

UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS BIRMINGHAM NHS FOUNDATION TRUST**Guardian of Safe Working: Combined Quarterly Report:****Quarter Q3 + Q4 (2019-2020): Date period: 01/02/2020-31/07/2020**

It remains a requirement of the 2016 Junior Doctor contract for the trust Guardian of Safe Working (GSW) to hold responsibility for ensuring that issues of compliance with safe working hours are addressed in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Junior Doctor contract - this includes the overall responsibility for overseeing the Junior Doctors' Exception Reporting (ER) process. The GSW is required to submit a report at least quarterly, on the analysis of the ERs submitted by junior doctors with an extended Annual Report to the Trust Board. It was agreed, following the Q1 report submitted to the Board on 30/3/17 that all future quarterly reports would be presented through the Performance Report structure. A final Annual Report at the end of each academic year will be produced to coincide with the major house change.

1. SUMMARY OF EXCEPTION REPORTS IN PERIOD:

Junior Doctor Exception Reports (ERs) for Q3 1/2/20 – 30/4/20) + Q4 (1/5/20 – 31/7/20) period are summarised in table 1 below. The full spreadsheets (Appendix 1 and 2) are anonymised and indexed by rota:

TABLE 1: Exception Reports Q3 & Q4 2020-2021				
	QEHB Q3	QEHB Q4	HGS Q3	HGS Q4
Hours	11	1	22	1
Education	1	0	7	0
Pattern of work	0	0	2	0
Service Support	1	0	0	0
Total ERs for period Q3 + Q4 (01/02/2020-31/07/2020):	14		32	
TOTAL ERs for UHB all sites:	46			

1.1 Immediate Safety Concerns (ISCs):

At QEHB one ISC was raised as an Exception Report. The incident referred to missed attendance at mandatory F1 teaching sessions, and workload due to sickness without specific reference to patients coming to harm. The GSW is satisfied that these concerns were mitigated at the time when the concerns arose. At HGS sites two ISCs were raised through Exception Reporting. The concerns were of an educational nature and were managed appropriately with no on-going concerns.

1.2 Guardian Fines (Comments where applicable):

In February 2020, there were two occurrences of GSW fines against rota QEHB044 – Neurosurgery (Division 5).

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2. AREAS OF SIGNIFICANT TREND/CONCERN IN PERIOD:

- 2.1 Prior to the implementation of the emergency rotas the main source of ERs at HGS showing a regular trend were from juniors working in the Gastroenterology service. Steps were put in progress to mitigate the issues including changing work patterns to accommodate MDT and bidding for increased numbers of junior doctors including international training fellows.
- 2.2 Two ERs raised in Neurosurgery (QEHB044 ST3+ Tier 1) on 26 and 28 Feb 2020 led to GSW fines as a result of exceeding the maximum permitted 13 hour shift length due to extended handover requirement post night duty. This matter was assigned for work schedule review - the specialty has since increased junior attendance at handover.

3. ROTA GAPS:

Due to the uncoupling of rotas in order to stand up emergency working arrangements, this information is not currently available and will be reviewed for the Annual Report.

4. GUARDIAN EXCEPTION REPORTING REVIEW GROUPS (GERRG)

GERRG meetings at both QEH and HGS were cancelled during the emergency period.

5. GSW ANALYSIS/COMMENTS:

- 5.1 At the end of March 2020, under the direction of the Senior Responsible Clinicians, all trust doctors in training were deployed to staff the clinical areas under new emergency rotas based on patterns of 4 x 12 hour shifts + 4 days of rest. The low number of ERs for Q4 and combined period is reflective of the implementation of emergency rotas beginning 27/03/2020 as part of the trust's coronavirus pandemic emergency planning. Exception reporting remained available via the Allocate software. The emergency rotas were stepped down in a phased approach during June - July 2020
- 5.2 It is the belief of the GSW that doctors in training were working well within the rostered hours of the emergency rotas. All Consultant staff including the GSW and Deputy GSW worked full clinical rotas throughout the first wave of the pandemic and this afforded significant clinical and moral support to the juniors.
- 5.3 There is an ambition to continue the work already commenced to reform multiple rotas across the Trust to enable major reconfiguration of acute and elective services, and to improve out-of- hours emergency cover. Medical Workforce and the Junior Doctors Monitoring Office is engaged in the rota redesign process to meet service and educational requirements and this remains a significant piece of work in progress.
- 5.4 In order to meet the needs of the service during phase 1 of the pandemic, a relaxation of some elements of the JD contract were

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approved by NHSE/BMA – specifically weekend frequency; this relaxation is withdrawn from August 2020. The ‘generic emergency template rotas’ were designed to represent the “4 on 4 off” work pattern and are therefore only recommended for use in emergency situations.

- 5.5 The nature of the emergency and the timeframes in which the trust was required to step up the medical cover did lead to challenges in the movement of juniors between rotas and monitoring rota changes; it is anticipated that previous experience will facilitate an improved approach in the event of a return to emergency covid rotas.
- 5.5 It was clear that some of the changes implemented during the phase 1 emergency period were received very positively by junior doctors. The “wobble rooms” and other break out areas were greeted positively, as was the availability of food and beverages out of hours especially in HGS. The institution of similar resources routinely would seemingly improve the welfare and wellbeing of junior staff and the GSWs are keen to support further development of such facilities.
- 5.6 The GSWs will ensure that briefing on Exception Reporting is delivered to the new doctors in training who join the Trust in August 2020 and junior doctors will be strongly encouraged to highlight concerns and ideas through the ER process to enable the trust to adapt work patterns accordingly. The GSWs will continue to monitor safe working under the emerging rotas in the next academic year August 20- August 21.

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14/9/2020

Appendix 3