



SUPPORT AND ADVICE FOR PAEDIATRICIANS

Royal College of Paediatrics & Child Health
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- The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health has made a commitment to provide confidential advice and support for paediatricians throughout the UK who find themselves in need of professional assistance or who feel threatened by disciplinary action.
- Talking through difficulties, especially at an early stage, may help to clarify issues, alleviate anxiety, reduce the sense of isolation and point the way to a solution.
- It is recognised that concerns may be related to specific areas of practice (eg Child Protection issues) or different for trainees, SASG's or Consultants. However, many of the problems encountered may be generic to all and this document aims to offer a number of optional sources of advice accessible to all in a confidential manner.
- This information gives details of organisations that can provide support and advice to paediatricians. It also gives details of services which may be available locally through the College's regional network of Council representatives and Regional Advisers.
- If it is not clear which agency is most appropriate to the needs identified, the College Secretary, Mr Len Tyler, will provide confidential advice and act as a point of contact for all College members and fellows.

ADVICE AND SUPPORT SERVICES PROVIDED BY EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

British Medical Association Counselling Service

A confidential counselling service for all BMA members and their families who are under stress through personal, emotional or work--related problems, relationship difficulties, health worries, debt, bereavement, and alcohol and/or drug misuse, etc.

It is staffed by qualified counsellors dedicated to the BMA. The counsellors are bound by strict ethical codes of conduct and confidentiality. Details of conversations with counsellors will not be relayed to employers or the BMA.

24-hour helpline: 0845 920 0169

www.bma.org.uk

Royal Medical Benevolent Fund

The fund provides financial assistance and support to members of the medical profession, their partners, children, widows and widowers who, through illness or misfortune, find themselves in need. The fund aims to provide help and understanding in times of acute crisis for as long as the need persists.

Telephone Monday to Friday, 9am - 5pm: 020 8540 9194

email: rmbf@virgin.net

The Royal Medical Benevolent Fund, 24 King's Road, Wimbledon, London SW19 8QN

www.rmbf.org

National Counselling Service for Sick Doctors (NCSSD)

An independent confidential advice and information service supported by the medical royal colleges and other professional bodies. The service is for doctors, their colleagues and close family members who feel that the doctor's state of health may be compromising their ability to treat patients safely.

It is staffed by medically qualified advisers whose role is to guide callers towards appropriate sources of help. Callers will be given the name and telephone number of an NCSSD adviser to contact.

24-hour helpline: 0870 241 0535

www.ncssd.org.uk

The Sick Doctors' Trust

A proactive service for actively addicted doctors which is structured to provide an early intervention programme. The trust facilitates treatment in appropriate centres, arranges funding for inpatient treatment and provides advocacy and representation when required. A charitable trust controlled by a board of trustees and staffed by doctors in recovery.

24-hour helpline: 0870 4445163

www.sick-doctors-trust.co.uk

BMJ Careers Chronic Illness Matching Scheme

The scheme provides the opportunity for doctors who have a chronic illness or disability to receive informal careers advice from other doctors. All communication is through email. Doctors can be matched with someone with the same illness/disability or those who work in a certain specialty, grade or country.

www.bmjcareers.com/chill

BMJ Careers Discrimination Matching Scheme

The scheme provides the opportunity for doctors who feel they have been discriminated against to receive informal support from another doctor. ALL communication is through email. Doctors can ask to be matched either with a doctor who has been discriminated against in a similar way (racial, gender, sexual orientation, disability or illness) or one who hasn't but is willing to give support and advice.

24-hour helpline: 01252 345 163

www.bmjcareers.com/discrimination

Doctors SupportLine

The Doctors' SupportLine (DSL) is run by doctors for doctors and offers independent, confidential and anonymous help to doctors who need it. Doctors in England affected by burnout, depression, anxiety, mental distress, work difficulties or family worries will be able to call the DSL and talk to a fellow doctor trained to offer friendly and informal support.

