

## GP TRAINERS – PLEASE PASS THIS NEWSLETTER TO YOUR GP SPECIALTY REGISTRARS

Welcome to the Spring/Summer 2009 edition of the GPC's GP Trainees subcommittee newsletter. We aim to keep you up to date with the issues affecting GP trainees, and the work that is being done on your behalf by the subcommittee.

## Elections for Membership of the GP Trainees subcommittee – your chance to get involved!

**Elections will be held this summer in all 19 of the subcommittee's regional constituencies.**

If you would like to get involved in the work of the subcommittee, and really make a difference to the lives of your fellow GP trainees, please consider standing for election.

Full details of the election can be found on the BMA website at

[www.bma.org.uk/gptraineeselections](http://www.bma.org.uk/gptraineeselections)

### Constituencies

Eastern	East Midlands
Kent, Surrey & Sussex	London, North
London, South	Mersey
North West	Northern
Northern Ireland	Oxford
Scotland (North)	Scotland (South East & East)
Scotland (West)	Severn
South West	Wales
Wessex	West Midlands
Yorkshire	

### Who is eligible to stand in this election?

- In order to be eligible to stand, you must be a doctor who is/ will be on the GP Training programme of a Deanery within the constituency at any point during the period 2 July 2009 and 30 June 2010.
- For the avoidance of doubt, this includes both F2 trainees who will enter GP training during the above period, and current GP Trainees who will complete their GP Training during the above period.
- You can stand in this election whether you are a BMA member or not.

### How to stand in this election

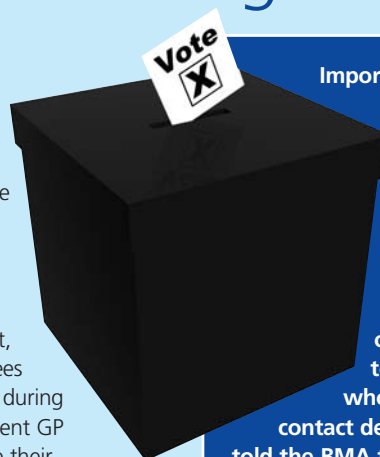
In order to stand in this election, download and complete the nomination form on the BMA website at

[www.bma.org.uk/gptraineeselections](http://www.bma.org.uk/gptraineeselections)

The closing date for the receipt of nominations is: **5pm, Friday 3rd July 2009.**

If you have any questions about the election, please contact Andy Young at

[ayoung@bma.org.uk](mailto:ayoung@bma.org.uk)



**Important – Register on the BMA website to make sure you can vote in this election!**

In every region where more than one candidate stands, we will hold an election.

**However, we can only send ballot papers to those doctors for whom we have up to date contact details and who have told the BMA that they are in a GP Training programme.**

We know that many GP Trainees haven't updated their details with the BMA recently, so to be sure that you receive a ballot paper, please take a couple of minutes to either register your details with the BMA, or to check that the information we hold about you is up to date. You can do this whether you are a BMA member or not. Please see the "We need your details" section on the final page of this newsletter for details about how to do this.

## Survey on GPStR Workload

Following the DDRB's recommendation that the GPStR supplement be cut again, to 45%, we are already planning next year's DDRB evidence. One of the ways in which the subcommittee plans to demonstrate the value of the supplement is to show the high intensity and complexity of the work that GPStRs carry out. In order to do this, we have just sent out a survey to a sample of GP trainees who have

worked, or are currently working in a general practice placement.

The survey aims to demonstrate the level of work that GP trainees actually carry out when in their general practice placements – for example, their level of responsibility for diagnosis and treatment, and how much supervision they receive when making decisions about these areas.

We need robust evidence to submit to the DDRB, and a high response rate would strengthen our case enormously. The evidence could be crucial in determining the future of the GPStR supplement, affecting both current and future GP trainees.

It is vitally important that you look out for the survey and return it as advised in the accompanying letter.

# Message from the Chairman



As ever the GP Trainees subcommittee has been working hard behind the scenes, mainly focussing on the DDRB report and the RCGP's plans for extending GP Training.

We were bitterly disappointed with the announcement of the further reduction in the GPStR supplement and are very aware of the problems this is causing, especially those who are in ST1 and those rotating in 4 month posts. The main obstacle that we have to tackle is that DDRB reports always compare us to hospital doctors, who work in a very different way and get paid according to their out of hours / on call time. The DDRB repeatedly see us as not working as hard as hospital doctors in a "total/type of hours" sense; we really need to prove why the GPStR supplement is justified and how different working in General Practice is. It is vital that we pull together on this for future GP trainees, as we are in real danger of constant erosion of the supplement.

