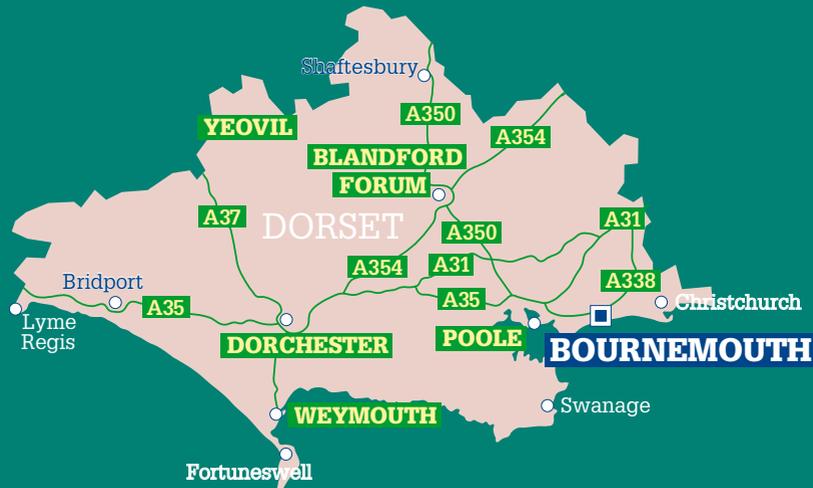
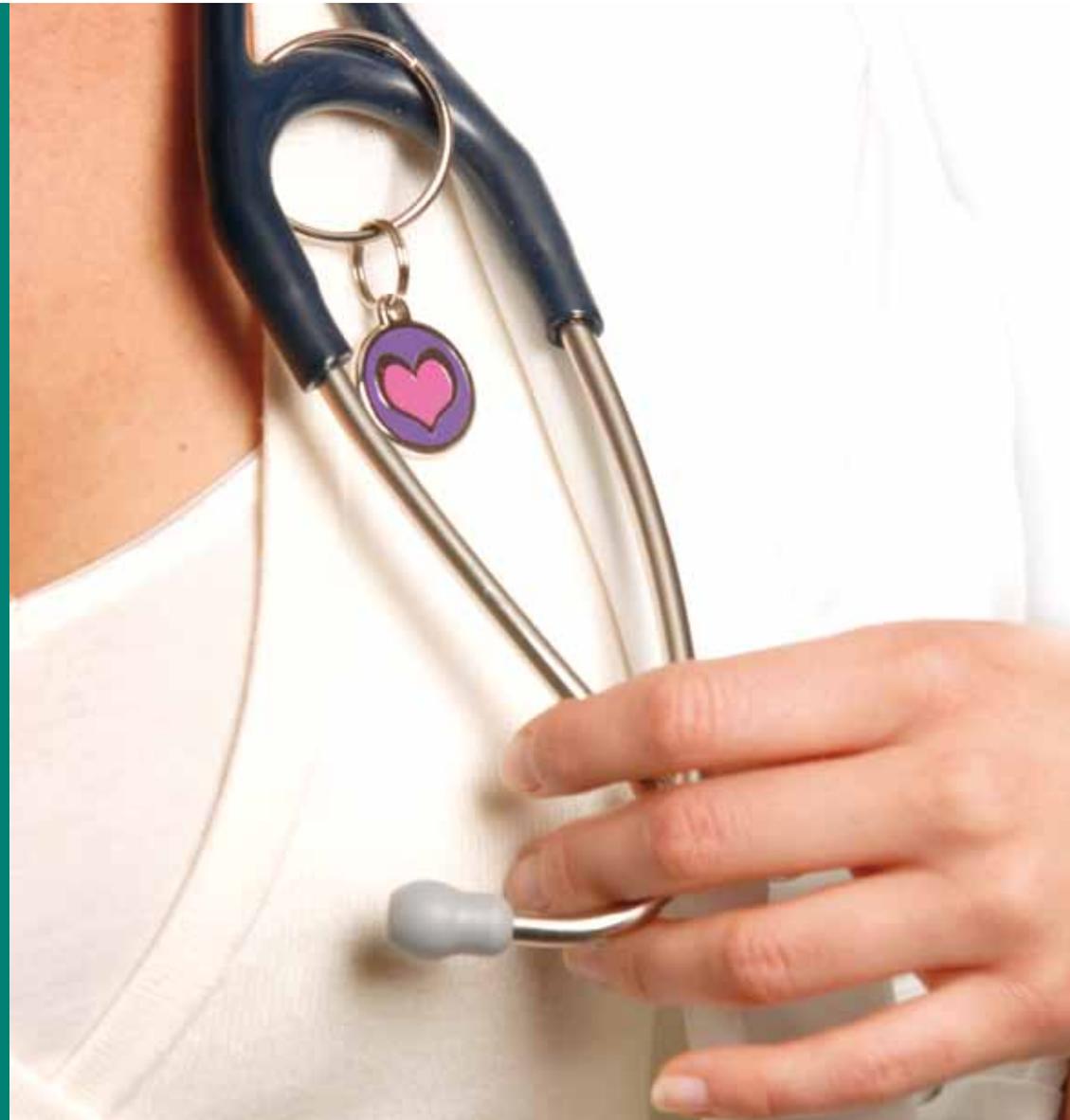