SupportLine is for all doctors who wish to discuss issues of work or personal concerns relating to their health, work or relationships. The volunteer doctors who staff the line are trained in the issues that affect many doctors.

SupportLine: 0870 765 0001

www.doctorssupport.org

British International Doctors Association

The association provides a health counselling panel that may be useful where cultural or linguistic factors are prominent.

Telephone: 0161 456 7828

British Doctors and Dentists Group

A support service for recovering and actively addicted doctors, dentists and their families which offers confidential advice and support. There are 16 groups which meet monthly throughout England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Advice is provided by local recovering doctors or dentists.

24-hour helpline: 020 7487 4445 or 01252 316 976

This is a confidential contact line based at the Medical Council on Alcohol, a charity committed to improving medical understanding of alcohol related problems.

www.medicouncilalcol.demon.co.uk

The Doctors Forum

The main function of the Doctors' Forum is to develop and take forward a range of initiatives they deem important to Improving Working Lives for Doctors. Offering staff a better deal in their working lives is essential if the NHS is to retain trained and experienced clinicians.

The Doctors' Forum brings together clinicians, local medical leaders and national representatives to bridge the gap between policy makers and the frontline. Currently, the Doctors' Forum has 80 members including general practitioners, consultants and doctors in training, medical students and medical directors.

The Forum has produced an introductory pack for junior doctors joining the NHS for the first time entitled "*Welcome to the team*" and a collection of FAQs for specialist registrars "*Becoming a Consultant*".

The Doctors' Forum website has a number of other links to web-based resources for doctors of all grades as well as copies of the packs described above.

<http://www.doh.gov.uk/doctorsforum>

ADVICE AND SUPPORT SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE MEDICAL DEFENCE ORGANISATIONS

The medical defence organisations provide help in times of difficulty that relate to medical practice, whether in the NHS or at private facilities. All paediatricians are advised to join one of the medical defence organisations.

The Medical Defence Union (MDU)

For MDU members, the union provides expert help and advice on medico-legal and ethical matters including handling complaints, claims and GMC cases.

It is staffed by a team of medico-legal advisers.

Freephone 24-hour helpline: 0800 716376

The Medical Defence Union, 230 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8PJ

www.the-mdu.com

The Medical Protection Society

The Medical Protection Society exists to protect the professional interests of members who can seek support on:

- negligence claims, including indemnity for damages and costs;
- General Medical Council proceedings;
- health authority hospital inquiries;
- disciplinary proceedings relating to professional misconduct or incompetence;
- inquests;
- complaints;
- criminal matters arising from professional practice; and advice on a wide range of ethical and general enquiries on legal aspects of professional practice.

It is staffed by medico-legal advisers.

Telephone: 0845 605 4000

email: info@mps.org.uk

The Medical Protection Society, 33 Cavendish Square, London W1G 0PS or The Medical Protection Society, Granary Wharf House, Leeds LS11 5PY

www.mps.org.uk

Medical and Dental Defence Union of Scotland (MDDUS)

The MDDUS is an independent, progressive defence organisation. It supports members who have problems with complaints or claims made by patients against them or who are facing disciplinary matters from their employing Trust.

Advice and guidance is given by a highly qualified team of medical and dental professionals.

24-hour advice line: 0141 221 5858

Fax: 0141 228 1208

The Medical and Dental Defence Union of Scotland, Mackintosh House, 120 Blythswood Street, Glasgow G2 4EA

www.mddus.com

ADVICE AND SUPPORT SERVICES FOR PAEDIATRICIANS IN TRAINING PROVIDED BY MEDICAL POSTGRADUATE DEANS, POSTGRADUATE CLINICAL TUTORS AND TRAINING PROGRAMME DIRECTORS

In addition to supporting the provision of training, medical postgraduate deans and training programme directors offer a range of additional services to doctors in training (and, in some cases, to career grade doctors) who require support and advice. The services on offer include mentoring, counselling and providing a listening ear as well as providing specific educational advice. Postgraduate Clinical Tutors act locally on behalf of the dean.

