

Welcome to this first edition of the new GP Sub Deanery Newsletter to be issued on a quarterly basis.

The GP Sub Deanery launched in December 2024; we are committed to supporting and developing General Practitioners through strategic leadership, robust governance, and continuous improvement and innovation. Our role is distinct from either medical school, and we provide an independent voice for General Practice.

Establishment of the Sub Deanery represents a tangible opportunity to support primary care undergraduate education and to place it on an equal footing with the Sub Deaneries in HSC Trusts. Working with the two medical schools, under the auspices of the Northern Ireland General Practice Clinical Placement Alliance (NIGPCPA), our goals include:-

- Promoting General Practice as a career
- Induction & support to GP practices
- Promoting excellence in teaching
- Quality monitoring of placements
- Recruitment & Co-ordination of placements
- Encourage involvement
- Collaborative Development



Prof Helen Reid (QUB Associate Director for GP and Primary Care), Mr Mark Browne (Dept of Health), Dr Louise Sands (GP Sub Dean), Dr Sian-Lee Ewan (UU Clinical Senior Lecturer GP & Lead for GP)

GP Sub Deanery Visits – Coming to a Practice Near You!

A key role of the GP Sub Deanery is meeting our teaching practices across the province.

At the time of writing, our 5 Locality Leads have completed practice visits in all 17 NI GP Federations. These visits have included all new practices to undergraduate teaching for 2025-26 for either medical school (22 in total). Most visits have been to current teaching practices, to seek their feedback, answer their questions and explain how we can support them. We have also carried out a very small number of visits to practices where a concern was raised by the medical school relating to student experience.

What to expect on a visit?

There is no documentation to prepare!

All we ask is that you complete the pre-visit questionnaire sent to you at least two working days in advance of the visit.

You will receive a Practice Visit Report 2 – 4 weeks after the visit which you should keep for your records.

Pre visit questionnaire: basic demographics

PM and Medical student leads attend

Visit from Locality lead or Sub dean

Allow 1 hour

Similar to NIMDTA – much less onerous

Emphasis is support

Written report

What have practices been telling us?

There is a huge appetite to teach and to do it well. It is also clear that practices are under significant pressure and that support to undergraduate teaching in GP is welcome.

The recurrent themes discussed are shown pictorially:-

We are delighted that practices have been very receptive to our visits and have found them a useful opportunity to reflect and learn from their experience of teaching students to date



ALLOCATION
PROCESSES



CLARITY IN
COMMITMENT



MANDATORY
ASSESSMENTS



EXPECTATIONS
FROM MEDICAL
SCHOOL



SUMDE PAYMENTS



DRIVERS TO
TEACHING



FRUSTRATIONS

The pre-visit questionnaire was straightforward and easy to complete.

Overall the visit was encouraging, and we were happy with all the feedback which was given.

The visit felt very supportive, providing useful advice

Upcoming Priorities

The GPSD's focus will include mapping the allocations processes for both medical schools. Practices are keen for transparency on allocations, and we will be working to develop a system that is as fair and accountable as possible.

Our new website is live, and we will continue to develop it further over the coming months. There are bespoke sections for GP Tutors, PMs and medical students. There is also a dedicated events page where you can find a list of important upcoming dates for either medical school. We welcome any suggestions for new content and hope to share best practice across the region.



If you would like to get in touch to ask a question, give us your views or book a GP Sub Deanery visit then you can do that on the website contact page or the admin email address below.