Dorset General Practice ST3 Induction Guide



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Welcome to your GP ST3 year

The ST3 year is an exciting and challenging time.

It represents the transition from hospital medicine into primary care, and the final part of training before certification for independent practice.

Starting the ST3 year can seem daunting. The transition from hospital to general practice is a big one. Don't worry, though – you will be well supported by your trainer, the training practice and the Day Release Course (DRC). Below you will find more about what to expect and a few tips on getting your year off to a good start.

During the year there are a number of compulsory hurdles that should be cleared in order to achieve satisfactory completion. However, the ST3 year is about much more than this! Here are some suggested goals for the year that you may like to consider.

Professional goals

Acquire the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes to practice as a qualified GP

This is perhaps the most fundamental purpose of the year – to transform GP trainees into independent GPs. This goal will be achieved through a variety of methods, including day-to-day experience in practice, working with out-of-hours providers, tutorials, group discussions on the Day Release Course, and relevant educational activities, eg. out-patient clinics.

Pass the nMRCGP examination

The nMRCGP is the licensing system for all UK-trained doctors wishing to obtain a Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) in General Practice and gain entry to the GMC's GP register.

The whole of the nMRCGP is mapped to competency areas derived from the RCGP GP Curriculum. Since no one method of assessment can be completely satisfactory, the nMRCGP is an integrated triangulation of assessments: the Applied Knowledge Test, Clinical Skills Assessment and Work Place Based Assessment (which includes the ePortfolio). Further information about these assessments can be found at www.rcgp.org.uk.

The examination will help to identify learning needs and to direct study but it should not become all-consuming. To focus solely on the examination would be to the detriment of many other important aspects of the year.

Develop an appreciation of the range and scope of general practice in the UK

Each trainee will become familiar with his or her own training practice but there are opportunities to meet with others working in different environments within primary care. The Day Release Course will provide a forum for discussion about the variety of ways in which clinical care is organised and practices are managed. Take opportunities to sit in with different GPs – this may be the only chance you have to do this in your professional career. Why not consider a practice exchange later in the year?

To understand the principles of general practice management

All GPs, whether partners or sessional GPs, will have some involvement in aspects of practice management and finance. This is often an unfamiliar area for GP trainees and the ST3 year provides opportunities to acquire the necessary background knowledge.

To identify potential areas of special interest to develop further in the future

Take note of the areas of general practice that particularly capture your interest. Maybe you find dermatology fascinating, or maybe you prefer cardiovascular medicine? Are there areas that you had not previously considered such as medicine for the homeless, sports medicine, business aspects of GP or occupational medicine? Experiences in these different fields may provide the foundation for a future special interest or portfolio career.

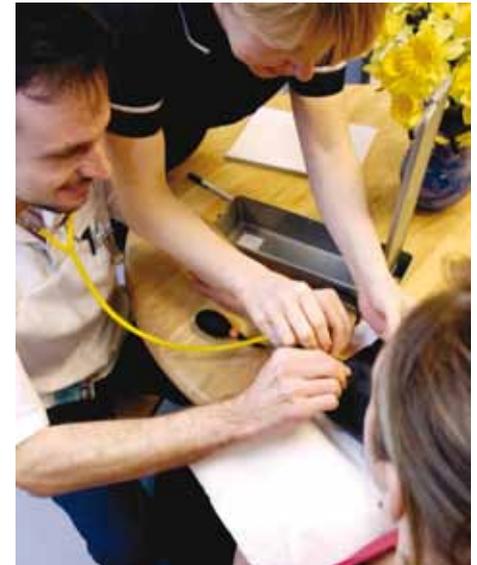
Personal goals

Build a network of support that will remain after the training year finishes

General practice will be stressful and challenging. The support of friends and peers will become increasingly important as you leave the relatively protected environment of GP training, so ensure you lay these foundations now. Many study groups formed in the ST3 year go on to become the young GP groups of the future.

