

HOW TO BE A GOOD BUDDY

WHERE TO GET ADDITIONAL INFO ABOUT HOW TO BE A GOOD BUDDY/MENTOR

- Online mentoring training: <https://www.e-lfh.org.uk/programmes/medical-mentoring/> - we would really recommend you take this. It takes about half an hour and is really useful. To sign up, you just need an NHS email address. Please email us if you haven't got one and we'll see how we can help.
- A podcast episode: <https://onthewards.org/how-to-find-and-be-a-good-mentor/>
- Most Royal Colleges do courses on mentoring, or your deanery may run a course - check on their websites.
- Ask your own colleagues and supervisors for advice and tips. It may help to let your supervisor know that you're being a buddy, as they may offer some advice or support if you need.

WHAT TO DISCUSS IN THE FIRST MEETING

- Get to know each other - maybe pick up on a few of the things the FY1 has sent you in answering the introductory questions, ask a few more questions about them, tell them a bit about yourself
- Find out what the FY1's concerns are
- How has their experience of induction, shadowing, working been so far? Any difficulties come up?
- What are their goals?
- What do they expect from the buddying relationship?
- Aim to agree some goals and a way of working together and encourage the FY1 to think about what issues they want to bring to discussions with you - they're in charge of what they get from this.
- Discuss confidentiality - you may share things with us co-ordinating the scheme, but beyond that, you would only break their confidentiality if necessary. The most likely person you'd speak to is their educational supervisor or foundation programme director (it would be helpful to get the names of these if the FY1 is happy to share these).

Likewise, you may wish to share personal things yourself, like difficult experiences you had as an FY1, and your FY1 should keep these things confidential for you.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS?

1. Email us at: info@fy1buddynetwork.co.uk
2. Can you share those concerns with your FY1? If so, it may help to discuss the concerns together. Advise them to speak to their supervisor, foundation programme director, take time off sick if needed, point them in the direction of support. (see the Useful Resources section of our website)
3. If you're not sure, and you want some advice from other buddies, post in our closed Facebook group for buddies. Post anonymously by messaging the admin team if you prefer.
4. If you think your concerns need escalating, contact the FY1's educational supervisor and/ or training programme director (you should be able to find the FPD for the FY1's hospital online or by contacting the medical education department at that hospital, and the foundation administrator should be able to give you details of who the educational supervisor is, if you don't already know). Bear in mind a support structure already exists for every FY1 - ie their employing trust/health board in the form of supervisors and foundation programme directors, and we should support and link in to that existing structure if needed.
5. If you have an immediate concern for someone's safety, you can only call 999/advise to attend A&E. You don't have any responsibility for your FY1 beyond what you would advise any colleague/member of the public.

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR FY1 DOESN'T REPLY?

Remember they are busy, possibly feeling a bit overwhelmed. Give them a week, then send a friendly reminder email/message.

Give that a few days, then contact them by another means - if you already emailed, then send them a text message. If you whatsapped, then email, etc.

If still no word, please email us at info@fy1buddynetwork.co.uk so that we can update our database and potentially match you with another FY1.

TOP TIPS:

- Try to recognise when your FY1 may benefit from support or expertise beyond what you can provide. Signpost to any of the organisations linked in our Useful Resources section of our website (<http://fy1buddynetwork.co.uk/useful-resources/>), but mention whilst signposting that you're still keen to support how you can, even if that's just listening. Remember that life will happen throughout their FY1 year (e.g. bereavements, illness), and so they may benefit from signposting to resources that aren't doctor-specific.
- Remember you don't have to fix everything for your FY1, you can help just by listening, empathising, metaphorically holding their hand through a challenging time, pointing out what they're doing well, building their confidence. You're not going to stop a difficult time being difficult, FY1 is a steep learning curve, but you may be able to help them get through it.
- If your FY1 is struggling, asking them to send you a "daily tweet" can be a really effective tool. Ask them to send you a short message or email, about the length of a tweet (280 characters), each working day, not expecting any immediate response. If they're struggling with confidence, or they've had negative feedback, their daily tweet could be to tell you something they think they did well at work each day. If they're feeling demoralised in a boring or unpleasant post, their daily tweet could tell you something they learned at work each day - there will always be something, and this will remind them to look for it. It helps to reply occasionally, or give positive feedback on their reflective messages, but it wouldn't be expected every day. You can agree between you how long to continue doing this for, and you may wish to reduce the frequency when things are improving.
- If you feel like you're taking on too much, if being a buddy feels like an emotional burden, if you have less energy for this than you thought you had - talk to us. See if you can reframe the buddying relationship, change things whilst still supporting your FY1 if that could work for you, or let us know if your FY1 might benefit from having a different buddy either instead of, or as well as you - we can always arrange this. Remember we are here for you.
- Be proactive - contact them regularly, **don't wait for them to contact you**. Don't fall into the trap of saying "Just call me when you need help". That's a helpline - it's not mentoring.
- Be who you needed when you were an FY1.

If you end up working directly together, regularly or in the same team, it is ESSENTIAL that you contact us. We've heard previously that it can change the informal buddying relationship if the buddy becomes the FY1's supervisor or senior (and sometimes was quite difficult), and that could be a difficult situation for you to be in - to work out how to be both buddy and senior. We want to support you, and offer the FY1 another buddy they don't work directly with.

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE END OF THE YEAR?

We're expecting most FY1s to only use the scheme for a year. Some may be an FY1 for longer, if they're less than full time, or need to take time out during the year, and if so we'd hope you could arrange with them to continue the support until the end of their FY1, whenever that is. If you can't continue, but your FY1 is still an FY1, please let us know so we can allocate them a new buddy.

At the end of their FY1 time, you need to have a conversation with your FY1 about what they want to happen next and agree this between you. They may wish to ask you to continue to be their buddy, this is up to you whether to agree to this. If you can, that's great, just let us know so we can keep track of who's still involved in the buddy scheme. They may feel it is time to move on, free up you up to be a buddy for a new FY1.

From e-LfH: It is important to define right from the start how long the mentoring relationship will continue for. In most cases, this will be for a year. At the end of the period, it is important to review (and hopefully) celebrate what has been achieved.

It is better to acknowledge the end of the mentoring process, rather than allow it to just lose momentum and the relationship to either fade away or become awkward. This ending of the mentoring relationship is a chance to:

1. Say goodbye and thank you, or
2. To redefine the relationship as colleagues or even friends, or
3. If the mentee chooses to request it and the mentor is happy to do so, to agree to continue the mentoring relationship for a new defined period of time, in which case the cycle continues. Either way, be deliberate and clear about this last step of the mentoring process.