

Guy's and St Thomas' VTS

Guy's and St Thomas' (GSTT) GP Training Programme

Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust
Guy's Hospital
Great Maze Pond
London
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Half Day Release: Tuesday (at the Sherman Centre at Guy's Hospital)

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Introduction to scheme

Our VTS is a creative, innovative, highly regarded GP training scheme based in Southwark and Lambeth. The scheme is highly rated by current and past trainees for the experiences they gain in innovative posts and the supportive network of peers they develop throughout their training. For trainees the VTS is the thread that connects up all of their GP training, as well as offering regular opportunities for support and peer connections. The VTS is growing and currently has a community of just under 70 trainees and three Program Directors as well as Anne who is our admin support.

Posts

ST1s and ST2s usually do one year made up of 3x 4 month posts in hospital posts and the other year in GP with an innovative 6 month training post (ITP) as part of this time in GP. The ST3 year (GP registrar year) is spent in one practice within the Lambeth and Southwark area.

The hospital posts are mostly located in Guys + St Thomas' Hospital. These posts range from Paediatrics at the Evelina Hospital, Sexual Health, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Community Psychiatry, Diabetes and Frailty, Stroke, General Medicine and A&E. We also have new posts in ENT, Dermatology and MSK which have been very well received. The GP based year involves 6 months of straight GP and 6 months in an Innovative Training post (ITP). We have some very exciting longstanding and new ITPs including the 'Homeless + Rootless' post which is based in Camberwell with a particular focus on Drug + Alcohol misuse and involves taking the RCGP Pt 1 Drugs + Alcohol Certificate Course. Others include a Palliative care ITP based in GP and in Guys Hospital Palliative Care Community team, a frailty ITP where trainees spend two days a week at the 'hospital at home service' and a GUM ITP involving two days a week working in local sexual health services which can include working towards the DSRH and/ or the LoC in Implants or IUCDs.

ST3s all work in GP practices in Southwark and Lambeth. We are very proud of our cohort of experienced trainers who offer high quality support and training.

The VTS sessions

The VTS take place in Sherman Centre, 4th floor, Guys Hospital every week from 2-5pm and is hosted by the three Program Directors. We meet 40 weeks per year. Trainees often say that the most valuable learning they do on the scheme was learnt through their peers and the space created by our meetings on Tuesday afternoons. The VTS invites outside speakers in, based on a trainee-led learning agenda. We also utilise in-house expertise from the PDs and VTS trainees. Integral to our approach is the use of reflective groups and peer support. The tea break is an essential time to make connections, hear about next posts and catch up with peers. We also recognise the value of being out of our usual working environment and how this can promote fresh ways of approaching familiar problems. To this end we hold several off site events each year ('Away days') which focus on a topic in more detail.

The Programme Directors (PDs)

There are 3 PDs, Fiona Watson, Sam Wessely and Jo McEwen, who are all GPs and Trainers who work or have worked in South London. While they are all available to all trainees, each PD has a specific responsibility to support one year group from start to finish. They offer teaching, pastoral and administrative support to trainees on the VTS.

Innovations

Interprofessional Reflective Practice Project (IRPP). We have forged a training relationship with the Department of Psychology at City University, who have provided trainees from the Doctorate of Counselling Psychology course to facilitate reflective groups for GSTT GP trainees. The objective is to see how their approach can lead to new insights into managing challenging clinical and professional encounters. The groups meet 6 times over the course of 12 months.

Interprofessional learning events. We have run events connecting with trainees from other parts of the NHS (eg Pharmacy trainees, Dental trainees, Psychology trainees) to learn from each other and foster better multidisciplinary working in the future.

Remotely run RCA practice sessions. We used a cohort of actors to be patients for a 10-minute consult for each trainee over the course of a morning. The recording of each consultation was then analysed by groups of trainees with PD support in the afternoon.

International collaboration. We have a connection with Radboud University in Nijmegen, Netherlands and have visited each other's training programmes. We hope post-COVID to re-visit them so trainees can learn how other countries train GPs and deliver healthcare.

Contacts

Admin and information

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