Develop increased self-awareness and ability to spot early signs of stress and burnout

The personality traits that make us good at our jobs can also predispose us to burnout. We all need a healthy self-awareness to recognise trigger factors for stress and to be able to spot the early signs of burnout. Setting up healthy patterns of work and appropriate expectations of ourselves are the keys to a happy career.



Know where to seek help

Definitely not a case of 'physician, heal thyself'! Be aware of potential sources of help including family, peers, senior colleagues and independent organisations. Register with a GP and do not be tempted to self-treat. Recognise the need for work-life balance and find ways of achieving this. There is more to life than work. Cultivate your outside interests and find a comfortable balance of work and home life. Knowing what sort of workload you are happy to accept will help when looking for partnership positions or other substantive posts in the future.

Have fun!

Start as you mean to go on.

Starting the year

Sitting in

For most GP ST3s much of the first two weeks is spent sitting in with various members of the practice team. This gives you the chance to get to know your colleagues. Some will have roles unfamiliar to you from hospital practice. Ask them what they do and when you might ask for their help. You will also see that your GP colleagues may have quite varied consulting styles, but it can be hard to pick this up when the diagnostic content of the consultations is sometimes unfamiliar. It can be a good idea to sit in with the GPs again at the end of the year.

Make the most of this fantastic opportunity to observe what other professionals do well, or less well. When observing, why not choose to specifically concentrate on the opening gambit of consultations, then perhaps a different colleague's time management skills and another colleague's risk management skills? Reflect on what you have observed with your trainer and in your group on the DRC.

Tutorials

Your first tutorials will most likely be spent familiarising you with some basics of general practice including finding your way around the computer notes. You will also have some form of learning needs assessment which will help you and your trainer plan your year including future tutorials. Why not complete the RCGP online curriculum-based learning needs self-assessment spreadsheet (www.rcgp-curriculum.org.uk/curriculum_map_faqs.aspx) and bring this to your first tutorial? You should include this needs assessment in your Personal Development

Plan and this will inform your Study Leave proposals, which need to be agreed with your Trainer.

Keeping a record of your learning

Most doctors are familiar with the need to keep a Personal Development Plan. This is something to discuss with your Trainer at an early stage and continue to review during the ST3 year.

You will keep some records in your ePortfolio but it is not yet clear whether you will be able to keep this for the longer term. There are also lots of things that don't fit in there. It's a good idea to keep a record of your referrals and admissions (maybe in a hardback notebook or a computer file) and their outcomes.

The same notebook can be used during consultations to jot down any topics you think you need to look up or ask about later. It is an excellent way of recording your learning for future appraisals. Record patients by their computer number, not their name, or you cannot legally take it out of the practice at the end of the year.

Travel expenses

In order to claim travel expenses you need to keep an accurate log of your practice related travel. A summary of the rules relating to travel expenses can be found in the 'GPR directions Schedules 1 and 2' which can be accessed at www.nhsemployers.org (see the section on Pay & contracts>Junior doctors/ Dentists/GP reg).

Out of hours (OOH)

Covering out of hours remains an important part of GP training. This is a challenging part of GP practice. You



will have to make difficult decisions, admitting people or managing them safely at home with minimal background information. Increasingly, OOH work is a major source of income for recently qualified GPs. The skills learned will also help you in your daytime work.

Currently, you are required to gain a minimum of 72 hours' OOH experience during your registrar year. This isn't difficult, but you will need to work steadily at it through the year. Demand for sessions can be very high late in the year, so plan ahead. The actual total number you need to do is to be discussed with your trainer who has to be sure that the experience you have undertaken has been sufficiently varied and educational. Please note that you will be expected to contribute towards the 'extended hours' work of the practice (which may mean

surgeries before 8am, after 6.30pm or on Saturday mornings) but these sessions cannot be counted towards your OOH requirements.

OOH work includes phone triage, working in treatment centres and doing home visits by car. When doing car shifts you are accompanied by a professional driver. At the beginning of the year you can expect close supervision by your OOH supervisor. You will be encouraged to practice more independently as the year goes on.

If your trainer or a member of the practice does OOH work, they will often be able to supervise your sessions. If not, then you will need to contact Dorset Urgent Care Service (your practice will have contact details) to arrange supervision.



Day Release Course (DRC)

The course for GP ST3s is based at Bournemouth University and the Postgraduate Education Centres of Poole, Dorchester and Bournemouth Hospitals. There are usually about 30 to 40 GP ST3s attending the course. The timetable will be sent to you soon after you start and can also be found on the www.dorsetgp.org.uk website.

