

PRT REVIEW 2016/17 - RESPONSE TO PRT 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 candidates and trainers (mentors), and an 'annual review meeting' to which all professional associations are invited.

The feedback information collected from PRT candidates ('graduates') and PRT trainers ('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 March 2017 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

The RCC prides itself on the solid relationships that have been built with all the chiropractic colleges. We continue to reach out to students by participating in presentations at the educational institutions, attending student events and using targeted email and social media campaigns to publicise the PRT programme.

PRT candidates have told us it would be beneficial to students if we publicised the PRT programme earlier in their college experience, not just in the final year. With the help of the educational institutions and, more recently, using social media campaigns, we have been doing much more to reach out to and engage with students earlier on in their undergraduate programmes over the past year. This has included brief visits to students in their earlier undergraduate years so that they are aware of the RCC and its relevance to them.

The RCC now routinely runs a 'business day' at the colleges to provide helpful employment and tax advice just prior to graduation, and to provide a taster of what is to come in the PRT programme.

PRT Handbook

When asked about the helpfulness of the PRT Handbook, we were pleased to see an increase of over 15% in the score of the 'good' rating or higher compared to the 2015/16 feedback survey. We have reviewed comments, incorporated changes and will continue to look at ways to improve the handbook in terms of design and content.

Candidates are reminded that the handbook is available in PDF form on the RCC website in the publications section. The handbook includes examples of the forms that candidates need to complete, but the actual forms for completion (Trainer Log, Learning Cycle, etc.) are provided as downloads at <http://rcc-uk.org/prt-forms/>

Assistance in 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 a smaller proportion, their trainer is an experienced chiropractor working in a separate clinic.

This year, 70% of respondents advised us they had no difficulty in finding a suitable PRT trainer, an increase of 10% compared to the last survey. We feel this improvement was due to a mixture of new and ongoing initiatives in place throughout 2016/17 to assist candidates in finding a suitable trainer:

- The launch of the advertised Chiropractic Associate jobs (<http://rcc-uk.org/classified-jobs/>) that are currently available with RCC members who offer PRT training;
- The list of registered trainers available from the PRT Administrator;
- Encouraging graduates who are considering taking up a post where there is no registered trainer to ask their Principal to talk to us about registering as a trainer. Full details about this are available on our website at <http://rcc-uk.org/become-a-prt-trainer/>
- Promoting awareness of M-level credits that can be awarded to PRT Trainers whose candidates have successfully completed the PRT programme, which can be used towards membership progression.

Our focus in the year ahead will be on the small number of graduates who told us they faced difficulty in finding a suitable trainer if their Principal is not able to undertake the role of PRT Trainer. We do have a dedicated cohort of trainers willing to mentor graduates with whom they do not work and continue to work towards improving the national coverage of these 'remote trainers' so that nobody's trainer is too far away when observations need to be undertaken. Note that for general discussion, use of skype can be very helpful in terms of keeping in regular touch.

Training the trainers

We will continue the initiatives mentioned above with the aim of building on the already excellent trainer base, particularly in terms of the recruitment of more trainers. We are delighted to announce the PRT Trainer's session at the forthcoming summer conference in June to which more than 70 trainers have signed up at the time of writing. This session forms part of a more supportive approach in the professional development of PRT trainers, which will also include new online learning resources and opportunities for regular discussion with other trainers.

PRT A, B and C meetings

The quality of the PRT A, B and C meetings was highly rated in this year's survey, and words such as passionate, motivating and inspiring were widely used to describe the tutors who delivered these meetings. This is a testament to the quality and experience of the regional PRT tutors who are dedicated to sharing their knowledge with candidates and enabling candidates to share their own thoughts and experiences in a relaxed and open environment.

The schedule of forthcoming A, B and C meetings is always available on our website (<http://rcc-uk.org/rcc-events/>). We understand that not all dates are convenient for all candidates resulting in them having to travel to a different region to attend a particular meeting. Whilst we appreciate this is not ideal, because we have many people involved in our regional meetings and to continue to ensure these are run as efficiently as possible, we are only able to host meetings on the dates published on our website.

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.

Feedback suggests that some graduates felt they didn't learn anything new from the ABC meetings because the content has already been covered at college. It is important to note that whilst some of the

content may have been covered at college, different undergraduates had different learning experiences, and the emphasis in terms of the PRT programme is on how that content is now being *applied* in practice. The purpose of the ABC meetings is to learn through a shared experience of how earlier learning has been applied and to encourage group discussion and networking. All candidates are encouraged to actively participate by sharing their experiences at these meetings.

Having said that, the RCC has embarked on a programme to review the content of the meetings and associated resources, and significant changes to the B meeting have already been implemented such that this now focuses largely on business development delivered with the input of experts in the field.

Online business modules

In response to previous feedback from candidates and trainers, the RCC provides a range of online learning modules in business management designed to support new graduates in their first/earlier years. We are delighted that the use of the online business modules has increased by over 30% in the last year. Further information about the online business modules can be found here: <http://rcc-uk.org/online-learning-business-management/>

Graduates are automatically enrolled onto the online business modules and should receive an automated enrolment email from our RCC.elearning247 service. If you have not received enrolment details and would like to access the modules, please email us at: admin@rcc-uk.org

The most and least valued aspects of the PRT programme

Mentor support and peer group interactions

The majority of graduates assign most value to the continuous support, guidance and feedback received from their trainer. However, they also highly value the opportunity to share experiences and create a support network with other recent graduates afforded through participation in the regional PRT meetings.

Clinical audit and reflective diary

The least valued aspects about the PRT programme for graduates are the clinical audit and reflective diary.

There was a perception that because one reflects in their day-to-day activities anyway, there isn't any real need to document these reflections. Documenting your experiences and reflecting on your actions is important and encourages practitioners to record and think about their professional activities and bridges the gap between experience and learning. Documenting actions can help set the agenda for discussions between the candidate and trainer and focuses attention on learning needs. Thus, the diary is just meant to be a simple means of recording learning incidents that occur so they can be reflected on later.

Clinical audit is a helpful process that seeks to improve patient care and clinical outcomes through the systematic review of care against explicit criteria and the implementation of change. It's an important process in any healthcare service as it helps to ensure the best possible care is delivered. Graduates told us that they had already learned about the process of clinical audit and applied it during their undergraduate education. However, the PRT programme seeks to encourage graduates to use this knowledge and apply clinical audit *routinely* to patients in their workplace. Note that Trainers placed the value of Clinical Audit much higher up the list in terms of the importance of PRT components.

Cost of the PRT programme

We appreciate there are many other fees to pay, not only during your first year out of college, but throughout your chiropractic career. For this reason, we keep the cost of RCC provisional membership,

which includes full participation in the PRT programme, as low as possible at £20.83 per month (£250 for the year). Over 60% of all respondents felt this is about right. Please note that it is the generosity of RCC members who are PRT trainers, regional PRT tutors and PRT Committee members, in terms of the time and effort they apply, which allows us to offer the provisional membership/PRT participation so cost effectively. The costs associated with running the PRT are outlined on our website at: <http://rcc-uk.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/The-cost-of-providing-the-RCC-PRT-programme.pdf>

PRT administration team

Our PRT administration team is here to help all PRT participants. 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