

## **Bexley**

### **Bexley GP Training Programme**

Hockenden Education Centre  
Queen Mary's Hospital  
Frognal Avenue Sidcup  
Kent  
DA14 6LT

Our training practices are predominantly in the borough of Bexley

**Half Day Release:** Wednesday afternoon

**GP Training Programme Website:** <https://bexleygpvts.org.uk/>

### **Description of scheme**

The Bexley GP specialist training scheme is well-established and close to the Kent countryside but within 20 minutes of central London, 2 hours from Calais and close to Bluewater shopping centre. With the advent of Crossrail, Bond Street will soon be less than half an hour away. Currently there are exciting job opportunities in well-established practices in the borough of Bexley.

The scheme is three years long, with 12 months in hospital posts at Queen Mary's Hospital, Sidcup, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Woolwich, The Princess Royal University Hospital, Bromley and Darent Valley Hospital, Kent.

We aim to provide an excellent range of experience and training with a minimum of 24 months in General Practice and 12 months in a variety of 4 month hospital jobs in a wide range of specialties.

All our programmes aim to offer experience in:

- Child health
- Psychiatry
- Women's health

as we understand the value of gaining first-hand experience in these specialities as you prepare for a career in General Practice.

There are some more unusual placements:

- Elderly mental health
- Ophthalmology
- MSK

These posts have received highly positive feedback from previous registrars.

Finally, during the general practice placements in years 1 or 2, there are secondments to either:

- Palliative care,
- Public health
- Sexual health
- Community paediatrics
- Federation and Training Hub

These posts were introduced into the scheme to reflect a move to more community focused service.

All GP registrars meet at our weekly half-day-release seminars during academic term times. These afternoons are an opportunity to meet up with your peers and learn together, often refocusing on the tenets of General Practice. We are a relatively small VTS so you are never just a face but a valued member of the group.

We have a large team of well-established talented trainers practicing throughout the area who have a broad breadth of experience and knowledge. We aim to be thought provoking, stimulating, supportive and fun while providing a base for exceptional training in General Practice.

## Location

Hockenden Education Centre, Queen Mary's Hospital, Sidcup, Kent DA14 6LT.  
Some sessions have been successfully run remotely during the Pandemic.

## Posts

The Bexley GP Training Scheme is constructed from the following posts, and placements in GP training practices:

- A & E
- Urgent care centre
- Geriatrics Medicine
- Elderly mental health
- Medicine including acute medical assessment
- Obstetrics & Gynaecology
- Ophthalmology
- Musculoskeletal Service
- Paediatrics including community paediatrics
- Psychiatry including community psychiatry
- Public Health
- Palliative Care
- Sexual Health
- Federation and Training Hub

## Educational Activities

Doctors on the GP training scheme have protected learning time on Wednesday afternoons when they meet at Queen Mary's Hospital for a planned educational programme which is generated by the GP Trainees. The Syllabus and Core Competencies required to complete training are covered in novel and learner directed ways. All specialist trainees are encouraged to attend, helping to develop a sense of belonging to the scheme and keep in focus the career

goal of general practice. We also have termly 'Away days' when we cover more meaty topics and team build.

Study leave is planned as trainees begin each job and DRCOG, DCH, DFFP are all readily achievable. We have a very good graduation and MRCGP pass rate.

The Programme of Education is run by 3 experienced and enthusiastic Programme Directors.

## Highlights

At Bexley VTS we try to promote and allow time for faster cohesion of the working group dynamic and team building.

Though we encourage a personal, learner-centred approach to professional development, the importance of the 'group' for learning with, and from, is recognized. Mentoring and peer support are an essential foundation to achieve this goal: peer support generated in this group can be invaluable, during training and in the future. By giving our trainees time for open discussion and "sounding off", and encouraging social events we hope to foster team working and a sense of "belonging".

Currently we have several trainees representing on local and national committees.

As programme directors, we ensure that teaching and learning is delivered in a variety of ways. For example, we may ask external speakers to teach on topics chosen by the group with a Q&A or case-based session often included as part of the process. We have used the Humanities to explore themes of medical ethics and communication e.g. film clips, trips to the theatre and literature; we have a 'book group'. The programme stimulates active participation from the group encouraging skills in teaching, presenting and facilitating group discussion.

In summary, the Bexley vocational training scheme equips future GPs with the tools to enjoy a successful and fulfilled lifetime in General Practice and we make this journey as fun and interesting as possible.

There has been a good retention rate in Bexley with many registrars going on to salaried or partnership positions in the borough. There is a close relationship with Bexley CCG with many trainers taking an active management role and registrars seeking to bolster these skills will have that opportunity.

## Contacts

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