We try to create a supportive, informal environment in which learning is fun and non-threatening. There is always ample time to relax and talk to your peers which we recognise is an essential component of the day. We encourage honesty, openness and a sense of humour! We will ask you to take part, even take a few risks, but we shall always support and encourage you. We do not tolerate education by negative criticism and humiliation.

The schedule for the DRC is integrated with ST1/2 teaching. The new academic year commences each August and runs each Wednesday in weeks 1, 2 and 4 of each month with ST1/2 teaching in Week 3. There is no meeting on fifth weeks when these occur. There are 30 ST3 Wednesdays each year resulting in a break during August. On 'non-ST3' Wednesdays trainees usually work in their practices but, by negotiation with their trainer, they may take study leave on some of these days. We start each Wednesday at 9.30am and finish at about 5pm.

We run two two-day residential courses each year: a Communication Course and a Life Skills/Management Course. The DRC also runs mock CSA days. Other activities related to the course include

nMRCGP study groups, and occasional social or sporting events.

During your GP training year we aim to support you in completing the transition from learning guided by others, as experienced at school, to self-directed adult learning. This change is essential for doctors working in general practice. We recognise that this transition can be challenging, and we aim to guide you along this journey with the objective of equipping you with the skills and experience to become a motivated lifelong learner. These skills will also be essential when addressing the needs of your annual appraisal and five-yearly re-accreditation. Thus the emphasis is on learner-centred reflective group work and self-resourced active learning, as opposed to the passive learning experience of the lecture theatre.

Of course, we do acknowledge the value of contact with specialist colleagues who usually join us on Wednesday afternoons. On many occasions these roles are filled by GPs with special interests, who are often in the best position to understand the needs of GP trainees.

Attendance at the day release course is confirmed by morning and afternoon registers. Don't forget to sign in – the course is a contractual part of your ST3 year and you are being paid to attend! A minimum attendance of 70% or more of the course is required for your WPBA to be signed off. You are reminded to make sure you claim any days off the course as annual leave since this is a paid element of your working week and probity issues are a serious part of the GMC's standards of professionalism.

A typical DRC day

We spend the morning in consistent groups of up to ten GP ST3s. Each group has its own regular facilitator. The first part of the morning is usually based around cases or other material brought by group members. The success of group work is dependent on you bringing ideas and material to the course. Try to jot down ideas during the week, eg. interesting cases and other aspects of general practice which have presented problems or given you pause for thought; experiences which have affected you emotionally or which will change the way you practice. There is a mid-morning break for coffee, after which the group may focus on a topic that members have prepared in advance.

After lunch we all meet together for 'soapbox' – 15 minutes during which one group (in rotation each week) presents something of interest (usually non-medical) to the other groups.

For the remainder of the afternoon we usually have a guest speaker/facilitator who acts as a resource, running an interactive session on one of a wide variety of clinical and non-clinical topics. We discourage didactic lectures and instead foster interactive discussion and questioning, often based around real cases.

Practice exchanges

Time spent in another practice can be a valuable experience in the ST3 year. You could consider switching places with another GP ST3 for a few days. Ideally, the practice you visit should have significant differences from your training



practice. Aspects to consider include size, population demographic, style of organisation, computer system and location (eg. urban vs. rural). There will be wide variation between the practices within the local area but if you are keen for something completely different you could look further afield (how about inner city London or rural Scotland?). Any time away from the practice will need to be negotiated with your trainer but a local exchange with another GP ST3 would not need to be counted as study leave if you are effectively covering each other's duties.



If things go wrong

GP training is a busy and stressful time for doctors in training. There is so much to do and it often feels as if there is not enough time to do it. It is inevitable that things, in this challenging year, will not always run to plan.

Illness, problems in practices and specific learning needs can all conspire to cause problems. The trick is to recognise issues early, before issues become problems. Trainers and GP ST3s are encouraged to discuss issues/difficulties at an early stage of the year. You may also seek the advice of your DRC group facilitator. We understand that sometimes it can be difficult for a GP trainee to voice worries to their trainer (and vice versa!) and the Dorset Educational Team is here to support you.

The Associate Director, based in the GP Office at Bournemouth University, will become involved in more serious issues but is also more than happy to have

informal discussions with any doctor (or anybody involved in training, for that matter). If you don't know what to do or if you are experiencing problems, at whatever stage of your career, then it is vital that you seek help.

And finally...

The keys to a successful ST3 year are good organisation and regular review of progress, coupled with a proactive, enthusiastic approach to your learning. It is a unique training year defined by the intensive support and the considerable opportunities that are available to you. Making full use of these resources will be instrumental in building the foundations for a successful and fulfilling career.

www.dorsetgp.org.uk provides more details about some of the topics above, such as identifying learning needs, and links to other key resources for the year.