

PUBLIC HEALTH TRAINING FOR NEWLY QUALIFIED GENERAL PRACTITIONERS

BACKGROUND

Public health is concerned with the health of a population rather than individuals. It has been defined as ‘the science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting, protecting and improving health through the organised efforts of society’. It is about preventing ill health and promoting wellbeing, not just dealing with illness, and looks at the impact on health of social, economic, political and environmental factors as well as individual behaviour.

The work of a family doctor is determined by the make-up of the community in which their practice is based. Clinicians therefore need to understand the potentials and limitations of the community in which they work and its character in terms of socio-economic and health features. There has always been a tension between the needs of individual patients and the needs of the wider community. This tension is becoming more pronounced as resources for health and social care are increasingly constrained. Healthcare systems are being rationed in all societies and doctors are inevitably involved in difficult rationing decisions. The purpose of this programme is to better equip newly qualified GPs to influence health policy in their community and to work with patients and carers whose needs are not being met.

AIMS OF THE PROGRAMME

This training programme aims to provide a newly qualified General Practitioner with knowledge and skills in public health. This forms part of a wider aim to recruit and retain GPs in County Durham. The participants will be employed by the CCG with a contract that offers an optional attachment to the Durham County Council public health team. The participant will be working on the public health component of their contract for one day per week for 2 years.

CONTENT OF THE CURRICULUM

The curriculum for the programme is based on the Faculty of Public Health (FPH) Training Curriculum 2015. It covers key areas of competence that relate to the three domains of public health practice (health protection, health improvement and health and care public health). The FPH curriculum has been adapted to be more applicable to the role of a primary care clinician.

The curriculum covers seven key areas of competency in public health knowledge and practice. Each key area has an overall aim and specific learning outcomes. The key areas are:

- Use of public health intelligence to survey and assess a population’s health and wellbeing
- Assessing the evidence of effectiveness of interventions, programmes and services intended to improve the health or wellbeing of individuals or populations
- Clinical policy development and implementation
- Leadership and collaborative working
- Health improvement
- Health protection
- Healthcare public health

The curriculum will build on the knowledge and skills developed in training as a General Practitioner. In particular this programme will enhance the GPs area of capability in caring for the whole person and the wider community (community oriented primary care). Community oriented primary care is about the management of the health and social care of the local population. It includes understanding the need to build on community engagement and resilience and the relationship between family and community-based interventions, as well as the global and multi-cultural aspects of delivering evidence-based, sustainable healthcare.

EDUCATIONAL MODEL

The curriculum is designed to cover the learning outcomes for the key areas through the following stages:

- Knows - tutorials and selected reading
- Knows how - shadowing and briefings
- Shows how - contributes to projects and produces papers
- Does - research, design, implementation and communication of a project

The programme will be phased in such a way that in the beginning there will be a greater emphasis on tutorials, shadowing, self-directed learning and background reading. The programme will then progress toward more supervised project work leading up to the participant researching, designing, implementing and communicating one or more specific pieces of work.

SUPERVISION

The educational supervisor will be Dr Mike Lavender. This role involves overall responsibility for the programme, reporting to the Director of Public Health and the CCG Medical Directors on progress. The educational supervisor will meet regularly with the participants to review their progress toward agreed learning outcomes. Specific pieces of work will be overseen by senior members of the public health team as project supervisors.

SETTING

Initially this will be with the public health team at County Hall. After this initial phase is complete the participant will spend more time within their practice, working with the GP Federations, alongside colleagues in the CCG as well as time with their project and educational supervisor in public health.

ASSESSMENT

This will entail a combination of:

- Direct observation
- Case-based discussion
- Written reports
- Logbook of evidence toward learning outcomes

TIMESCALE

The programme can start in April 2017.

GOVERNANCE

This programme forms part of the 'Core Offer' of public health support for CCGs. This will need an amendment to the Memorandum of Understanding between the CCGs and public health to be approved by the CCG Boards and the Director of Public Health.

APPENDICES

- Amendment to the Memorandum of Understanding
- Curriculum
- Logbook