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Date: 16th March 2020
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Dear Trainee,

As you will all be aware from the extensive media and social media coverage, we are now starting to experience the impact of COVID-19 on our NHS Healthcare systems. Many of you will already have seen and perhaps participated in the preparation and contingency planning.

NHS Education for Scotland (NES), including the Scotland Deanery, have been working extensively over the past few weeks to consider the impact on medical education and training and to mitigate where possible for you as our valued trainees.

These are unprecedented times, however I wish to emphasise that we are working extremely closely with the other Statutory Education Bodies (HEE, HEIW and NIMDTA), the General Medical Council, Medical Royal Colleges, Universities and our NHS Healthcare providers to make the most appropriate decisions in face of this situation, and to ensure patient and trainee safety is not compromised.

We will endeavour to keep you well informed over the coming weeks. You will have been circulated last week with the position statement from the 4 Statutory Education Bodies in collaboration with the GMC regarding guiding principles should we need to **redeploy trainees to areas of clinical need**. Although all doctors will be within scope for redeployment, it would be anticipated that specialties stopping elective activity eg surgical disciplines, would be called upon first to help out in other clinical areas. We are also looking at how we can utilise those doctors currently Out Of Programme (OOP) to return to clinical practice and will contact these trainees directly.

Enclosed with this communication is a further position statement from the 4 UK Statutory Educational Bodies regarding our decision, and the rationale, to **pause all planned rotations in April**. We fully understand that this may create challenges for some, but during the expected COVID-19 surge period, it is vitally important that we consider the care of our patients and the population in general at this most critical of times.

Many of you will have questions about cancelled education courses, events and College examinations. You may also be wondering what will happen with ARCPs, recruitment and progression. These are all areas NES is considering in detail.



Chair: David Garbutt
Acting Chief Executive: Stewart Irvine

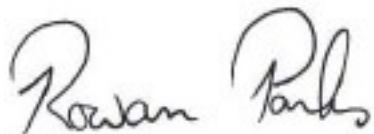
We have agreed that trainees should not be out of pocket by virtue of cancellation of study leave events. This will be reimbursed from the NES study leave budget, unless registration fees are expected to be reimbursed by the course provider. Trainees should not rebook attendances at such events for the foreseeable future.

It is recognised that COVID-19 could impact on anticipated learning and trainee progression. At present, we are in discussions with the other Statutory Education Bodies, the General Medical Council and the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges regarding recruitment, ARCPs and trainee progression. Our priority will be for those at key points of progression and we are determined to ensure the longer-term needs of doctors in training are not compromised.

We recognise that many of you will have questions and queries. Hopefully, some of these may be addressed by your Education Supervisor or Training Programme Director, but we have established a specific email for enquiries (deanerycovid-19enquiries@nes.scot.nhs.uk) and have a dedicated area of the Scotland Deanery website with relevant information (<https://www.scotlanddeanery.nhs.scot/covid-19/>). We will be planning to upload FAQs in due course. NES will continue to review the evolving situation on a daily basis and will provide further updates as required.

May I take this opportunity, on behalf of all those involved in postgraduate medical education & training in Scotland, to remind you that you are all highly skilled, very able individuals and will make a massive contribution to delivering the required healthcare to our population over the coming weeks and months. Please remember to follow the advice and guidance from Health Protection Scotland and do look after yourselves and those working with you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rowan Parks". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Professor Rowan Parks
Acting Medical Director
NHS Education for Scotland