

Hello,

On behalf of the SuppoRTT (SRTT) Champions for KSS GP Trainees we have written this letter to be sent out to all KSS trainees when they are about to go or are on leave to ensure that you are aware of sources of support that you can access and so you know that there is funding available to help you!

SRTT is a great offer to support all trainees who are returning after time out of programme. This might include taking a year out to pursue other academic interests, maternity or parental leave and sick leave. It is available to all trainees taking more than three months of leave (but that is not a hard line – if you, your ES/TPD feel that even though your time off is less, you would benefit from more support to enable you to return to work well then you may be eligible).

SRTT aims to ensure that whilst off you don't feel forgotten about and that if you want to access resources that help you feel connected or for your development then you can do so. To be there so, when you are ready to return, this is managed by your employer and education team with you so that it is a safe and supported return to work. You may feel you have knowledge gaps or have forgotten some skills that you need on return to work and you can use SRTT to access courses to help with this. You might have had a life event and feel a bit out at sea, feeling a bit lost about your future or just wanting to reflect on where you are now and where you want to be: you can access coaching via the [PSU](#) to help with this.

What is SRTT – still not sure?

This [YouTube video](#) gives you a good introduction.

And the [SRTT office website](#) explains how to complete the forms and has links to all the resources available.

You might be thinking about going part time on your return, see the [Less Than Full Time page](#).

So, what do you need to do next?

1. If you know you are planning to take leave, arrange to meet your ES / TPD to discuss this 8 weeks prior to your planned leave and complete the [SuppoRTT pre absence form](#) (If you are on leave that was unplanned – do not worry about this. Just move straight to step 2).

When thinking about this meeting you may wish to consider:

- a. How long will you be away?
- b. Do you want to come in for Keeping in Touch days? (if on mat leave KiT days are part of employment law and you are eligible for 10 days (pro rata) whilst on mat leave: not whilst on the annual leave part of this time off as technically you are back at work.
- c. How do you want to be contacted whilst on leave? Ensure that your ES / TPD / GP administrator/ practice manager and myself have the email address you want us to use to contact you on whilst on leave, so you know about courses / opportunities available whilst you are off.

- d. Who do you want to contact you? How often? What about?
 - e. Is there anything worrying you about being off and then returning to work? Is there something you can identify that you could do whilst off to help with that? How can we help with that?
 - f. Do you think you will be returning full time or part time? There are forms to complete and people to inform so it is good to ensure you are aware of those [processes](#) in advance.
 - g. Do you know what pay you are entitled to? Are you sure that payroll and your PM have your entitlements correctly calculated? You can speak with the BMA for help with this.
2. Spend your leave as you wish
- a. There is lots available for you to access whilst off but equally if you do not wish to access it you do not need to. If you are on maternity leave it is perfectly acceptable to just take time completely away from work and concentrate on your family. If you are on sick leave then it is absolutely the right thing to concentrate on getting well. This is not expected to become a burden, or something else to tick off. This is a positive addition to support that is available should you wish to access it and to help once you are ready to return to work. Some people find it helpful to keep in touch with work / their knowledge whilst off and that is ok too. One size does not fit all!
 - b. Your ES / TPD may contact you whilst you are off to “check-in” and ensure you are aware of support available. This does not mean that they wish to pressure you to return to work any earlier than planned.
 - c. If you experience mental health problems including stress / burn out or addiction, then you can still access the [GP Health Service](#) whilst on leave. It is a confidential service, separate to your GP, designed for doctors and you can self-refer.
3. As you start to think about returning to work, arrange to meet with your ES (if in GP post) or TPD (if in hospital post). Ideally this would be 8 weeks prior to return to work but sometimes you do not know in advance so just as soon as you do. If you are on planned leave you do have to give prior notice for your return
- a. Remember you may well have been exposed to lots of learning opportunities whilst on leave and these can become valuable reflective learning logs. Your experience of illness; being a parent or carer develops you as a GP and gives you a deeper understanding of your patients’ experiences in the future.
4. The return to work planning meeting (ES if ST3 ; TPD if ST1-2 in hospital post (Note if in hospital post you will need to liaise with the trust SRTT champion/ your CS. Remember to tell HR that you are returning so that you get paid correctly!)
- a. [Complete the form](#): you need email details for your ES and TPD.
 - b. Think about:
 - i. What are your main concerns about your return to work? Sharing your worries is not a sign of weakness! It helps people to put in support where you need it and to be there for you to help you be the best you can be.

- ii. Are there practical skills you need to refresh? Many Trusts have a SIM skills lab – contact them with support of your TPD to find out what skills they can help you with. We are developing HEEKSS SIM course opportunities.
 - iii. Are there knowledge gaps you feel you might have (you could consider a GP update course or online specific modules to address your learning needs). RCGP has combined with [Plus Baby Seminars](#) to provide baby friendly CPD courses.
 - iv. There are many resources on the [SRTT page](#) to support you in remote working, COVID updates, general updates, returning from shielding, wellbeing resources and much more.
 - v. Is your basic life support up to date? You could access training via your Trust and also on e-learning for health. You should ensure that you are aware of how to use local equipment and where it is / how to raise the alarm.
 - vi. Do you need an occupational health review prior to return to work? Access this via your Trust.
 - vii. Do you need a phased return? You can use SRTT to support this.
 - viii. Do you need to review your job plan / hours / go LTFT? Talk about this early to help your employer make adaptations to support you back to work.
 - ix. Would you like to [access coaching](#) to help you think through any concerns you have or decisions you need to make?
 - x. What will your first few weeks back at work look like? What will you be doing? When? With whom? Who will be supervising you and how closely? It is expected that you will have a period of close supervision on your return to work.
- c. Once you have completed the SRTT form online you will get an email confirming that you are approved for SRTT funding.
 - d. Any courses/resources that you access requiring funding should be paid for and then you apply via your usual Trust process for reimbursement. State on your application that it is under SRTT funding (they then get this reimbursed from SRTT).
5. Meet regularly with your ES/TPD after your return to check in with how you are settling back in. If you are in a hospital post, ensure that you have a meeting set up with your CS/ the SRTT Trust champion (each trust may differ on how they handle this)
- a. You need to be doing your WBPA during your return to work period – you should have lots of supervised time e.g., in GP this might include joint surgeries, joint visits so lots of chances for COTS / CBD / CEPS. These are useful to help identify any learning needs you have so that these can be addressed. You are a trainee – you are supposed to have learning needs so identifying some is not a failure! It keeps those of us employed to educate you in a job ☺.
 - b. Flag any issues – don't hide if you're struggling to cope. It's important to get help if you need it.
 - c. Once you are settled into work and your supervisor feels you are ready to return to standard training and service provision then you should meet with your ES / TPD and complete the [final sign off form](#).

Each form you complete needs to be uploaded to your e-Portfolio in a learning log called SRTT.

Questions should initially go to your ES or TPD. If you or they need further help, please do contact kssgp.supportt@hee.nhs.uk

We wish you all the best in your return to training.

Yours faithfully,

The KSS SRTT GP Champions