

Case Study: Newcastle Oncology Taster Week

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Length of taster: One week

Frequency: Available as required to interested trainees

Target audience: It is suitable for both prospective clinical and medical oncology trainees, and is particularly helpful for people interested in oncology but who have had no exposure to radiotherapy, to help them decide.

Format: There is a timetable of options for the week which the trainee can choose from but we suggest they attend at least one planning session, one MDT meeting and one ward session. We ask them to email the supervisors a few weeks before to make sure they won't be on leave. This ensures people don't turn up and the session isn't happening (always disheartening).

Supervision and support: All the supervisors who are on the timetable have volunteered, most have an interest in training and are keen to meet and encourage prospective trainees. This enthusiasm is key to attracting people in.

As overall lead for the programme I arrange to meet the trainee on the first day, so they are welcomed and shown round the department, introduced to the registrars, shown somewhere to leave bags etc. If I am away I ask one of the other supervisors to do it instead and put them in direct touch so the trainee knows who to ask for, where to go etc.

If the trainee needs guidance on which sessions to choose I meet them and help them in advance to take them through the options.

How is it advertised? We advertise the opportunity on the foundation school part of the intranet which gives my contact email. We also use informal links and word of mouth, e.g. foundation doctors approaching oncologists in peripheral hospitals, or via our clinical director, who put the trainees in touch with me. We are currently looking for opportunities to advertise it more widely.

Engagement and feedback: We have only had small numbers take part so far but informal feedback has been good. The trainees who have done it have been very positive and some are now pursuing it as a career. If feedback received is positive, we follow up with offers to meet and offer career advice etc.

One participant, who is now in the process of applying for a clinical oncology training post had this to say:

'In the run-up to ST3 applications, I was given the opportunity to undertake a taster week within the Oncology Department covering Newcastle upon Tyne and the surrounding region to gain some exposure to working in Oncology and how the teams work in this area.

In the four days I spent with the team at the NCCC, I attended clinics in both central and peripheral hospitals, radiotherapy planning sessions and multi-disciplinary team planning meetings. The department have put a lot of effort into organising a structured week with lots of different opportunities – allowing a realistic and comprehensive insight into the typical working week of an oncology trainee. All the members of staff were so welcoming and enthusiastic – I thoroughly enjoyed my time with the department, and will certainly be pursuing a career in Oncology following my experience.'

See overleaf for the timetable and options available

Timetable and options available to trainees:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
AM	Upper GI and HPB FU <u>clinic</u> (MO) OR <u>Radiotherapy planning</u> 3 consultants with site specialist interest of : lung/lower GI or lung/lower GI or breast/head and neck OR Early phase <u>trials unit</u> (MO) OR breast <u>clinic</u> (CO) OR <u>radiotherapy review</u> "floor" clinic	<u>Radiotherapy planning</u> (lung, male GU) OR <u>Radiotherapy review clinic</u> level OR Lower GI <u>clinic</u> (CO) OR Nurse led oral chemo <u>clinic</u> day unit OR Melanoma targeted therapies <u>clinic</u> (MO)	Lymphoma <u>clinic</u> (CO) OR Upper GI <u>clinic</u> (MO) OR <u>Radiotherapy planning</u> (lung upper GI)	Urology <u>clinic</u> OR HPB/NET <u>MDM</u> OR Head and Neck <u>clinic</u> (CO) OR Breast <u>clinic</u>	Upper GI <u>MDM</u> OR <u>Ward</u> OR <u>Radiotherapy planning</u> (breast/lung)
PM	<u>Ward</u> - ward SHOs OR breast <u>clinic</u> (CO) OR lung/upper GI <u>clinic</u> (CO)	Melanoma <u>clinic</u> (joint CO/MO) OR <u>Ward</u> –ward SHOs	Colorectal <u>MDM</u> OR Uro-oncology <u>clinic</u> OR consultant <u>ward round</u> (GI team)	<u>Trials unit</u> (MO) OR <u>Radiotherapy planning</u> (head and neck, breast)	Upper GI new patient <u>clinic</u> (MO) OR Upper GI/ Lung <u>Clinic</u> (CO)

Additional offsite options, if transport is available, to peripheral hospitals.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
AM		Peripheral hospital Upper GI <u>MDM</u> Followed by Upper GI/CUP <u>clinic</u>	Peripheral hospital Lung <u>clinic</u> Followed by Lung <u>MDM</u>	Peripheral hospital Lung MDM Followed by either Upper GI/lung <u>clinic</u> OR Lung/lower GI <u>clinic</u>	
pm		Upper GI/CUP <u>clinic</u>		Upper GI/Lung <u>clinic</u>	