

**Guidance for Careers Champions**

As a Careers Champion, you can provide unique insight into your working life, specialty, trust and training programme. It's the small things you don't even think about that can be most enlightening to somebody investigating their next career steps. The Careers Champions scheme is intended to bridge the gap between your experiences and the career exploration of more junior trainees.

Enquirers might want to know what a day in the life is like in your specialty, what the good things are about your role, what the bad things are, how to become a competitive candidate, can you easily work part-time, take an OOP – the list is long. It can be valuable to talk about your own experiences and how you got access to them, especially if you are in the early years of your career.

The scheme isn't intended to replace careers guidance for those who are struggling with career choices, nor is it designed to be a mentoring scheme. Full careers support will continue to be provided via existing routes e.g. Educational Supervisors.

**Four stages of career planning**

People who contact you should be encouraged to carry out a structured approach to their career planning. We recommend following a four-stage plan. It is likely your contribution will be most helpful with Stage 2.



**Questions you might be asked**

Conversations with people who contact you might cover things like:

The content of your job

- What the average day in your job is like
- Whether there is a lot of variety in the work
- Whether there are particular ethical issues you have to deal with
- The systems, diseases and patients they might find themselves working with
- What kind of relationships health professionals in your specialty have with their patients
- What other teams they can expect to work with in your specialty
- Whether your specialty is likely to change substantially in the next few years
- Which research questions are currently being studied
- How on-going technological advances might impact on your specialty
- What the best thing about your specialty is
- What the worst thing about your specialty is
- Are there academic opportunities available in your specialty

### Recruitment

- How competitive things are in your area
- How long training typically lasts
- Whether their academic qualifications and experience will enable them to realistically compete
- What was your recruitment process like
- What kind of questions were you asked at interview (if you had one)
- What was your selection centre like (if you attended one)

### Other Factors

- How easy is it to have a good work/life balance
- Is it easy to work part time
- Are there other training opportunities such as Academic etc.
- Are there opportunities to take time out of programme (OOP)
- What are the benefits of working abroad
- What is the trust like that you work in
- Benefits of the East Midlands as a place to live/train

This is just a small sample of questions. It's important to let the enquirer lead the conversation. They might want to have further detailed conversations with you, in which they ask you to review their current plans. You're welcome to do so, if you have time. Whatever your contribution, try not to be too directive. It's easy to be drawn into 'if I were you' discussions, but these can be counterproductive. What we hope to do is make it easier for them to access all the information and advice they need to make a good decision.

### **Additional things you can do**

This list is by no means prescriptive or exhaustive, but it does suggest some things you could do at a local level to raise understanding about your field:

- Arrange a short presentation at an appropriate local teaching or training event
- Arrange a myth-busting session at your place of work/local trust
- Get all the careers champions together in your area and hold a careers event

### **Questions and comments**

If you have any further questions, or wish to make any comments on the scheme, please contact [careers.em@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:careers.em@hee.nhs.uk)