



GIG  
CYMRU  
NHS  
WALES

Addysg a Gwella Iechyd  
Cymru (AaGIC)  
Health Education and  
Improvement Wales (HEIW)

Dear colleagues

As the immediate pressures of the second wave settle and we collectively try to catch our breath for a few moments, I hope you don't mind me contacting you with a brief update on training. The challenges of the last 12 months have been enormous. You have all been an integral part of the response and will be for the recovery process and we are immensely proud of your contribution. Thank you!

Your voice has never been more important in shaping the future of postgraduate medical training and you will have an opportunity to be heard via the GMC national training survey which opened this week on 20 April. This is a hugely important and influential source of information so despite the fact that completing a survey is not likely to be high up on your priority list at the moment, please may I ask you to take the time to complete it. Can I also thank those of you who have used 'HEIW open' ([HEIW.Open@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:HEIW.Open@wales.nhs.uk)) during the last months to inform us of your concerns, enabling us to rapidly progress discussions with Health Board colleagues to ensure appropriate action is taken. Keep them coming!

Undoubtedly some of you will have concerns about the potential impact the last year has had on your own training progression. Some of you may be uncertain about your individual circumstances and with multiple derogations in place I understand that it can be confusing. I would ask each of you to scrutinise the relevant ARCP decision aids and liaise with your educational supervisor to discuss what competencies may be required before the forthcoming ARCPs and more importantly looking forward to the year beyond. Please take personal responsibility for understanding your own position and ask for input when uncertain.

For a small number of trainees it has not been possible to continue patient facing training during the pandemic. Not only have those individuals been unable to do clinical work but they have also lost that social contact which the rest of us have benefited from over the last year. I would like to reassure those individuals that we haven't forgotten about them and will work with Welsh Government, Public Health Wales and NHS employers to provide clarity about how and when they may be able to safely return to the workplace following the successful vaccine rollout.

Whilst I don't even want to raise the spectre of a possible third wave of COVID it is important we plan for all eventualities. The latest modelling seems to suggest this could occur sometime in the autumn, but thanks to the vaccination programme the peak may be much flatter than originally thought. Fingers crossed! If redeployment of trainees is needed in the future it is crucial that this is managed very carefully, protecting those who have been impacted the most. We are already working closely with Health Boards to plan for this and will share our guidance in the near future.

Finally, to finish on a positive note can I update you on the position in relation to study leave and annual leave. I can confirm that the terms in the attached statement from 2020 relating to annual leave still apply this year. The terms outlined in the 2020 statement for study leave personal allowance will also apply. Following a consultation process on study leave the favoured option by the majority of trainees was to enable roll over of unused personal study leave allowance for those

remaining in training in Wales. We believe we now have a mechanism in place to implement this on a long-term basis.

Thank you all once again for your individual and collective support. Look after yourselves and each other.

Dr Tom Lawson  
Postgraduate Medical Dean