

Trainers of Trainees in Difficulty



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The PSU/PSW and me

Back at the Beginning

- First case manager in the EoE PSU
- Resources available to me
 - My personal learning from training about TiDs
 - Advice from Alys Burns and Kate Read
 - Careers Support
 - OH
 - Support from Schools, DMEs etc
 - Interventions mainly educational



Evolution of the PSU/PSW

What I've witnessed and been part of

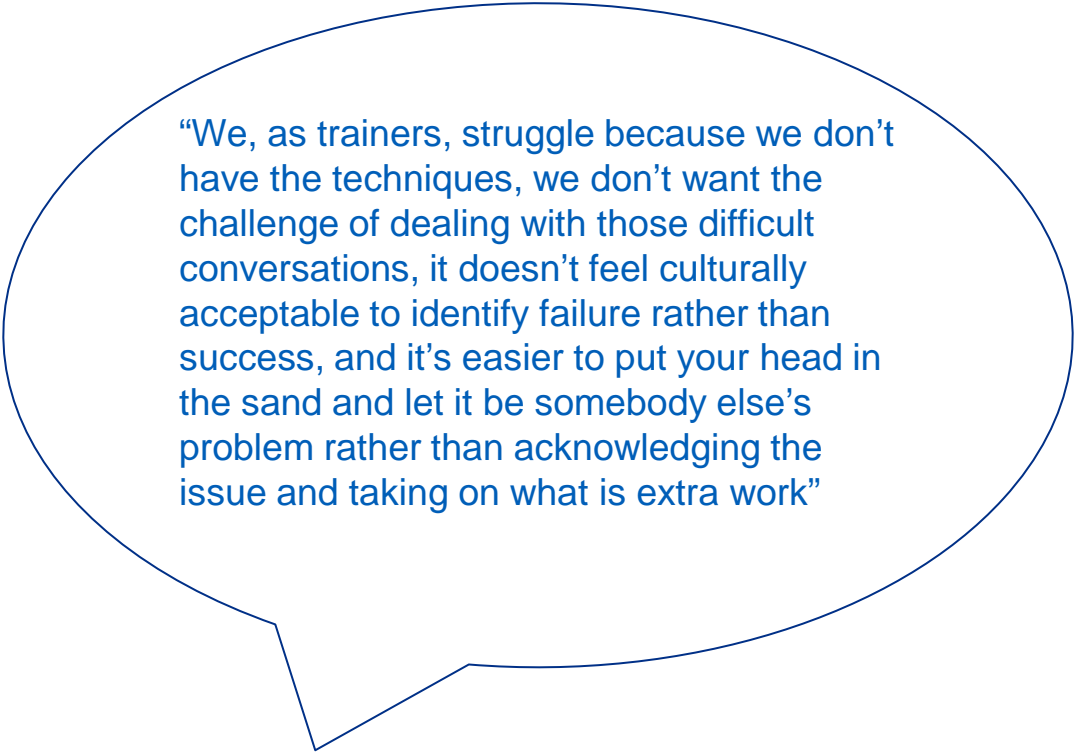
- Development into a team of managers and case workers
- Increasing numbers and diversity of referrals
- Partnerships with other agencies for onwards referrals
- Neurodiversity screening / Emotional intelligence testing
- Proactive promotion of wellbeing – the PSW
- Training role – workshops
- Complex Cases and Serious Concerns Advisory Groups
- Offer of psychological support for trainers

What I am planning to cover

- The challenge of managing TiDs (PGDiTiDs!!)
- Trainers' roles
- Escalating concerns
- Focus on trainers of high risk trainees
- Getting the portfolio and ARCP right
- The importance of seeking support
 - Practical
 - Psychological



The challenge of TiDs ...



“We, as trainers, struggle because we don’t have the techniques, we don’t want the challenge of dealing with those difficult conversations, it doesn’t feel culturally acceptable to identify failure rather than success, and it’s easier to put your head in the sand and let it be somebody else’s problem rather than acknowledging the issue and taking on what is extra work”

..... But is this still true?!

- Taught sessions
 - Supervisor training includes sessions on TiDs
 - PSW and other workshops
- Experiential learning – TiDs are not that uncommon
- **Supporting TiDs is generally very rewarding - but not always!!**
- **Ensure you look after yourself as well as them**

General principles for managing TiDs

- Act – Do not ignore
- Document supportively ideally in trainee's portfolio
- Be fair; acknowledge what's good
- Facts not opinions
- Care with emails/social media
 - No inappropriate copying of emails
 - No pejorative comments
- Recognise your limitations

Recognising your limitations

- You are not:
 - An expert in all areas of support
 - The trainee's doctor
 - A counsellor
 - A psychologist
 - An expert in HR issues
 - The owner of the trainee's problems
- You should seek advice and support early
- Don't work in isolation

Important questions to ask

At the beginning or if anything changes

- Is the trainee safe to be at work?
- Is there any risk of self-harm?
- Does the trainee have a support network?
- Do I have the support I need?
- Do I need to escalate immediately or can it wait?
 - Who to?
- Would the PSW be of benefit?

