

Ensuring that training is not one step forward then two steps back

Sir,

The transition from one training grade to the next should signal excitement and increased responsibility. It can therefore be upsetting when this transition leads to a role with less responsibility. This 'one step forward but two steps back' phenomenon is not unfamiliar to trainees as they move to new NHS trusts. It may occur when there is a wide range of training grades on the same rota, for example, a senior house officer rota incorporating foundation year 2 (FY2) and core trainee 2 (CT2) doctors. The competencies required of FY2s differ to those of CT1s or CT2s. Rotas in these situations may cater to the more junior trainee, leaving the senior trainee feeling unchallenged.

Job satisfaction has been directly linked by NHS trainees to workplace learning (Iliopoulos et al, 2018); and with low morale among NHS trainees a recognized

problem (Health Education England, 2017), it is important that trainees feel fulfilled in their roles.

Constructing targeted environments that provide appropriate levels of responsibility to the trainee occurs best when trainees are on a rota which includes a narrower range of training grades. In such an environment for example, a CT2 may learn to better make the transition to specialist trainee level, or a new FY2 can be given slightly more responsibility than an FY1 which would be more beneficial to training. Training programme directors should pay careful attention to how rotas are constructed and ensure that NHS trusts foster targeted development of trainees, so that they take continual steps forward (without stepping back).

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