

## Foundation Programme Review Recommendation 14

### Intended uses of 'self-development time' (SDT)

Recommendation 14 of the Foundation Programme Review report states:  
**'HEE will work with key stakeholders to assess how Foundation doctors can be given time in the working week for professional self-development ('self-development time')**

The text of the review report adds the following further detail:

- FY1s should have one hour per week of non-clinical professional self-development time in their work schedule. This could be delivered as a block – for example four hours once per month and coordinated to match the availability of their supervisors.
- FY2s should have three hours per week of non-clinical professional self-development time. This will include time for preparing for specialty application as well as developing skills in quality improvement, teaching and leadership.
- The use of this time should be discussed with the educational supervisor and the outcome recorded in the eportfolio.

From August 2020 we asked all English trusts with foundation doctors to include self-development time in the work schedules of foundation year two (FY2) and then if possible for foundation year one (FY1) doctors. FY2 doctors were required to have a minimum of two hours per week self-development time. FY1 doctors were to have a minimum of one hour although not mandatory. After evaluating the first year of this scheme listening to feedback from trainees themselves and the system it has been determined that **from August 2021 all FY1 and FY2 doctors will have a minimum of 2 hours per week on average of SDT time.** The implementation of this has been planned with the wellbeing of doctors in mind, but also with the demands that are being placed upon service provision in mind.

'Self-development time' is to be used for non-clinical activities which foundation doctors must carry out, in order to successfully develop as a doctor and complete foundation training, but which are not best suited to completion within the clinical environment during day-to-day clinical working. It is also vital to note the following points:

- Foundation doctors are being paid for SDT
- It is NOT extra time off, and Foundation doctors cannot do locum shifts when they are rostered to be on SDT (this would mean they're being paid twice for the same time; this will be considered fraud)
- In the current context, if Foundation doctors have nothing to do during their SDT, we believe that it would be professional to report to your department to do clinical work

The following are examples of intended uses of this 'self-development time':

#### **Formal meetings with Educational Supervisor (ES) and named Clinical Supervisors (CS)**

Foundation doctors must meet with both their ES and CS at the beginning and end of each post, in addition mid-point meetings with these supervisors are recommended but not mandated. The ES and CS should already have job-planned Supporting Professional Activity (SPA) time for carrying out the supervisory role, which can be used for these meetings, but foundation doctors informed the review they rarely have time in their work schedule for these and can therefore sometimes struggle to arrange the meetings, with them often happening before or after shifts. Self-development time for Foundation doctors would allow mutually convenient times for meeting with their supervisors.

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### **Reflecting on their clinical practice and development needs**

Foundation doctors are expected to develop their skills as reflective practitioners. The Foundation Programme Curriculum and the GMC both emphasise the importance and necessity of doctors reflecting on their professional practice and clinical outcomes. The GMC, in 'The Reflective Practitioner', also states that time must be made available for self-reflection.

### **Use of the ePortfolio to record educational activities and development**

The ePortfolio is used to collate evidence which is used to assess whether the foundation doctor has achieved the standard required for progression and for revalidation. The foundation doctors must link evidence to the 20 Foundation Professional Capabilities in the syllabus, must record all formal educational activities, such as teaching attendance and structured learning events, and must record evidence of their reflections on their own practice. Foundation doctors are also expected to develop and regularly update and record personal development plans. Maintaining a comprehensive and contemporaneous ePortfolio requires a significant time input from the foundation doctor, which Foundation doctors told the Review was often their own non-work time.

### **Preparing and delivering teaching**

As well as attending teaching, foundation doctors are also expected to develop skills in preparing and delivering teaching, and to get feedback at least once per year, using the 'Developing the Clinical Teacher' assessment form, on a teaching session they have delivered.

### **Quality Improvement activity**

Foundation doctors are expected to be involved in QI work throughout FY1 and FY2. By the end of FY2 they need to have evidence of having contributed significantly to at least one quality improvement project including data collection, analysis and/or presentation of findings and implementation of recommendations.

### **Career exploration, decision making and applications**

During FY1 and particularly during FY2 foundation doctors need to be considering, exploring, preparing for and hopefully applying for post-foundation specialty training. Self-development time would give Foundation doctors the opportunity to reflect on career opportunities and discuss their intentions with senior doctors.

The introduction of 'self-development time' would support implementation of the recommendation from NHS Employers and the BMA, in the Good Rostering Guide (2018), that work schedules and rosters should include sufficient time for activities such as teaching and assessment, e-learning, quality improvement, and reflective practice.

## **Activities not intended to be carried out using 'self-development time'**

'Self-development' time is not intended to replace time already available in work schedules for foundation doctors to carry out other non-clinical activities such as:

- attending departmental or trust-delivered teaching programmes
- routine attendance at trust or departmental meetings, such as audit, quality improvement, morbidity & mortality or governance meetings
- taking study leave
- doing taster days / sessions to gain insights into potential career options
- attending induction programmes for trusts or departments
- completing trust mandatory training, for example fire safety or information governance.