

PRT REVIEW 2015/16 - RESPONSE TO FEEDBACK

Each year, the RCC's PRT Committee undertakes a review of the PRT programme in order to help ensure it meets the needs of participants and other stakeholders. This review involves collection and analysis of a range of data, including feedback information from graduates (PRT candidates) and trainers (mentors), and an 'annual review meeting' to which all professional associations are invited.

The feedback information collected from graduates and trainers is particularly important in helping to determine whether the PRT programme is achieving its aims, especially in terms of meeting the needs of graduates. It provides insight and enables us to identify and explore ways we can continually improve the scheme.

The purpose of this brief paper is to highlight and respond to a range of queries raised by graduates and trainers who completed an anonymous feedback questionnaire distributed in February/March 2016 and we are very grateful to all those who took the time to respond. The aim is to summarise some of the key findings and to provide further information in response to queries raised.

Promoting awareness of the PRT programme to students

We currently reach out to students by participating in presentations at the educational institutions and attending student events, where possible. We received some constructive feedback from graduates about how the RCC could do more to promote awareness of our organisation and the PRT programme and, with the help of the educational institutions, will be doing much more to engage with students earlier on in their undergraduate programmes. We are also actively seeking additional direct advice from recent graduates.

This year, we started a new email campaign aimed at targeting students who have recently graduated, providing them with information about the PRT programme, outlining the vital skills the programme can help to develop and providing key contact information should students wish to find out more.

PRT Handbook

The launch of a new PRT Handbook last year was an attempt to convert the old ring-binder into a more appealing resource which is more accessible, more convenient and easier to use. However, feedback suggested that some have found elements of the booklet confusing. We recognise the need for some changes in terms of both design and content and these will be incorporated into the next scheduled print run.

Assistance in finding a suitable trainer

A small number of graduates told us they faced difficulties finding a suitable trainer. For some graduates, their trainer is the Principal, Partner or other experienced chiropractor in the practice in which they take up an associate position while, for others, their trainer is an experienced chiropractor working in a separate clinic.

We hold a list of registered trainers, so graduates having difficulty finding a trainer should contact us directly; we are more than happy to help. A new Jobs section was recently created on our website

<http://rcc-uk.org/classified-jobs/>) which provides a list of Chiropractic Associate jobs that are known to be currently available at practices where PRT is offered.

We suggest that graduates considering taking up a post where there is no registered trainer should ask their Principal to talk to us about registering as a trainer. Full details about this are available in the PRT menu on our website at <http://rcc-uk.org/become-a-prt-trainer/>

PRT A, B and C meetings

The quality of the PRT A, B and C meetings were highly rated in this year's survey, but there was an indication that more could be done to improve the accessibility of the meetings. While we strive to make the meetings as accessible as possible by hosting them in many regions, we understand the dates are not always convenient everyone, resulting in graduates having to travel to another region to attend a particular meeting. Whilst we appreciate this is not ideal, we will continue to offer as many date and location options as possible. Graduates who have particular problems attending the meetings held in their region are encouraged to contact us and we will try to help and suggest alternative solutions. Individual requirements can sometimes be accommodated where there are clear mitigating circumstances.

On occasion, graduates tell us that some material covered in the ABC meetings has already been covered at college. While this may be the case for some graduates, it is important that all graduates at a given meeting are brought up to speed before moving on to share how what was learnt at college is now being *applied* in practice. Candidates with particular knowledge and experience are encouraged to share their insight with the whole group and actively participate in helping everyone to learn.

The most and least valued aspects of the PRT programme

Mentor support and peer group interactions

The PRT programme aims to further the learning experienced at your graduating college and looks to share knowledge and experiences on the *application* of this prior learning with trainers, regional PRT tutors and other graduates. It was good to receive feedback that the majority of graduates particularly value the support and regular contact with their trainer and the networking opportunities the PRT programme brings through the regional PRT meetings.

Written work and clinical audit

The least valued aspects about the PRT programme for graduates were the written work and clinical audit. Documenting your experiences in the Trainer Log and in your reflective diary is important in terms of assisting the identification of individual learning needs and outcomes, and helps provide the focus for discussions between graduates and trainers. As such, it is a necessary evil!

Clinical audit is a helpful and constructive process that seeks to improve patient care and clinical outcomes through the systematic review of care against explicit criteria and the implementation of change. Clinical audit is an important part of any healthcare service as it helps to ensure the best possible care is delivered. While we appreciate that graduates have learned about the process and application of clinical audit during their undergraduate education, the PRT programme seeks to encourage graduates to use this knowledge and apply it to real patients in their own clinical situations.

Experiential learning

Many graduates tell us they particularly value the experience of observing other healthcare practitioners during their PRT programme. The purposes of observing non-chiropractic healthcare professionals in practice are three-fold: graduates gain an insight into the practices of other professions, these other professions gain a greater understanding of chiropractic and, potentially, new referral pathways are established. However, it was brought to our attention that the PRT handbook implies that other

chiropractors should not be observed in practice. This is absolutely not the case! Although observing other chiropractors practising is not a stated *requirement* of the PRT programme, graduates are strongly encouraged to observe as many other chiropractors as they can.

Online business modules

When asked about what they think the PRT programme should do to help graduates adjust to autonomous chiropractic practice, feedback from both trainers and graduates this year highlighted the need for help with business skills. Last year, the RCC launched a range of online business management learning modules to help address this. While potentially useful for all chiropractors, the modules were primarily designed to support graduates either in setting up their own practice, or in taking an active and supportive role in developing the practice in which they currently work.

However, our feedback shows that while 68% of respondents are aware of the modules, only 13% have actually used them. Further information about the online business modules can be found here: <http://rcc-uk.org/online-learning-business-management/> We automatically enrol/re-enrol the current cohort of graduates on the online business modules approximately every six months. When enrolled, candidates receive an automated enrolment email from our e-learning service. However those who have not received enrolment details and would like to access the modules should email us at: admin@rcc-uk.org.

Last year, the RCC started funding the annual delivery of a one-day 'pre-PRT' business development seminar to final year students at each of the educational institutions with the assistance of our partners at Painless Practice. These were extremely well received by undergraduates but not very well attended. We plan to work with the colleges to improve the publicity for these seminars.

Cost of the PRT programme

Over 65% of all respondents to our recent survey thought the £20.83 per month charge for RCC provisional membership, which includes full participation in the PRT programme, is about right. We are only in a position to provide PRT as part of an inclusive Provisional membership package due to the generosity RCC members, who are PRT trainers, regional PRT tutors and PRT Committee members, in terms of giving their time. The PRT programme is not run for profit and there are many costs associated with running it, as outlined on our website at: <http://rcc-uk.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/The-cost-of-providing-the-RCC-PRT-programme.pdf>

Overall quality of PRT administration

While the overall quality of PRT administration was highly rated this year, we feel there is always room for improvement. Our PRT administration team are here to help all PRT participants and always welcome feedback. Should you have any questions or comments regarding any aspect of the PRT programme, please do not hesitate to contact us.

PRT programme contacts and links

Email enquiries: admin@rcc-uk.org

Telephone enquiries: 0118 946 9727

RCC website: <http://rcc-uk.org>

Online Business Modules: <http://rcc-uk.org/online-learning-business-management/>

Benefits of RCC Membership: <http://cld.bz/IOufsP>