

Prospectus for the North London Higher Training Scheme in Psychiatry of Intellectual Disability

The North London Higher Training Scheme in Psychiatry of Intellectual Disability provides ST4-6 training that leads to the attainment of a Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) in Psychiatry of Intellectual Disability. This guide is intended to provide an overview of the scheme for prospective trainees.

Introduction

Psychiatry of Intellectual Disability offers a rewarding, stimulating, varied and enjoyable career.

From a clinical perspective, it truly embraces the bio-psycho-social model of understanding mental illness. Community services are at the forefront of multidisciplinary working with innovative models of integrated health and social care. As an academic discipline, the speciality provides an ideal opportunity to develop a broad range of research skills. This rotation has strong links to the Division of Psychiatry at University College London which has an impressive track record in the field of Intellectual Disability research.

The North London Higher Training Scheme in Psychiatry of Intellectual Disability provides high quality clinical, leadership and academic experience across a range of inpatient and community services. It is consistently highly rated by trainees as evidenced by the GMC trainee survey. There is an excellent monthly academic programme and a wide range of teaching opportunities for trainees.

Our trainees have made a video which provides further information about the speciality which is available here:

<https://youtu.be/COoOtsWJAGU>

Location

The scheme includes 12 different posts in 5 Trusts across North London, covering both inner and outer London boroughs. Trainees will generally complete 3 or 4 of these jobs over the course of the training, each one usually lasting 12 months. Job selection is based on trainee preference and educational need, with consideration also given to practical aspects such as distance from home and travelling time. Trainees are supported to work part time where requested. In recent years some trainees have chosen to take Out of Programme Experience to develop additional professional skills. Job descriptions are available for all posts.

Team	Service type	Clinical supervisor	Postcode
Kingswood Centre	In-patient LD unit	Dr Anusha Wijeratne	NW9 9QY
Harrow Community LD Team	Community LD team	Vacant post	HA1 2XY
Hillingdon Community Team	Community LD team	Dr Saadia Arshad	UB8 3NN
Westminster Learning Disability Partnership	Community LD team	Dr Ingrid Bohnen	NW8 8LW
Camden Learning Disabilities Service	Community LD team	Professor Angela Hassiotis	N1C 4AG
Haringey Community LD Partnership	Community LD team	Dr Bhatika Perera	N22 7SJ
North London Community Forensic LD Team	Community Forensic LD Team	Dr Alex Acosta-Armas	EN2 8JL
Hackney Learning Disabilities Team	Community LD team	Dr Laura Checkley Dr Ian Hall	E8 1DY
John Howard Centre	In-patient forensic LD service	Dr Sanjay Nelson	E9 5TD
Tower Hamlets Community Learning Disability Service	Community LD team	Dr Nicole Eady	E1 4DG
Newham Community Learning Disability Service	Community LD team	Dr Deirdre O'Brady	E15 4EA
Goodmayes Hospital	Moore Ward inpatient care & hospital liaison	Dr Shazia Zahid and Dr Bini Thomas	IG3 8XJ



Training opportunities

The scheme allows trainees to achieve all aspects of the specialty training curriculum defined by the Royal College of Psychiatrists, thereby becoming confident and competent independent practitioners ready to take-up a consultant post. Rotations include posts in community teams, as well as specialised in-patient work and a range of special interest sessions that can be adapted to meet individual needs.

Weekly clinical supervision is provided by a clinical supervisor and trainees are assigned an educational supervisor who they will meet regularly over the course of their training. All supervisors have an annual educational appraisal and meet the competencies outlined in the Professional Development Framework for Supervisors.

In addition to core clinical work, the scheme also offers opportunities to develop leadership and management skills by becoming involved in service evaluation and development initiatives and accessing the range of clinical governance activities that are available locally.

Further information about the curriculum can be accessed via this link:

<https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/training/curricula-and-guidance/curricula-review-project/curricula-implementation/draft-higher-specialty-curricula-2022>

On-call duties

Trainees are included on the general adult psychiatry on-call rota in the region where they work. Many on-calls are non-residential; during such shifts, trainees are based within one hour's travel of hospitals within one area of a Trust. On-call duties include supervision of junior colleagues, emergency Mental Health Act assessments, and occasionally assessment of people in police stations. In addition, some Trusts may ask the on-call Higher Trainee to conduct a weekend ward round. There is consultant cover for all on-calls.

Special interest Sessions

Trainees can undertake up to 2PA Special Interest Sessions each week (or part-time equivalent). Several special interest sessions are available within the scheme and cover a diverse range of subjects. Trainees are also able to arrange their own special interest sessions outside north London, if desired. Proximity to Great Ormond Street Hospital and the National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery (Queen's Square) offers the possibility of highly specialist placements in clinical genetics, neurodevelopmental disorders, epilepsy, and neuropsychiatry.

Examples of special interests pursued by trainees in recent years include:

- ADHD specialist clinic
- Autism assessment service
- CAMHS-LD
- National Deaf Service
- Forensic aspects of Intellectual Disability Psychiatry
- Complex and challenging behaviour service
- Epilepsy
- Neuropsychiatry
- Old age / memory service
- Clinical genetics clinic
- Medical Education

Research opportunities

Several senior clinicians on the scheme have a background in psychiatric research and active research interests. Professor Angela Hassiotis and Dr Afia Ali are clinical academics based at the Division of Psychiatry, University College London (UCL) and can support trainees who wish to undertake research as part of their career.

The MSc in Mental Health Sciences Research at UCL is a popular choice for trainees and offers the chance to gain a formal qualification in psychiatric research whilst completing an original research project under the supervision of experienced clinical academics.

