

St Georges GPSTS

Description of scheme

St. George's VTS is an established and popular scheme with an excellent educational reputation, based in a large London teaching Hospital in South West London.

Approximately 18 trainees start the scheme each year beginning a three-year rotation; generally including 2 GP attachments totalling 18 months, 6 months in the new GP community posts and the remaining 12 months in 3 hospital posts. The hospital posts are put together into well balanced rotations of specialties relevant to General Practice.

These include: A&E, Paediatrics, Care of the Elderly, Psychiatry, ENT, GUM, Care of the Elderly & Dermatology, General Medicine/ Endocrinology. The new GP Community (otherwise known as GP Plus posts) include Palliative Care, Neurodisability long term services, Older Persons Assessment and Liaison Service (Geriatrics), Psychiatry (Community via Single Point Access), Clinical experience in a Nursing Home and the Community Musculoskeletal Service.

GP placements are in a wide range of Training Practices across Wandsworth and North Merton, giving trainees the opportunity to experience a diverse range of General Practice that will equip them for their future practice. Each year Trainee Reps are elected who help to facilitate the running of the scheme and ensure there are social events arranged throughout the year.

St George's VTS aims:

- To make the course both enjoyable and educationally valuable using adult learning principles.
- To ensure good coverage of the RCGP curriculum and speakers are invited based upon the wishes of the trainees.
- To develop a supportive peer community by providing a comfortable, safe educational environment in which trainees feel able to express and share their views and opinions. We encourage this in both large group teaching or small group discussion.
- To develop good communication and consulting skills.
- To encourage trainees to reflect on their learning and their own practice.
- To encourage trainees to become aware of wider important issues in general practice such as professionalism and managing uncertainty.
- To expose trainees to a variety of opinions and views from their peers and other colleagues so that they are aware of alternative viewpoints.
- To equip trainees with the knowledge and skills to pass MRCGP.
- To encourage life-long learning.

Location

Thursday afternoon VTS teaching is based at the Postgraduate Medical Education Centre, St George's University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Blackshaw Road, London, SW17 0QT. During the pandemic it has been run via Microsoft teams.

Educational Activities

The course currently runs over three terms of approximately 10 weeks each. When face to face, trainees are encouraged to join us for lunch from 1pm each Thursday, with the session starting at 2pm. The early part of the afternoon focuses on an identified topic from the RCGP Curriculum for GP training, and can be in the format of Multidisciplinary & inter-professional learning, lectures or interactive workshops. The educational content evolves depending on curriculum changes, the changing face of General Practice and learner needs. Trainees are encouraged to be actively involved in the development and content of the scheme. We actively include sessions which consider issues around professionalism, transition into independent practice and an understanding of the wider issues within the NHS. We encourage participation in allied GP organisations in which trainees can also contribute.

Trainee led sessions are held generally once per half term and these are consistently high quality and well organised by the group. We usually have small group work from 4-5pm which is learner led but facilitated by course organisers. The last session of term often involves a humanities or other educational outing to great central London venues.

We make the most of every opportunity for Away Days. These provide the opportunity for more focus on elements of communication and consultation skills, together with life after training skills for those nearing completion of the scheme.

Highlights

Recent course evaluation following the GMC Survey has confirmed that the scheme is valued for its educational content and is a stimulating and enjoyable course.

Our Away Days are always rated highly by the trainees for both educational input as well as developing peer support.

We encourage small learning groups to work closely together to study for the MRCGP in particular when preparing for the CSA.

We actively encourage trainees to be involved in additional activities such as RCGP and HEE committees, and our trainees are involved with Learning Together projects with other specialities.

Our base in a major London teaching hospital provides excellent opportunities for keeping up to date with current best practice, with high quality teaching from excellent specialists.

The local trainers are enthusiastic and committed. They work closely with the scheme to ensure all aspects of the curriculum are covered and our trainer- trainee meetings are lively and supportive.

As a result, the St Georges VTS provides the opportunity for each trainee to develop into an autonomous, resilient and skilled General Practitioner.

Trainee feedback

“Friendly, well structured and unique teaching with mixed year groups making training interactive, multi-skilled and fun. Excellent rotations and training opportunities within a diverse community.”

“A wonderfully supportive VTS scheme that values regular social interaction between trainees and professional interaction with Programme Directors who are amazingly supportive. A thoroughly recommended scheme!”

Website

<https://www.stgeorges.nhs.uk/education-and-research/education/gp-specialist-trainees/>

Link person

Dr Isba Javed - isba.javed@nhs.net

Programme Directors

Dr Isba Javed

Dr Aryan Jogiya

Admin

GPSTS@stgeorges.nhs.uk