to clinical practice after a period of absence (planned or unplanned) can be challenging. HEE North West Office has therefore set up a mentoring scheme to support trainees returning after an absence of three months or more.

The SupportRTT Mentors will be trained and have support from HEE, and all trainees returning will be offered access when a mentor is available. Use of the service is not compulsory and the intention is to provide a space for personal development over the 6 months following return to practice.

What is mentoring?

Know + Do Ltd. are delivering the training for the North West SupportRTT Mentors. They have provided several documents/articles which help to define what mentoring is and how it is different to coaching and other 'helping' interventions:

[Similarities & differences between key 'helping' interventions](#)

[The difference between coaching and mentoring](#)

[Coaching and mentoring – the difference](#)

Expectations of a SupportRTT Mentor

Each SupportRTT Mentor will support up to 2 trainees at a time for up to a maximum of 6 months following their return to training. They may support more trainees if they wish to do so.

How will it work?

The SupportRTT team will email trainees prior to their return to offer a mentor to support them during their return period.

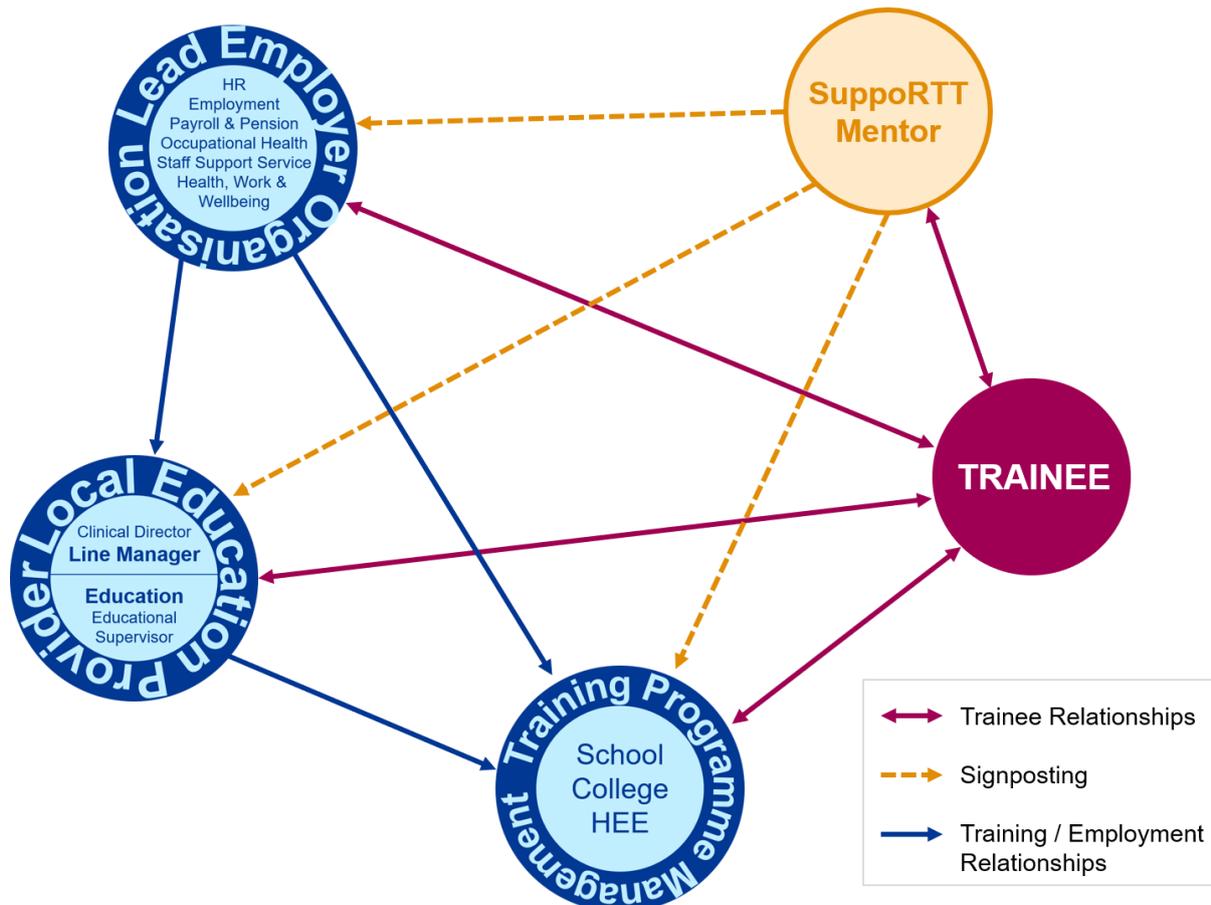
Trainees who express an interest in this opportunity will be allocated a SupportRTT Mentor; special requests (e.g. geography) will be accommodated where possible but cannot be guaranteed. The mentor and mentee will be introduced via email.