While many issues, for paediatricians in training, may be managed locally through discussion with the educational supervisor or College Tutor, the College recognises that some problems may prove difficult to resolve through these means. **In such cases, advice should be sought from the postgraduate Clinical Tutor, training programme director or postgraduate dean** as they have a clear responsibility for helping to resolve problems and providing support and advice. It is also through the postgraduate dean or training programme director that trainees may access additional local support services.

The names and addresses of postgraduate deans and training programme directors in the UK are available from:

The Conference of Postgraduate Medical Deans of the Kingdom, 20 Guilford Street, London WC1N 1DZ

Telephone: 020 7692 3197

Fax: 020 7404 2930

email: copmed@copmed.org.uk

www.copmed.org.uk

ADVICE PROVIDED DIRECTLY BY THE RCPCH REGIONAL NETWORK OF ADVISERS

Information on careers, support and advice services at a local level can be obtained from the RCPCH Regional Advisers, Training Programme Directors, RCPCH elected Council Members and Paediatric College Tutors.

- Regional advisers in paediatrics form the paediatric advice to the Postgraduate Dean and to other relevant bodies, such as Trusts, on matters relating to paediatric medicine and especially on postgraduate educational matters.
- Regional advisers maintain an overview of paediatric training and support the College regional Council representatives within their region. They also provide a direct link between the College and the deanery on policy initiatives and developments in training and workforce planning.
- Regional advisers should have a close links with whatever regional paediatric advisory system or structure is present in the region, and duties may include a pastoral role, including involvement with doctors who have career or health problems and, on rare occasions, concerns about clinical competence.
- In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, regional advisers are involved in scrutiny of job descriptions for career posts, i.e., consultant, staff grade, etc., as well as the assessment of job descriptions of specialist registrar posts and new SHO posts.
- Training Programme Directors are appointed by Specialty Training Committees to oversee higher specialist training programmes and rotations within a group of Trusts. They are responsible to the Postgraduate Dean.
- Paediatric College Tutors provide support and advice on general professional paediatric training and oversee the appraisal and assessment processes for paediatric trainees.

CONTACTS

Names and contact details for regional representatives can be obtained from the relevant department on the numbers given below or via the College website.

www.rcpch.ac.uk

Regional advisers and college tutors

Names and contact details available from the General Professional Training Office.

Telephone: 020 7307 5648 – GPT Administrator - Claire Moseley

email: mary.goodby@rcpch.ac.uk

Programme directors and specialist advisory committee (SAC) regional liaison members for higher specialist training

Names and contact details for programme directors and SAC regional liaison members can be obtained from the Higher Specialist Training Administrator based at the College.

Telephone: 020 7307 5649 – HST Administrator – Kylie Craig email:
kylie.craig@rcpch.ac.uk

President and senior officers of the College

The president, vice-presidents and senior officers may also be approached personally by fellows and members seeking general advice. In the first instance, please contact the College Secretary, Mr Len Tyler who will advise on the most appropriate point of contact.

Telephone: 020 7307 5603 – PA to College Secretary, Barbara Pettit
email: barbara.pettit@rcpch.ac.uk

OUR COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health is fully committed to equality of opportunity and opposes all forms of unfair discrimination, intentional or unintentional, covert or overt.

Every possible step will be taken to ensure that decisions on recruitment, selection, training and career development are based solely on an objective assessment of skill and ability.

Every paediatrician has a responsibility not to discriminate in the workplace. discrimination not only contravenes professional standards - it is illegal under UK law.

The success of the medical profession depends upon its ability to recruit, develop and retain the best people. Paediatricians are our greatest resource and if we are to provide a first class service it is vital that everyone has the opportunity to perform well and be rewarded equally for their efforts.