



## National Emergency Medicine Training Programme

### Mentoring in Advanced Specialist Training

#### 1.0 Introduction to mentoring in postgraduate medical training

In Greek mythology, Odysseus placed his old friend Mentor in charge of his son when he left to fight the Trojan War. The subsequent spiritual and pragmatic guidance that Mentor provided became associated with his name and the term 'mentor' emerged to describe someone who shares wisdom with and provides advice and guidance to a less experienced colleague.

Informal mentoring has long been a feature of postgraduate medical education and many established specialists can identify individuals they considered mentors during their formative years.

In recent years, a more formal approach to mentoring during training has emerged. In June 2014, the Strategic Review of Medical Training and Career Structure (the McCraith report) recommended that the further development of mentoring supports across all training programmes be expedited<sup>1</sup>. The implementation of a mentoring programme was a recommendation that emerged from the Medical Council accreditation of the National Emergency Medicine Training Programme in 2016.

It is against this background that ICEMT is introducing a formal mentoring structure for advanced trainees.

#### 2.0 Overview of the mentor role

2.1 A literature review carried out as part of the Strategic Review of Medical Training and Career Structure identified a number of key themes relating to mentoring<sup>2</sup>;

- Professional support
- Personal support
- Supportive relationship
- Partnership based on common bonds or interests
- Reciprocal relationship between an experienced person and a less experienced person
- Provision of guidance on personal and professional development
- Reflection on and learning from decision-making



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- 2.2 The literature review identified a number of attributes and skills of a mentor which included:
- Expertise
  - Professional integrity
  - Honesty
  - Accessibility
  - Approachability
  - Facilitation
- 2.3 Available literature suggests that mentors should not be line managers or educational supervisors.
- 2.4 The literature review is available [here](#) and is recommended reading for mentors and mentees.

### 3.0 ASTEM mentoring programme

#### 3.1 Mentors

- All current and recently retired Consultant trainers are invited to act as mentors to advanced trainees
- No mentors will have more than two mentees at any one time
- Mentors may elect to limit themselves to one mentee
- Mentors will commit to a face-to-face meeting with their mentee a minimum of twice yearly; this meeting may coincide with other activities, for example, a national conference or training meeting
- Mentors will not undergo formal training but there will be *ad hoc* meetings, particularly at the outset of the mentoring programme, to provide feedback, share experience and develop the process
- Mentors are not required to provide formal feedback on their mentee to the training programme; however, they should feel free to liaise with ICEMT if they feel it necessary or at the request of their mentee

#### 3.2 Mentees

- All ASTEM trainees are invited to participate in the mentoring programme; participation is voluntary
- Trainees will be provided with a list of available mentors and may either choose a mentor or elect to have one assigned to them

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- Ideally, the trainee will not spend time training with their mentor during ASTEM, though they may have worked with them in the past
- In general, trainees will have the same mentor for the duration of their training; in some situations, for example, where a trainee is taking the early steps towards sub-specialisation or developing a special interest, it may be appropriate for the trainee to change their mentor accordingly
- It is recognised that not all mentor-mentee relationships will succeed; in that eventuality, a change in mentor will be facilitated.
- Mentors will commit to a face-to-face meeting with their mentee a minimum of twice yearly; this meeting may coincide with other activities, for example, a national conference or training meeting
- Where the number of potential mentees exceeds the number of available mentors (this may happen at the outset of the process), priority will be given to more senior trainees where the need for career support and guidance may be more pressing

## 4.0 References

1. Strategic Review of Medical Training and Career Structures  
<http://health.gov.ie/future-health/tackling-the-capacity-deficit/strategic-review-of-training-and-career-pathways-for-doctors/>
2. Mentoring in postgraduate medical education and specialist training Review  
[http://health.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/mentoring\\_review\\_final\\_version.pdf](http://health.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/mentoring_review_final_version.pdf)