

10 January 2024

Dear colleagues,

We are sadly in a situation where industrial action is still ongoing.

We have heard repeated queries and worries about the impact this may have in the future on training progression and particularly the potential for extensions to training and delay in progression dates.

We thought it would be helpful to reiterate that the national guidance and FAQ published earlier this year still remain in effect and have not changed. These can be found at: -

<https://medical.hee.nhs.uk/medical-training-recruitment/medical-specialty-training/industrial-action-and-management-of-doctors-in-postgraduate-training>

We would like to highlight particular points relating to time out of training (TOOT).

For the foundation programme, it states: -

All Foundation doctors have a 20-day absence allowance (per year) for sick leave, compassionate leave. This is particularly important in Foundation Year 1 (FY1) as this is a time-based programme, with each FY1 doctor having to complete 12 months training pro rata. If a Foundation doctor has more time off than this, a review of their performance is triggered, but this does not mean an automatic extension to training.

In the event of doctors in training taking industrial action in 2023, then any time absent from work may be considered to be within the '20-day allowance'.

If the '20-day allowance' is exceeded for any reason (including industrial action), then this should trigger a review of overall performance and achievement of curricular outcomes, but does not mean an automatic extension to training. This review will be carried out by the Foundation School with oversight by the Postgraduate Dean, but, in line with Gold Guide, does not require an Annual Review of Competency Progression (ARCP).

This should be discussed with the Foundation School Director/Postgraduate Dean before any training is extended.

For other doctors in training (DrPgT) including GP: -

The ARCP process looks at whether a DrPgT has met the curriculum requirements for their stage of training and identifies those who have a further developmental need (identified by an outcome 2 or 3).

As part of the ARCP, all doctors in training are required to declare time out of training as part of the ARCP process, and the taking of industrial action will be included in this time.

Again, the principle of an individual review of overall performance being made will be the overriding principle and will be the deciding factor on whether someone will progress as planned or whether any changes will need to be made.

Due to a specific repeated concern raised to us, we would also highlight the line in the guidance which states:

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The Educational Supervisor report and ARCP will not record whether an individual chose to strike or not, but where industrial action impacted on their training to the extent of requiring an extension to training, that will be recorded in the Educational Supervisor (ES) report and ARCP.

Please do read the whole guidance document for a fuller picture, and we hope this provides some clarity and reassurance that the position remains unchanged from that previously stated.

Please all take care of yourselves at what feels an especially busy and stressful time for NHS workers as a whole.

Kind regards

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