We are also very aware of the problems facing trainees in gaining

employment post CCT and are actively working with the GPC to help promote solutions to this. The other issues we hear from you about are those around Out Of Hours slots and extended hours sessions – we are currently pulling together guidance for this and would welcome feedback on any specific problems that you might be having. Out of Hours and extended hours sessions are the reality of general practice as we know it, but we maintain that sessions in extended hours have to be undertaken within the limits of our 40 hour contract and the European Working Time Directive.

The GP Trainees subcommittee continues to be a very active committee which does most of its work through electronic communication and representation at other fora; it meets 4 times a year at BMA House, London. We primarily discuss contractual issues but also play a key role in the training and professional aspects of being a trainee; as the academic year is reaching its end many of the subcommittee members will be moving on and I would like to thank them all for their hard work and dedication to the committee over the past year. This does mean there will be vacancies arising from these seats and I would encourage any of you to consider standing for the positions in this year's elections; it is key to get representatives from the ST1, 2 and 3 years to provide a broad input into committee.

**Katie Maclaren, Chairman,  
GPC GP trainees subcommittee**

## Pay Changes From April 2009 *The 38th DDRB Report*

The 38th DDRB report was published in March 2009. Despite the BMA calling for the GP Specialty Registrar (GPStR) supplement to at least be retained at 50%, pointing to increased training and exam costs and the negative implications of a reduction for GP recruitment, the DDRB recommended that the supplement **be reduced from 50% to 45% for those GPSTRs entering general practice placements on or after 1 April 2009.**

We are disappointed with this recommendation, and are extremely concerned that continual erosion of the supplement will have a negative impact on recruitment at a time when the government is seeking to expand the number of GP trainees. We feel that the reduction in the supplement does not reflect the extremely hard work carried out by trainees in their general practice placements.

The DDRB has also recommended an increase of 1.5% to GPStR pay, in line with other doctors in training. This takes effect from 1 April 2009.

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## GP Workforce

We are aware of the current problems facing newly qualified GPs, such as GP underemployment, the lack of partnership opportunities and difficulties in achieving career progression. We strongly believe that a newly qualified GP should have the opportunity to follow the career path of their choice, be it as a salaried GP, locum GP or GP partner. In conjunction with the GPC, a group has been set up to look into GP workforce issues. The group has already met with representatives from the Department of Health and the NHS Workforce Review team in order to hear from the policy makers and tackle some of these issues. We are hoping to raise the profile of the plight of newly qualified GPs and promote choice, in order to alter the worrying trend of a lack of available GP partnership posts.

# Get Ahead:

## The Essential GP Trainee Skills Day

# START

For all those who are preparing for life as a GP, whether GP Trainees, Foundation Trainees or those who have recently completed GP training, the BMA's GP Trainees Subcommittee is organising an exciting one-day event to help you get ahead in the competitive GP job market. This is what the BMA does best and it will be a great opportunity for you to help prepare yourself for life as a working GP.

Taking place on Friday 10 July at BMA House in London, this one-stop Essential Skills Day aims to help you make the very most out of your training and preparation for life as a GP, from expert advice on presenting yourself to employers through your CV and interview to managing your finances in the early years of practice. There will be sessions on how to make the most out of your career choices and helping you to avoid the pitfalls of the journey ahead. This conference will equip you with vital know-how that you cannot afford to be without, and that you won't find anywhere else.

Registration fees are £95 for BMA members, and £155 for non-members. For further information and to book your place, please visit our website at [www.bma.org.uk/conferences](http://www.bma.org.uk/conferences) Please contact BMA Conferences on 020 7383 6137/6923 or by email at [confunit@bma.org.uk](mailto:confunit@bma.org.uk) if you have any questions.

# Review of GP Specialty Training



The Tooke Report, on the findings and recommendations of the independent inquiry into Modernising Medical Careers, recommended that GP training be extended to five years.

The Royal College of GPs were commissioned by the Department of Health to produce a business case for this extension. They have produced an interim report for the Department of Health, and plan to submit their final report shortly. They have a web page providing further information about this, which you can find at:

[www.rcgp.org.uk/gp\\_training/extended\\_GP\\_specialty\\_training.aspx](http://www.rcgp.org.uk/gp_training/extended_GP_specialty_training.aspx)

The BMA welcomes the proposal to extend training in principle as, if implemented properly, it could deliver significant benefits to GPs and patients in the increasingly complex environment of primary care.

