

Professional Support Unit (PSU)

formerly Career Development Unit (CDU)

Director of Unit: Dr Penelope Toff

Introduction to the Unit

The PSU is dedicated to helping doctors living or working in the Thames Valley, to fulfil their work potential. The Unit consists of the Director, an Assistant Director, a Careers Lead, a Support Manager and a team of coaches. These include GPs, consultants and specialists in culture and communication, speech and language, psychology, executive coaching and medical and dental careers.

We offer

- One-to-one confidential coaching to support trainees and doctors and dentists in the established grades who have been identified by educators or have self-identified with “performance issues,” to get back on track
- Career decision-making and specialty application preparation workshops in Foundation 1 and 2
- One-to-one confidential career dilemma support for trainees at all levels

Our services are completely free to medical and dental specialist trainees working in NHS (contracted) services within HETV.

Facts about the Unit

Formed in 2005, the PSU has worked with over a thousand trainees, consultants, GPs and medical students from Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Milton Keynes and Buckinghamshire, on a host of personal and professional challenges impacting on their training and work and has supported them on how best to manage their career. Each clinician is assigned a PSU coach who works in partnership with them in an empathic way that fully respects and harnesses the individual's strengths and wishes. This supportive exploration enhances self-understanding and brings clarity about motivation, potential and action. Sometimes a coach may also offer the Myers Briggs Personality Type Indicator (MBTI) or other psychological testing, if this seems appropriate to help identify an individual's unique gifts and to increase awareness about their professional relationships. It is often helpful to involve a trainee's educators at some stage in the coaching

Accessing the PSU

Any doctor or dentist can refer herself or himself to the PSU and receive a completely confidential service, or they may be referred by their Training Programme Director (usually with the support of their ES) for performance support. Details of these referral processes are available on the HETV website at: www.oxforddeanerypsu.org.uk along with referral forms and links to a number of useful career resources and sources of support, such as Occupational Health, *Medic Support*, the BMA Counselling and Doctor Advisor services and advice on dyslexia.

Trainee Feedback about the PSU:

“It was a very professional service and unlike any other guidance I have received...I am certain there are many others who could benefit from your advice.”

“Very helpful to talk through career options with an independent advisor, which is difficult to achieve in one's own specialty...to reflect on what it is exactly we enjoy (or don't enjoy) about our chosen field...the experience reaffirmed why I had chosen my specialty.”

“My PSU advisor supported me through a changing landscape: we first met before applications and I approached her while I was experiencing a stressful team dynamic...I felt well-supported.”

Key Contact Details

Unit Support Manager: **Phil Skeldon**

Read more about the PSU at: <http://www.oxforddeanerypsu.org.uk>

Email the PSU in confidence at: psu@thamesvalley.hee.nhs.uk

Please see the next page for details of the PSU referral and self-referral process.

**Self-referral
(always by the Trainee) for
Careers Support**

- 1. Initial online research*:**
BMJ Careers
www.healthcareers.nhs.uk
<http://specialtytraining.hee.nhs.uk>
PSU & HETV online and other reading
- 2. Attendance at Foundation careers workshops ***
- 3. Information & advice from senior colleagues, specialty schools and specialty colleges as appropriate**

- 4. PSU Self-Referral**
- on the **PSU referral form***
- **with an up to date CV** and any other useful documents

**Educator Referral
(always by the TPD) for
Performance Issues**

Level 1 Support Process: managed within the educational programme.

- Level 2 Support process**
- **MAY include PSU referral if the trainee is at work or in a phased return**
- 1. Consider other resources*** especially where health problems:
 - **Occupational Health**
(by educator referral)
 - **Medic Support**
(by self-referral)
 Inform the **DME** as appropriate.
 - 2. Educational Needs Review (ENR) ***
 - 3. Personal Improvement Plan (PIP)*** including educator role and potential PSU role
 - 4. Discuss PSU referral** with the trainee and ES and copy them into all PSU correspondence

- 5. PSU Referral by the TPD***
- on the **PSU Referral form**
- **copied to the trainee & ES**
- **with a CV and ARCP/ES Report** and any other useful documents
- 6. If trainee is seeing OH, please give written consent** for OH to share information with the PSU

PSU triage and correspondence

Allocation to PSU coach

Confidential 1:1 coaching

**3-way meeting:
Trainee, PSU coach and ES**

* Please see the **PSU website** for more information & templates to help you with this process including the **Oxford Deanery Protocol for Supporting Doctors & Dentists in Training**