**Somerset Training Hub - Covid 19 – Education Facilitator Update for Practices**

**Re: Apprenticeships, Trainee Nursing Associates and Student Placements**

1. **Apprenticeships - Advice for Practice Employers of all Apprentices**

Please find the link to the Government’s published guidance regarding all apprenticeships. This applies to any apprentice you may employ, including TNAs. You can find this at: - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-apprenticeship-programme-response>

HEE have also released guidance around breaks in learning and apprenticeship pay. Please see attached for the full guidance, but key points are:

* Apprentices should continue learning as normal where possible. Where it is not possible due to training providers being unable to provide, organisations pulling staff from learning to cope with demand or learners being off long term sick, please note down any breaks in learning – this only applies for breaks of over 4 weeks, but it may not be clear how long they are due to be off for. Breaks in learning (over 4 weeks) must be registered with your training provider and the ILR. Please check with their employing managers to ensure they have not been stopped from learning already and it hasn’t been noted anywhere.
* If apprentices are not actively studying their apprenticeship, but are still working as part of the workforce, please be mindful of their rates of pay. **If they are paid less than** [**national minimum wage**](https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates) **for their age and are not actively on their apprenticeship but still working, their pay rate will be illegal**. The simple answer to this is to issue them with a bank contract alongside their apprenticeship contract, so if their apprenticeship is temporarily suspended, they can still work on the bank as part of the workforce. Please discuss this with your HR teams in readiness for any potential disruption.
1. **Trainee Nursing Associates (TNAs) – Specific Information for Lead Nurses and Practice Managers of TNAs**

**a) Existing Cohorts:**

* College attendance - the health and wellbeing of students, apprentices and education staff is of paramount importance. All TNAs have been contacted by Bridgwater & Taunton College (BTC) and the University of the West of England (UWE) as to how they are going to support the study and qualification programmes. Advice has been given in line with the Government and Public Health England [guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19) regarding education. Every effort is being made to support learners and also includes measures they can take to protect their personal health and help reduce the spread of the virus.
* Students will not be attending college but will receive teaching remotely. The 20% off the job criteria can be satisfied by the TNA maintaining a study day at home. If this is not possible due to pressures on the practice, TNAs have been asked to inform the college in case it needs to be considered as a ‘break in learning’, as above (see apprenticeship guidelines).
* Placements – all external placements for existing cohorts have been suspended until further notice. TNAs have been advised of possible alternative Spoke Placement activities within the practice and where this is not possible, Protected Learning time can replace placement time. For further information please contact carol.hobbs4@nhs.net

**b) April 2020 Cohort:** Unfortunately the next cohort has been deferred until later in the Autumn. All prospective TNAs have been informed and will be advised of any changes and will receive ongoing support.

1. **Placements – Information for practices offering Student Nurse, Trust TNA and other non-medical Placements -** For practices where student nurse and other non-medical learner placements have been previously arranged, it is unlikely any students will be placed with you for the next few months. Universities are also receiving Government [advice](https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/Pages/coronavirus.aspx) and the HEI student placement coordinator will be in contact with directly with you.

**For any queries regarding student placements, apprenticeships or TNAs please email** **carol.hobbs4@nhs.net**