Chief Registrar Programme
Guidance for mentors
2022–23

Thank you for offering your time and support to mentor an RCP chief registrar. This short briefing is intended to signpost you to sources of information to support the mentoring relationship, and provide insight into chief registrars' needs and requirements that we have learned through evaluation and feedback from chief registrars themselves.

What do chief registrars do?

Chief registrars lead local change initiatives within and across teams and organisations to improve:

> patient safety and experience

> education and training of trainees

> efficiency and effectiveness of services

> engagement between trainees and senior clinical leaders

> engagement between clinicians and managers.

Your role as a mentor

> Conduct regular mentoring sessions to explore key development areas.

> Enable networking opportunities to widen the professional network of your chief registrar including participation at senior meetings.

> Enable your chief registrar to align their activities with organisational development needs

> Champion multi-professional involvement in chief registrar improvement work and activities

> Present leadership opportunities for chief registrars and support them to increase their visibility across the organisation.

> Encourage local clinicians and colleagues to interact with their organisation's chief registrar and trainees to share experience of leadership and QI.

> Participate in opportunities offered by the RCP to connect with other mentors and to share learning.

Where to access support and resources for quality improvement

> Before we start the 2022–23 programme, we would like to invite you to a mentor induction, and you will receive an email with further information outlining this.

> This will be held via Microsoft Teams and there will be an opportunity to ask the programme team any questions you may have about the programme or expectations. We will then encourage you to connect with other mentors to share experiences and obtain peer support.The RCP will facilitate mentor calls during the chief registrar year to support your role.

> We will send out a mentor briefing on what was covered during this session, highlighting key points you may want to discuss further with your chief registrars.

> The following blog posts may provide useful guidance from previous chief registrar mentors:

  – Dr Carlo Prina, consultant geriatrician

  – Dr Gareth Lewis, consultant in acute medicine and nephrology

  – Dr Rachel Tennant, consultant in respiratory and acute medicine

> If your knowledge of quality improvement (QI) is limited, a useful resource is the Health Foundation's 'Quality improvement made simple' guide.

> The RCP has also developed an e-learning package for educational supervisors on supervising QI projects.

If you are new to mentoring:

> Read the RCP's 10 tips for successful mentoring.

> Books and resources on mentoring are available via the RCP Library.

What factors are important for chief registrars to succeed?

Evidence from the independent evaluation undertaken by the Health Services Management Centre at the University of Birmingham in 2017, and feedback from the chief registrars themselves, has highlighted that the following areas are important for the success of the role:

> Chief registrars benefit from autonomy to pursue their own ideas (balanced with support and guidance where needed).

> Chief registrars benefit from flexibility in organising clinical / chief registrar time to balance commitments.

> The maintenance of protected time (40–50% for chief registrar role) is crucial, especially where chief registrars are leading larger service development projects.

> Regular and easy access to, and support from, senior clinical and managerial staff (including medical director, director of medical education and chief executive) is important.

> A goal-setting process at the start of the post to identify aims and plan objectives helps to provide structure and direction.

'Mentoring is to support and encourage people to manage their own learning in order that they may maximise their potential, develop their skills, improve their performance and become the person they want to be.'

– The Oxford School of Coaching and Mentoring

Feedback from chief registrars

Chief registrars have reflected that they need and value:

> regular timetabled meetings with their mentor (these should be monthly at a minimum)

> introductions to and induction meetings with key people at the start of the role – medical director / director of medical education / chief executive in particular

> regular timetabled meetings with medical director / director of medical education / chief executive if possible and/or the ability to shadow for a period of time

> clear understanding of the organisation's values and objectives

> dedicated office space

> not being 'spread too thin' – chief registrars are more effective when they can concentrate on one or two significant projects with the right level of support

> ideas for projects to give direction and purpose (more important at the beginning of their role when getting started)

> constructive feedback on new ideas and dealing with the challenges of implementation

> support to procure resources, collaboration and funding for projects

> support in overcoming individual ideas for projects to give direction and purpose (more important at the beginning of their role when getting started)

> constructive feedback on new ideas and dealing with the challenges of implementation

> support to procure resources, collaboration and funding for projects

> support in overcoming individual or organisational resistance.

How to make the most of your mentoring relationship

> Respond to the initial contact made by the mentee at the beginning of the programme.

> Engage in conversation with your mentee to establish learning and development priorities and to set expectations at the beginning of the year.

> Meet with the mentee on a regular basis during the programme either in person, via telephone or teleconferencing.

> Have an outline structure for the conversation, for example check in; review action plan; agree focus; explore opportunities and challenges; clarify actions and date of next session.

> Contact your mentee in advance if you are unable to connect for an arranged session.

> Respond to specific requests for assistance and guidance from the mentee where appropriate or suggest other support avenues.

> Encourage the mentee to identify areas of strength and areas for further development, particularly with regards to the competencies and career development surrounding leadership roles and consider options through which they might develop further.

> Be a 'wayfinder' and 'champion' for the chief registrar.

What challenges and barriers do chief registrars face?

> Unclear purpose / lack of direction at the beginning of the role, and during the projects

> Resistance to the role from peers and colleagues

> Feeling overwhelmed and out of their depth at the start

> Feeling isolated

> Resistance to change and lack of motivation from colleagues

> Not knowing which stakeholders to engage and how to access them

> Limited time to achieve tangible results from their projects

> Sometimes unclear or unrealistic expectations from their organisations

> Operational issues putting pressure on protected time, particularly if they have a full on-call rota commitment

Where to find ideas for chief registrar projects

> Chief registrar yearbooks, posters and presentations are a good source of inspiration as are chief registrar blogs.

> Contact the RCP if there is a specific area you are considering and want to know if any other chief registrars and/ or healthcare teams have implemented similar projects. Please email **chiefregistrar@rcp.ac.uk**.

Project examples

> Facilitating junior doctor forum

> Arranging and chairing Grand Rounds

> Improving weekend discharge

> Establishing ambulatory care and 'acute hospital at home' services

> Redesigning pathways

> Medical handover and Hospital at Night

> Improving discharge summaries

> Reforming induction processes

> Developing simulation training

> Coaching and mentoring trainees

> Renovating doctors' mess and introducing 'mess meetings'

> Involvement in deanery/GMC/CQC visits

> Improving referral processes

> Improving ward round standards

> Wellbeing for junior doctors

> Supporting the medical registrar workforce

If you experience any difficulties or require any support in the mentoring relationship, please inform the RCP at chiefregistrar@rcp.ac.uk who can offer advice and guidance as needed.