Trainees interested in pursuing an academic career have been supported to become Academic Clinical Fellows. Several trainees have been successful in completing PhDs and gaining MRC Research Fellowships. For example:

“As an academic trainee on the scheme, I’m affiliated with University College London where the opportunities for research span basic laboratory science to applied clinical projects. Under the supervision of leaders in the field I’ve researched psychotropic prescribing in people with intellectual disability and the provision of care in hospital settings in projects that have had national impact.

My clinical trainers have always been very supportive of my work at UCL and given me flexibility that has allowed me to develop clinical and academic competencies. The scope for future research in our specialty is vast. Several trainees have completed higher research degrees and I would recommend the scheme to anyone who is considering a career in academic psychiatry.”

Dr Rory Sheehan, academic clinical fellow

Teaching opportunities

There are a wide variety of teaching opportunities available on the scheme. Many of the posts on the North London scheme receive medical students from Barts and the London, Imperial College and University College London medical schools. Trainees may be involved in delivering seminars and lectures at London medical schools.

Trainees also can study for formal teaching qualifications such as the Certificate in Learning and Teaching at Queen Mary, University of London, which is provided free for those involved in teaching at Barts and the London medical school.

Additionally, trainees have been involved in the design and delivery of many other teaching programs to other groups such as teaching to peers, junior colleagues, and the wider multidisciplinary team.

ID psychiatry academic programme

The academic programme for the scheme runs for a full day on the second Monday of each month, alternating between the Kingswood Centre in Kingsbury and St Bartholomew's Hospital in the City of London. The programme is well-attended by consultants and juniors from across the region.

(During the pandemic, the academic programme switched to Zoom, and the plan is to return to the usual format when permitted)

Trainees contribute to the programme which comprises lectures by internal and external speakers, case presentations, journal clubs, quality improvement presentations, workshops and more. The content of the academic programme is formally mapped to the speciality training curriculum. SIM training designed has recently been incorporated in the programme.

Training committee

The training committee is a forum where issues relating to the scheme are discussed. The committee meets every 3 months and includes all higher trainees (led by a trainee representative) and educational and clinical supervisors

London Postgraduate Medical and Dental Education

London Postgraduate Medical and Dental Education (LPMDE, formerly the London Deanery) has overall responsibility for doctors in training across London. Trainees on the North London Higher Training Scheme in Psychiatry of Intellectual Disability have access to the professional development opportunities provided by LPMDE, including the careers unit, coaching, and mentoring schemes. <http://www.lpmde.ac.uk/>

Feedback from recent trainees:

A career in psychiatry of intellectual disability is like no other. As well as being fascinating, rewarding and stimulating, you become an advocate for the most vulnerable in society. Every day is a chance to make a real difference. I chose to do my specialty training in North London where I have met the most inspiring patients and staff. There are numerous training opportunities and I was supported to complete an MSc in Mental Health Sciences Research alongside my clinical role. I have also been able to take time Out of Programme in Medical Education which has led me to becoming involved in undergraduate and postgraduate teaching. This has enabled me to grow as a doctor, academic and leader. I highly recommend this scheme to anyone interested in clinical or academic psychiatry of intellectual disability.

Dr Sonya Rudra, ST5 trainee and Medical Education Fellow (ELFT)

“During my first year I have had many opportunities to develop other areas of interest, such as organising the pan-London Psychiatry of Intellectual Disabilities Conference, I’ve taken part in research and presented at an international conference, and I’ve been encouraged to pursue other interests such as using my special interest time to work with an Autism Assessment service.

I am currently on an Out of Programme Experience and doing a Darzi Fellowship in Clinical Leadership. From the moment I expressed interest in the fellowship I received an overwhelming amount of support, various consultants made themselves readily available in their free time to help me prepare for the interview and my clinical supervisor intervened to ensure I had time off for the interview as I was scheduled for resident night on calls on the day of my interview. When I was successful with my application the programme directors again made it very easy for me with the out of programme application. While I am thoroughly enjoying this opportunity, I am also very excited to re-join the scheme in September.

From my experience of the cohort of consultants in North London, they are extremely approachable, incredibly enthusiastic, although I think most importantly, especially supportive of their trainees and colleagues in general, which is a joy to see and be part of.

I would highly recommend the North London training programme for all the reasons listed above and many more! If you would like to hear more from a trainee perspective, please do not hesitate to contact me.”

Dr David Prior, ST5 trainee and Darzi Fellow

As a higher trainee within the North London Psychiatry of Intellectual Disability scheme, it has been a genuine pleasure to be able to work within this dynamic subspeciality. I had initially completed a 6-month core training post in an inpatient intellectual disability unit and was astounded by the care and dedication displayed by the clinical team towards their patients. This positive placement provided me with the steppingstone to venture further into this rewarding and fulfilling job. Other various roles available to trainees involve community services, forensics, liaison, and there is even something for those who have an interest in politics!

I have been involved in many opportunities which include organising annual trainee conferences, being a local trainee representative, presenting quality improvement projects at international conferences, delivering structured teaching to peers & medical students and research.

The nature of the clinical work attracts those who are people-centred, interested in the difficulties faced by the patient and challenges involving wider societal issues as well. The consultants and tutors provide a lot of encouragement and a wealth of insight. The level of clinical and educational support received is highly valuable and is tailored to each trainees' career development.

There certainly is a good work-life balance and there is encouragement for trainees to take time out to pursue other interests. I have felt valued as a trainee and an individual throughout each phase of my training. This in turn continually drives me to aspire delivering the highest standard quality of care and dedication in all that I do.

Dr Mervyn Yong, ST6 trainee



Please get in touch with our current trainees who are happy to share their experiences of training. The TPD's can organise this.

Application process

Application for the scheme is via the National Recruitment process and is coordinated by the North Western Deanery, Health Education North West. There are usually two recruitment rounds each year.

For further information about the training scheme please contact:

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