Where to seek support

- Educational issues
 - Trainee-related: DME, TPD, APD
 - Training environment: GoSW, DME, TPD, Quality Team
- Conduct and capability
 - HR, CD, MD, Lead Employer, RO
- Health
 - OH, GP
- Most TiDs should also be referred to the PSW



What can the PSW offer

Professional Support

Providing fast access to specialist support and on-going case management.

Professional Support

Well-being Support

Well-being

Supporting Educators and Trainees to be as effective as possible in their roles.

Assigned Case Manager
 Careers Support (1:1)
 Coaching (1:1)
 Emotional Intelligence testing
 Communication Skills (1:1* and workshops)
 Exam Support (1:1** and workshops)
 Neurodiverse conditions**
 Psychological Support (1:1 and workshops)
 Resilient leadership (1:1 and workshops)
 Supported Return to Training (SuppoRTT)

..... But, remember, it is not a panacea!

**Based on exam referral or educator referral will need to be submitted*

*** Based on exam referral only – 2 or more attempts on same exam*

Making the most of OH

- Ask the right questions
 - Does the trainee's illness affect their ability to learn / train
 - Are there any adjustments that will maximise the opportunities for the trainee to complete training
- Recognise that not all OH departments are familiar with the requirements of training programmes

Making adjustments

- Not all adjustments are reasonable
- Shortening hours has financial implications
 - Royal Medical Benevolent Fund
- Access to Work – Government scheme
 - Grants to pay for practical support
 - Support with managing mental health
 - Support with communication
- Pausing training while adjustments put in place

Red flags for high risk to trainer

When the trainee has:

- Performance and behavioural issues
- Poor interpersonal skills
- Lack of insight
- Blaming of trainers and/or training environment
- Alleging bullying and/or discrimination

Managing the high risk trainee

- Experienced ES
 - Review portfolio
 - PDP mapped to ARCP: SMART targets
 - Regular educational meetings: document content and share with trainee; record any disagreements; witness may be needed; e.g. HR rep.
 - Objective evidence rather than generalisations
 - Avoid widely copying emails, using WhatsApp groups
 - Seek advice from DME, TPD, HoS etc
- Seek support for yourself and other members of the team

The PSW and the high risk trainee

- Experienced case worker
- Appropriate onward referrals
- Refer to Complex Case Advisory Group (CCAG)
 - Monthly meeting
 - Senior members of the PSW
 - High risk trainees considered individually
 - Review of progress
 - Action plan for the next month

Supportive meetings with trainees outside of the PSW

- TPD, HoS, DPD, Revalidation, Assessment and Performance Manager
- Co-temporaneous minutes
- Check all necessary support is in place
- Reinforce what trainee needs to do to complete training and the consequences of not doing it
- Provides clarity to TPD/HoS about what they need to do and what is being done to support the trainee

Serious Concerns Review Group

- SCRAG
- Postgraduate Dean, Senior Leadership Team, Revalidation, Assessment and Performance Manager
- Most challenging cases
 - Removal of NTN/outcome 4
 - Referral to GMC
- Consensus view
 - Lots of wisdom
 - Sharing of responsibility

Preparing for a challenging ARCP

Role of the TPD/ARCP Panel Chair

- Ask for lay, PGD's and external representatives
- Seek help from HoS/DPD - SCRAG
- Ensure all relevant evidence recorded in portfolio
- TPD report (and trainee response)
- Training timeline
- Ensure reasonable adjustments in place
- Other support offered – PSW, supportive meetings
- Keep trainee informed

Outcomes 3 & 4: The ARCP Form

- Use supportive language
- Acknowledge where good
- Base decision on what is recorded in portfolio plus supplementary evidence submitted to the panel
- Give clear, objective, defensible reason(s) for decision
- Consider mitigations, if all support offered, etc
- For outcome 3,
 - Detailed supportive remedial training plan
 - Record what would lead to an outcome 4

What are we trying to achieve?

- Best possible outcome is that the remedial training plan and the support we offer are effective
- The next best is that you've built a strong case
 - Easy to defend at an appeal or tribunal
 - Reduces the stress on the trainers involved
- Remember to take advantage of the support on offer
 - Practical
 - Psychological

Psychological support for trainers

- Supporting a TiD can be psychologically challenging
- Can cause trauma
- We have a duty of care to you as trainers
- Psychological support for trainers of TiDs available through the PSW since 2017
- Limited uptake to date
- We'd encourage you to take advantage of this if you do feel psychologically affected



Key messages

Document content and share with trainee

Minimise risk

Be fair, consistent and objective

Seek advice and don't work in isolation

Recognise your limitations and the potential need for psychological support

Ensure the trainee is supported too

Patient safety and experience is paramount

Document everything

Respect Confidentiality:
Be careful who the email
is copied to but make
sure you include
relevant people

Agree next steps with
trainee and include them
wherever possible in
discussions

Seek advice and help –
you are not alone

Professional / supportive
tone



Thank you

