

REPORT TO: Trust Board
REPORT FROM: HR Director
DATE: 31 July 2007
SUBJECT: Junior Doctor Recruitment
RECOMMENDATION: For Discussion & decision

SUMMARY:

Modernising Medical Careers, and the new junior doctor appointments process effective from 1 August 2007, have resulted in:

- Delays in matching junior doctors to training positions
- Junior doctors without jobs

In addition the Secretary of state has made a promise of employment under which "unappointed" doctors will remain in paid employment until the conclusion of a second round of recruitment (a three months period)

This Trust has worked closely with the Deanery, SHA and with existing junior doctors as a result of which:

- All first and second year posts (F1 & F2) and general practitioner placements (GPVTS) have been filled
- 52 out of 87 further training posts have been filled
- Of the 35 vacant training posts 29 have been filled for short-term periods
- There are 6 vacant training posts that will be entered into a matching process
- Only 8 current junior doctors are without jobs and will be entered into a matching process within South East Coast for opportunities across the sector.

FIT WITH CORPORATE OBJECTIVES:

- Provide a high quality service and experience for patients, staff and the public
- Deliver services which are efficient and productive
- Ensure effective governance of the Trust and its services
- Ensure we are a model employer in the local community and NHS
- Deliver financial viability and sustainability

KEY RISKS

Heavy reliance on clinical directors and clinical tutors to ensure continuity of care during period of instability due to the reliance on short-term contract junior doctors who will be entering a second round of recruitment

Risk that the second round of recruitment will not deliver appointments to vacant posts
Salaries for 8 doctors covered by the Secretary of State promise without jobs will cost £60 for a 3 months period

ACTION REQUIRED

- To note the report and agree on the management of any unappointed junior doctors during the 3 months period of the Secretary of State promise

Junior Doctor recruitment

Purpose

1. To brief the Board on the implications to the Trust of national problems in the recruitment of junior doctors for appointment effective from 1 August 2007;
2. To give assurance to the Board on the measures taken to minimise impacts on the Trust;
3. To agree funding issues.

Background

4. The national Modernising Medical Careers (MMC) initiative had the stated objective: *“To develop a workforce of trained doctors working within clinical teams, who provide the majority of front-line medical management and care for patients”* [quote from presentation given by Professor Alan Crockard, National Director MMC, September 2006].
5. The new doctor training programme was designed to provide:
 - a. *A health service operated by more fully-trained doctors*
 - b. *Improved, safer patient care*
 - c. *More competent, hospital at night doctors*
 - d. *Streamlined applications: so reduced bureaucracy*
 - e. *Open and transparent system*
 - f. *National standards of training, so employers know what they are getting*
6. Attachment 1 gives an overview of the new training scheme.
7. The Medical Training Applications Service (MTAS) was developed to support the introduction of MMC training arrangements with a view to:
 - a. provide a fair and transparent web-based application service for foundation and specialty programmes
 - b. streamline appointment processes with reduced administration and advertising costs
 - c. maximise appointments to all vacant training posts with suitable candidates
 - d. ensure an audit trail and quality monitoring of the selection process

8. Much national attention has been given to problems with MTAS and the difficulties it has caused to junior doctors trying to progress through the training scheme. This has resulted in significant disruption and delay to the process.

Current situation in the Trust (at 23/07/07)

9. The appointment of applicants to Trust positions is summarised in the table below:

Opportunities	K&S	Maidstone
F1 (about 30 jobs)	Full complement	3 vacancies; recruitment strategy includes a review of candidates locally
F2 (about 30 posts)	Full complement	
GPVTS posts	Full complement	
Run through grades	<p>87 posts; received confirmation from Deanery of 52 appointments. The 35 vacancies will be filled through a second round of national recruitment, with appointments effective from 1 November 2007</p> <p>To meet short-term needs, 3 month appointments have been made to 29 of the 35 vacancies leaving only 6 vacancies (ST4 in Paediatrics, ST2 in Anaesthetics, ST1 Ophthalmology, FTSTA ST2 Ophthalmology, ST3 Medicine, ST3 O&G).</p> <p>A SE Coast matching process is planned for 24 July</p>	

Unappointed Doctors

10. In acknowledgement of the difficulties nationally, and the number of doctors who have been unsuccessful in securing their next placement in readiness for a 1 August start, the Secretary of State has promised that all such doctors in the MTAS process, whose placements expire on 31 July 2007, will be guaranteed employment until 31 October (i.e. the expiry of round 2).
11. As at 23 July 2007 some 34 junior doctors currently in the Trust are still without offers of employment from 1 August. However this number has reduced significantly through a combination of doctors finding

alternative opportunities and through short-term appointments to vacancies within the Trust. As a result, the Trust has only 8 junior doctors without jobs from 1 August and who are covered by the Secretary of State promise of employment.

12. The SHA is working on the basis that (i) the promise of employment is “statutory”, (ii) a matching process will be able to deploy most unappointed doctors to funded posts across SE Coast, and (iii) there are no central funds to support the “promise of employment. The Trust has formally expressed the view that it cannot make appointments without funding and has looked to the SHA to provide assistance. The SHA has not waived from its position and a formal response to the Trust on the question of funding is still awaited.
13. The estimated cost of 8 junior doctors for a 3 months period is £60k.

Actions to minimise the impact of these difficulties

14. The Trust has worked with the Deanery to ensure a coordinated and pragmatic approach to recruitment activity.
15. The Trust is also actively supporting efforts within S.E. Coast to match unappointed doctors to funded placements at the event on 24 July 2007. This will hopefully reduce the number of both (i) Trust vacancies and (ii) unappointed doctors and therefore reduce possible financial implications to the Trust.
16. Clinical Tutors, Clinical Directors, Human Resources and Post Graduate Centre staff have worked tirelessly to ensure that both (i) the needs of the service are protected by making appropriate and timely appointments to vacancies and (ii) providing pastoral support junior doctors during this period of uncertainty and frustration.

Issues

17. The short timespan between notification of appointments from the Deanery and start date means limited time is available to conduct necessary pre-employment checking and appointment processes. However processes have been launched as soon as details have been received.
18. Of greater concern is the treatment of doctors not appointed in round one but who are entitled to retain NHS employment for the 3 months period during which round two is conducted.
19. Whilst this numbers only 8 staff, the Secretary of State promise of employment means that some £60k of additional costs will be incurred in maintaining their employment status. Guidance from the SHA is

being sought on the treatment of these additional costs. As previously mentioned, a response from the SHA to deputations made by the Trust is awaited.

20. Of course, it is possible that these doctors, if appropriately deployed, could offset other staffing costs and the possibility of this is being explored.

Recommendations

21. The Board is asked to note the report and will receive an oral update at the meeting on the results of both further matching processes and guidance from the SHA on funding impacts.
22. In order to protect the interests of Junior Doctors poorly served by the national process it is recommended that the Trust deploys these unappointed doctors in the most appropriate roles and to continue discussions with the SHA about funding.

Terry Coode
HR Director

UK MMC Career Framework