A first mutually agreed meeting will be planned, and a mentoring agreement completed. It is recommended that this meeting is face to face, however subsequent meetings can be conducted by Skype or other methods, if both parties agree.

The frequency of meetings will be decided by the two individuals involved but most mentoring arrangements are monthly. The total duration of this support should be for up to six months and if mentoring is required after that time alternative arrangements should be sought.

The mentoring is a safe space to encourage planning for personal development and is not for educational supervision, dealing with concerns about placements, pay, LTFT arrangements, health issues and other concerns, although a mentor may help signpost to other support.

Usual support from the lead employer, occupational health and the Trust where the trainee works should be used, and a diagram showing how the system works is below:



Confidentiality is usually expected on behalf of both parties but as both are GMC registered this imposes limitations and, where agreed, information may be shared.

If a mentor and mentee find the relationship is not working they should inform the SupportTT Team (SupportTT.nw@hee.nhs.uk) and a different arrangement will be offered.

If the mentee wishes to discontinue the mentoring they are requested to inform the team and both parties will be asked to complete a short survey to assess how well used and useful the support has been and after 6 months this will occur automatically if it has not already occurred.

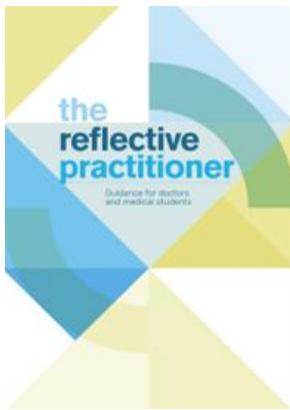
Mentoring Agreement

Rather than providing a form for you to complete please use the following questions and statements as a guide for your conversation to reach your agreement. It would however be

beneficial if you could record your conversation/agreement in some way for future reference / review.

- Details of the meetings: length, frequency, format (face to face, Skype etc.), how formal / informal, contact between meetings (frequency, format), who arranges the venue, agenda etc., what are the arrangements for cancellations?
- What outcomes / learning objectives are the mentor and mentee aiming for?
- Are any topics off limits for discussion?
- How will key outcomes and learning be recorded?
- How / when will we review the progress to make sure the mentoring is effective?
- How will we end the relationship if either party thinks it is not working out?

Reflection



This short guide has been developed jointly by the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, the UK Conference of Postgraduate Medical Deans (COPMeD), the General Medical Council (GMC), and the Medical Schools Council and supports medical students, doctors in training and doctors engaging in revalidation on how to reflect as part of their practice.

Please click on the image to be taken to the GMC's Reflective Practice webpages where this guidance can be read or downloaded.

You can also access the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges and COPMeD Reflective Practice Toolkit from within this document.

Less Than Full Time Training (LTFTT)

LTFTT is a scheme whereby eligible trainee doctors and dentists of all grades are able to work on a part time basis. Please follow this link to read or download a copy of the North West's Less Than Full Time Training (LTFTT) policy and guidance: <https://www.nwpgmd.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/LTFTTPolicy-v4.pdf>

In the ACAS discussions around the 2016 doctors in training contract it was agreed that there would be champions of the flexible training role; each Trust within the North West now has a LTFTT Lead who can provide advice and guidance.

Further information, including contact details for the LTFTT Team and the LTFTT Leads can be found on our website: <https://www.nwpgmd.nhs.uk/content/less-full-time-training>

Other support is available to trainees and the specific activities are to be found here: <https://www.nwpgmd.nhs.uk/supported-return-to-training>.