CREATION OF A NEAR-PEER MENTORSHIP PROGRAMME TO IMPROVE SUPPORT FOR NEW DOCTORS

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Aim Medical leadership is recognised as an essential facet of clinical practice. However, there lacks standardised, sustainable training for postgraduate doctors particularly to support the transition from undergraduate medical student to Foundation Year 1 (FY1) doctor. Through the introduction of the Government Apprenticeship Scheme, NHS Trusts now have access to a ring-fenced budget, the Apprenticeship Levy, which can be used to provide a funded, vocationally based and nationally benchmarked training solution.

Methods In a partnership between the author, South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (STEEs) and a Registered Apprenticeship Training provider, the Foundation Leadership and Management (FLM) programme for FY1s was developed using the Apprenticeship curriculum standard. FLM consists of 12 leadership-themed modules which complement the FY1 clinical curriculum and results in a nationally recognised qualification allowing Associate Membership of both the Institute of Leadership and Management and the Chartered Management Institute. As a pilot, 38 FY1s were enrolled in December 2017. Their perception of preparedness for the leadership challenges of practice was gauged during FLM using questionnaires.

Results Reasons given by FY1s for participating centred on gaining support (20), advice (24) and insight from someone with recent experience (11). FY2s participated to help support colleagues (61), because they wished they had a mentor themselves (28), and due to interest in leadership and teaching (17). Rate of response to end of year feedback was 32/95 FY1s, 65/95 FY2s, 98% of feedback respondents reported making contact with their partner, and 82% met their partner in person. Major barriers to meeting included scheduling/rota conflicts and locational differences. Respondents felt peer mentors fulfilled a different role to the educational supervisor. FY1s overall felt more likely to turn to their mentor than educational supervisor for personal welfare support. 94% of respondents reported that having both peer mentor and educational supervisor was beneficial (29/32 FY1s; 62/65 FY2s). At the end of the year, 84.4% of responding FY1s felt ‘having a peer mentor helped [them] feel supported in the transition from medical student to FY1.’ 99% of feedback respondents felt the programme should continue.

Conclusions Near-peer mentorship enhances support for FY1 doctors. The programme was widely accepted and received positive reviews from participants.

REFERENCES