Personal Development Advice for National Grid neonatal trainees.

The goal of National Grid training is to prepare the doctor for a consultant role in Neonatal Medicine. This must cut across the board of clinical and nonclinical skills. This reflects what the appointing committees for new consultants will be looking for. Grid training offers a place to achieve these goals.

This short document sets out some of the advice. There is no formula or agreed way to do this. The Neonatal CSAC hope this will be helpful.

Clinical excellence
- sine qua non -

Clinical excellence is an absolute essential. All UK trainees must complete their curriculum.

High standards of knowledge, skills and performance, clinical decision-making and the ability to share this with the care team and the family are necessary. This is at the heart of everything we do looking after newborn infants.

The 2nd vital component is readiness to be a consultant. This is reflected in the stations that you come across in START. This does not mean that we must know everything and possess all the non-clinical skills. The new consultant works with and for a team. We all continue to learn, to develop skills, and acquire new expertise when we are consultants. All of us who are consultants were the same.

The capabilities that are achieved on Grid training may be divided into clinical and non-clinical. All should demonstrate the generic or core clinical and non-clinical capabilities set out in the curriculum. Most will take forward some areas of special interest.

There are some important principles:

- No one can be excellent at everything.
- None of us really completes our training – ever!
- Ideally, initiate an interest with a view to growing in that area of expertise as a consultant.
- Remain flexible and ready to change.
- If you want to show an interest then do something that shows you are interested:
  - eg if it is teaching, do some teaching, collect feedback, attend a course
Areas of special interest

In UK training, some experience will be gained in all areas, aligned with the agreed curriculum.

It is good to have some areas of Special Interest. This is where you have developed experience, skills, awareness or achievements that are over and above what is expected of everyone. There is no rule here. Consider personal development in 2 clinical areas and 2 nonclinical areas.

Clinical areas include:

Paediatric Subspecialty in Newborns (eg neurology, cardiology)
  Obstetrics • Genetics • Fetal medicine • Breast feeding
    Palliative care • Follow up • Discharge planning
  Transport • Pharmacology and prescribing • Infection control
  Integrated care • Neurodisability • Family centred care

Non-Clinical areas include:

  Leadership • Management • Service design • Health politics
  Research • Medical Education • Multiprofessional Education
  Education support • Supervision • Mentor
  Governance • Quality improvement • Guideline development
  Clinical networks • Outreach • RCPCH

If some of these or other areas of personal development appeal to you then there are many ways to approach this. Probably the most important thing is to talk to a colleague who knows more than you do.
Suggested approach in areas of special interest

- **Explore.** Google it. See what RCPCH, the Department of Health, other agencies in the UK or overseas are developing for future. What is happening in your Trust, in your Region and further afield? What does the published literature say?
- **Plan.** How will you approach this? Where do you want to end up? How will you continue to develop this interest as a consultant? What does the future hold for your area of special interest, for families affected and for you?
- **Agree.** Always agree your personal development plan with your supervisor. Time out of core training should always be by prior agreement with your supervisor, your employer, your deanery [LETB] and your CSAC.
- **Discuss.** Talk about how to develop your interest: with experts, with those who are involved, with families who might be affected. Do a small survey, run a focus group, complete a metanalysis.
- **Visit.** Go and see facilities, techniques, places, people and families. Consider travelling to other places, other countries or centres of excellence.
- **Document.** SMART objectives are hard to write but a good discipline. Agree them and put them in your PDP. Keep a logbook. Save minutes from meetings. Write reflective notes. Collect feedback. Publish.

**Summary**

Our advice is, achieve clinical excellence, and think about building some areas of special interest. This can drive learning, stoke up your enthusiasm, give you the edge in that consultant interview and also be a lot of fun.