

Advice to trainees interested in Paediatric Neurodisability (PND)

Should I train in Paediatric Neurodisability

It is important to understand the differences between training in the new subspecialty of paediatric neurodisability and training in other related subspecialties, especially community child health (CCH). Because of the high prevalence of disability in children, the majority of children with disabilities will continue to be managed by community and also general paediatricians. It follows therefore that CCH (and to a lesser extent general paediatric training) will continue to include a significant proportion of training time in neurodisability as set out in the CCH competency document. Training in CCH will be broader than neurodisability training and will also include wider training in social paediatrics, child protection and public health aspects of child health.

In future, because of the increasing complexity and treatment of children with neurodisability, a more detailed and comprehensive training in neurodisability will be needed for a smaller number of paediatricians. These paediatricians will take a lead responsibility for neurodisability in larger districts or tertiary centres and will have completed subspecialty training in paediatric neurodisability. There will be many more positions available for paediatricians with CCH and general paediatric training than for posts with a lead in paediatric neurodisability. This is an important consideration when deciding on training direction.

National Grid

The National grid posts are advertised in January each year. Trainees interested in training in paediatric neurodisability will need to apply competitively for these posts. These posts are aimed at trainees currently in years 2 or 3 of specialist registrar training and will provide two years of paediatric neurodisability training.

In 2005 16 Grid training programmes in paediatric neurodisability were approved, pending a formal training visit. Approval of further training programmes will be delayed until PMETB has established new procedures for approval of training programmes.

Registration for PND training

Trainees should register their interest in PND training with the College Specialty Advisory Committee (CSAC) at RCPCH. Forms are available from the PND CSAC administrator at the RCPCH. This will help CSAC to keep trainees up to date with any training news or developments. Annual update forms will be sent to these trainees for completion and return to the College until completion of training.

Criteria for approval of accreditation for inclusion on the Specialist Register in Paediatrics (Neurodisability)

1. Complete 2 years core SpR training (including 6 months Community Paediatrics – 4 months prior to September 2003)
2. Spend 2 years in an approved Neurodisability training programme with one further year of relevant experience.

3. Have had exposure to all necessary experience as laid out in the Neurodisability Training Pack (may be downloaded from RCPCH website, www.rcpch.ac.uk).
4. Have been judged competent in all essential areas as set out in Neurodisability Training Pack with documentation of how competencies were assessed
5. A review of training (interview with trainee and review of portfolio) in the penultimate year of training will be undertaken by the CSAC with the educational supervisor (either directly by a representative of the CSAC or in consultation with the Educational Supervisor). This review will be in addition to the deanery annual review and RITA and can be used to inform the final annual review process.

‘Year 3’ – Relevant Experience

The additional year of HST should be in a subject relevant to paediatric neurodisability e.g. neurorehabilitation, neurology, child psychiatry or other neurodisability specialty, training or research, community or general paediatrics with involvement in chronic disease and multidisciplinary team work. It will be necessary to be able to provide evidence of relevance to paediatric neurodisability. This year could be in the 5th year of training after the mandatory 2 years PND training.

Transitional trainees

There are trainees in year 4/5 who are too far on in their training to apply for a grid post but intend to apply for a CCST in General Paediatrics (Neurodisability). Most paediatricians in this position will have been following a training programme in community or general paediatrics with an interest in neurodisability. They will be able to apply for consultant posts described as having an interest in paediatric neurodisability based on their experience and competence. Therefore accreditation in paediatric neurodisability will **not** be essential, but retrospective accreditation may be possible depending on their training.

To be accredited, trainees will need to have their training programmes approved by CSAC and provide evidence that their training meets the requirements of the syllabus as set out in the Paediatric Neurodisability Training Pack (available on the RCPCH website, www.rcpch.ac.uk).

- Training centres/supervisors will have to complete ‘virtual visit’ paperwork – this is the same as the approved centres have had to complete and can be obtained from the HST administrator for PND at the RCPCH.
- This will be simpler if the trainee is in one of the centres which have now been approved, although programmes will have to be looked at individually. The ‘virtual visit’ paper work should enable those not in approved centres to demonstrate that they have followed a suitable training programme compatible with that in the PND syllabus.
- The trainee will have to submit their CV and provide evidence to demonstrate how the required competences have been achieved.
- Detail of experience will be needed i.e. what was done/learnt and level of competence, not just time served in a particular clinical attachment.
- Tools in the PND training pack are available for guidance and may be used although these are not yet validated tools for assessing competences.

- These criteria must be strictly applied. The final decision will be taken by the PMETB.
- CSAC must be informed of Penultimate Year Assessment date. Grid trainees will have a formal PND assessment at this time. It may be useful for transitional or out-of-grid trainees to be given informal advice about outstanding training needs at this point. (Please note that Programme Directors are not obliged to provide appropriate training if trainees are not training in Grid training programmes.)

‘Outside the Grid’

Trainees who decide to pursue their training in PND outside the grid will need to discuss and agree their training programme with their regional Programme Director. Trainees need to be aware that the CSAC will not be able to intervene formally in support of addressing training needs locally. However, informal advice can be sought by trainees, trainers, Regional Advisors and Programme Directors from the CSAC chair and training advisors.

The CSAC will not be able to guarantee accreditation in paediatric neurodisability at the end of training completed outside the grid.

Retrospective accreditation for Consultants

Some consultants have also asked about retrospective accreditation in PND. Again the CSAC do not anticipate there will be much demand for this, as appointments are generally made on experience, and until recently this subspecialty training was not available. Criteria will be based on the above criteria for approval for trainees. CSAC will consider requests on an individual basis.

Should I apply for (Neurodisability) or (Community Child Health)?

The CSAC continue to receive questions about this. Alison Salt has written a piece for the college newsletter about the new subspecialty. The CSAC view is that most people will continue to work in CCH or general paediatrics and have neurodisability as part of their remit, but there will be a smaller number of more specialised consultants who will take the lead for neurodisability in their district, with perhaps as much as 80% of their workload in paediatric neurodisability. There will also be a smaller number of consultants at a regional level or in academic departments for whom (Neurodisability) is the most appropriate CCST.

Keeping in touch with other trainees

There is a trainee representative on the CSAC and they will keep in touch with trainees about any developments and can be contacted directly with any questions or with issues to raise at CSAC meetings. Contact details for the trainee representative can be obtained from the PND HST Administrator at the RCPCH.

There are also paediatric neurodisability trainee reps on the committees of the BPNA (Alison Cozens: alison.cozens@tuht.scot.nhs.uk) and BACD (T. Sethumadhavan: sethumadhavant@aol.com).

Any other questions please contact Alison Salt (Chair), or Karen Whiting or Jane Williams (Training Advisors) via the RCPCH, PND HST Administrator.