

Managing February 2021 Rotations for London organisations

As a result of the current COVID surge and the unique challenges this has resulted in across London, Health Education England (HEE) London has taken the decision to “pause” the rotation of all HEE trainees due to rotate in February 2021 for a period of 4 weeks to support both the delivery of patient care and to protect maintain pastoral and wellbeing support of trainees.

This pause will involve all Postgraduate Medical and Dental trainees on HEE managed programmes and comes after considering all other options.

Background

Junior doctors have a crucial role in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic over the past year, going above and beyond across London to care for patients. The current COVID surge has resulted in significant challenges for provider organisations in the delivery of clinical care as well as significant impact on educational capacity to support Trust and local induction to ensure a safe transition for learners to their new placements and the potential wider effects on the public of having a lot of people moving around. In addition, a significant number of trainees are already redeployed to COVID facing activity/rotas.

HEE London has made this difficult decision with patient safety and learner well-being at the forefront of considerations and it was also clearly important to take into account the circumstances in London and the need to minimise people’s movements wherever possible to limit risk of transmission. A rotation pause will allow time for the London system to become less pressured, allowing providers some capacity to facilitate appropriate induction and new starter arrangements as well as making sure that learners current arrangements for supervision, wellbeing and work disrupted as little as possible.

The Postgraduate Deans have engaged with Trust Chief Executives, Medical Directors, Directors of Medical Education (DMEs) and Medical Education Managers (MEMs) who are supportive of this pause. Further work has taken place with London Regional NHS England & Improvement colleagues. The BMA London junior doctor committee representatives engaged in the process to ensure the wellbeing of needs of trainees are central to this process and so any concerns can be resolved.

It should be noted that this is a “rotation pause” and that education and training will continue.

Process

All 3291 trainee rotations will be paused until Wednesday 3rd March 2021.

HEE acknowledge that there will be exceptional reasons where a rotation in February 2021 will be necessary for an individual trainee. Examples of these exceptions are outlined in the appendix to this letter along with the route for escalation.

The situation will be reviewed regularly in collaboration with the BMA and NHS E&I throughout February; however, it is anticipated that this pause will last no longer than 4 weeks.

The 212 new starters to programmes will go ahead and be managed on an individual basis between DME/Medical HR departments and the Healthcare Education Team at HEE.

Trainees that are currently due to rotate to a neighbouring deanery as part of their rotation are included in this pause. Please refer to the exceptions document.

Webinars

The Postgraduate Deans and HET will be running two Webinars, one for trainees (with support from the BMA) and one for educators

Educator Webinar: Thursday 14th January 2021 between 18:30 and 19:30

Trainee Webinar: Wednesday 20th January 2021 between 18:00 and 19:00

Details of the webinars will be circulated in due course.

We recognise the disappointment and anxiety that this may cause in our trainees and educational faculties, we hope that the reasons behind the decision remain transparent and focussed on the well-being of learners and your role in the delivery of patient care during this challenging time for provider organisations.

Wellbeing

Should any trainees wish to access health and wellbeing support, every trust should have local provision. All doctors and medical students can access counselling and peer support via [The Professional Support Unit \(PSU\)](#) and the BMA at <https://www.bma.org.uk/advice-and-support/your-wellbeing>

Postgraduate Deans

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February 2021 Rotation Pause Exception Guidance

This document outlines where there may be valid personal or educational reasons that would necessitate a February 2021 rotation continuing for an individual trainee.

Process

In the event that a trainee considers themselves in any of the below categories to be eligible for consideration of an exception to a rotation pause, they should discuss in the first instance with their TPD for an initial discussion.

Where the TPD supports the trainee's position this request should be agreed with the relevant Head of School. Where agreement cannot be reached then the request should be forwarded to the Postgraduate Dean aligned to the geography of the paused rotation placement. For trainees in KSS managed programmes please forward these to Geeta Menon and for East of England Managed programmes to Gary Wares.

The decision of the Postgraduate Dean is final and due to the timescales involved, there is no right of appeal.

The Healthcare Education Team will maintain a record of requests and outcomes for future scrutiny and assurance.

Trainee related reasons

Statutory considerations

Where a rotation in February 2021 was being planned for one (or more) of the following reasons:

- To accommodate a personal physical or mental health condition
- To support primary carer responsibilities
- To support parental responsibilities

Non-statutory

- Where a trainee had an OOPC application approved for the circumstances outlined above
- Where a trainee has made significant changes to accommodation arrangements to support a February 2021 rotation where a rotation pause cannot be accommodated via existing excess mileage claims processes or the trainee can document that travel from the new accommodation to the paused placement cannot be undertaken via reasonable routes.

Trainee wellbeing

- Where a trainee is supported by the relevant Training Programme Director (TPD) and demonstrates that a rotation pause will have significant detriment to the mental or physical health of the trainee. Where appropriate it would be expected that this category would be supported by the appropriate occupational health or GP recommendations.

Educational or training reasons

In exceptional circumstances there may be reasons where a trainee is required to rotate in February 2021 to achieve the necessary curriculum aligned experience via a placement due in February 2021. The following conditions should apply:

- That the curriculum aligned experience, as defined in the relevant curriculum, cannot be obtained in the placement that is subject to the rotation pause and there are arrangements in place already for the next rotation to take these into account.
- That a pause in rotation cannot be managed via existing Annual Review Competency Progression (ARCP) 10.2 and 10.2 derogations which are currently extended to September 2021 minimum
- Confirmation that the curriculum aligned experience is available to the trainee despite redeployments and reduction in service in the placement due to commence in February 2021.
- Where a trainee was due to commence an Academic Clinical Fellow/Clinical Lecturer programme placement and the relevant academic activity is available
- Where the trainee is taking up their first placement in a programme where recruitment (or deferral) has been arranged for a February 2021 start which will include Inter Deanery transfers
- Where a trainee is due to commence in an approved Out of Programme (OOPT/OOPP) arrangement and there is evidence that the relevant academic or other activity is available to the trainee during the period of the rotation pause

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