However, we have several concerns regarding a number of areas including:

- the lack of a fully planned structure for the extra 2 years, leading to concerns that trainees will be allocated to unsupervised posts that are not of educational value to the individual trainee.
- the availability of trainers to meet the increased number of trainees in the system that the introduction of extended training entails.
- the availability of funding for trainers to ensure that additional training facilities can be developed.
- the level of remuneration available to trainees in the extended training years.

We have and continue to highlight these areas of concern to the RCGP. We will continue to monitor this immensely important issue very closely, and seek clarification on these areas before the plans can be fully supported.

## We Need Your Details!

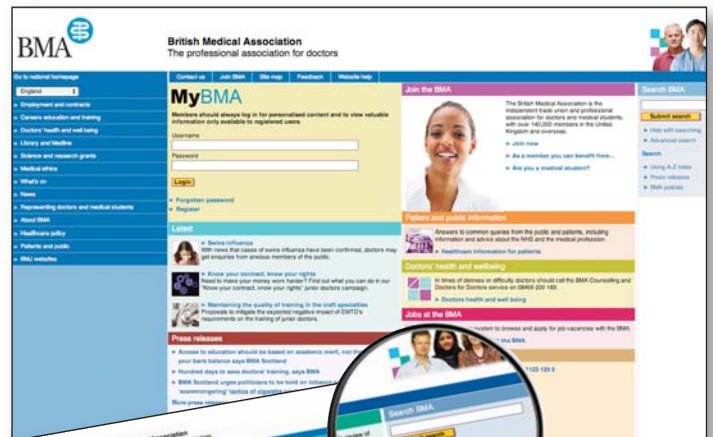
In order that you receive important information from us on issues affecting your life as a GP trainee, and so that you can **take part in our elections**, it is vital that you keep us up to date with your details, including your status as a GP trainee. There are a number of ways in which you can do this:

- You can visit the **BMA website**.
  - If you are already a registered member of the BMA website, log in, then click on “my details”.
  - If you are not a registered member of the BMA website, visit the homepage and click on “register”.
- You can e-mail the BMA's membership and professional records department at [membership@bma.org.uk](mailto:membership@bma.org.uk)
- You can telephone the BMA's membership and professional records department on **020 7383 6595**.

When letting us know about your GP trainee status, you should select the category “Specialty Registrar – GP (junior doctors)” if you are a GP trainee in a hospital placement or an F2 doctor about to enter a GP training programme, or select “Registrar GP (general practitioners)” if you are in your general practice placement. Unless you select one of these two categories, we will not be able to send you a ballot paper for our elections.

## Launch of the New BMA Website

The new BMA website was launched recently and as well as having a new design, it includes new features such as a much improved search facility and an increased targeting of information based on your branch of practice and the country that you work in. You can visit the website at <http://www.bma.org.uk>



## Need advice?

Contract problems and ambiguities are best resolved before employment commences, so we recommend that you carefully consider the implications of your contract before signing.

The GP trainee contract section of the BMA's website contains guidance on a wide range of issues, from detailed information about the Framework Contract to guidance on how to choose the right trainer for you. Please visit the website at:

[www.bma.org.uk/careers/training\\_trainers/gp\\_registrars/index.jsp](http://www.bma.org.uk/careers/training_trainers/gp_registrars/index.jsp)

The BMA are also able to advise BMA members directly on their individual contractual and employment issues. Contact the BMA on **0300 123 123 3** or e-mail [support@bma.org.uk](mailto:support@bma.org.uk).

### Contributions to the newsletter – we want to hear from you

If you have any issues that you would like to see included in future editions of this newsletter, or suggestions for the website, please contact Joe Read at [jread@bma.org.uk](mailto:jread@bma.org.uk)

Any correspondence for the subcommittee should be sent to Andy Young, GPC Secretariat, British Medical Association, BMA House, Tavistock Square, London, WC1H 9JP, or email: [ayoung@bma.org.uk](mailto:ayoung@bma.org.uk)

### Would you like to receive this newsletter by e-mail?

If you are a GP trainee, GP trainer, course organiser, postgraduate dean or work for a postgraduate centre, and would like to be added to our e-mailing list for future newsletters, please email [kday@bma.org.uk](mailto:kday@bma.org.uk) with your e-mail address and details of which of the above groups you belong to.