

# Industrial action in the NHS - practical advice for paediatric trainees and SAS doctors

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We fully appreciate you may have questions about the effects of any industrial action by paediatric doctors on you and your training. Here we provide advice on how you can continue your training - from managing your ePortfolio, being flexible around reflections and working with training units and schools to ensure your training needs are met.

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## Background

Following the announcement in July 2022 of the below inflation pay increases for NHS staff, alongside a rising cost of living, a number of NHS unions have been

consulting their members for views on industrial action (indicative ballot), formally balloting (statutory ballot) or taking industrial action.

The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) represents nurses across the UK. More information [about their industrial action can be found on the RCN website](#).

The British Medical Association (BMA) published a range of [information and advice to members about industrial action](#), which is well worth a look.

As a College we are not involved in the negotiation of terms and conditions of contracts, or pay discussions which is the remit of the unions as highlighted above. They have the staff, resources and expertise to take this forward.

Furthermore, as an organisation we are absolutely clear that the decision on whether or not to take industrial action is a personal choice.

We are aware of specific questions raised by paediatric trainees and SAS doctors through our Trainees Committee about what industrial action may mean for their training. We have therefore put together some information to help paediatric trainees navigate the current environment.

This web page contains:

- information to support trainees as nurses and advanced clinical practitioners consider or take industrial action
- advice from paediatricians on how trainees can continue their training during any periods of industrial action, or severe service disruption
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- If you have any questions or issues do feel free to speak to senior clinicians, consultants and/or managers.
- You should continue to follow the principles of the General Medical Council (GMC) [Good Medical Practice guidance](#). In particular you should only act within the limits of your competence.
- You can find out more about the [GMC's position on industrial action in their briefing](#).

## How can I continue my training during any periods of industrial action?

Our Trainees Committee has received some questions about the impact on training during possible industrial action within the health service, combined with winter pressures. We fully appreciate that as a trainee paediatrician you may have questions about the effects of industrial action by paediatric doctors on you and your training.

As a College we are here to support all our members with their education and lifelong careers.

We have also pulled together some general advice from paediatricians:

- **Keeping your ePortfolio up to date.** As always, we remind trainees that the best way to manage your portfolio is to keep up to date as you go along. Try to make the most of quieter times to get ahead with assessments and portfolio.
- **Maintaining flexibility for arrangements around reflections, note taking or discussions.** During busy times there are plenty of opportunities for learning and developing capabilities, but there may not be time for formal assessments or full reflections. You might consider making brief notes after a shift and returning to them later to record full reflections, discuss with supervisors or complete formal assessments when time allows.
- **Reviewing your evidence logs and assessment guides.** The [assessment table for the 2022/23 training year was revised](#) but retains many of the modifications put in during the COVID-19 pandemic and the number of mandatory assessments is small. Learning and development can be evidenced in many ways including reflection and using the service experience category in the development log.

- **Exception reporting in England:** Trainees should continue to exception report for missed training opportunities, even when this is unavoidable due to exceptional service pressures. This helps departments to evidence training and service gaps and work towards solutions.
- **Working with training units and schools to ensure your training needs are still met.** Some specific and formal training opportunities may have to be deferred during times of service disruption whether that is due to strike action or unusual service pressures. This may be unavoidable to maintain patient safety, and we know that training often needs flexibility; however, we would expect training units and schools to facilitate catch up of any outstanding training once things settle down. This might include prioritising clinic attendance or re-scheduling clinical commitments to take the opportunity to acquire specific technical capabilities. Please talk to your supervisor and/or Training Programme Director (TPD) if you feel your training has been affected.
- **Your Annual Review of Competency Progression (ARCP).** As a trainee, the decision to take part in industrial action per se should not affect your relationship with your trainers or your Annual Review of Competency Progression (ARCP) outcome.
  - Days TOOT since your previous ARCP, as per the [Gold guide time out of training \(TOOT\)](#), including taking industrial action, must be declared on your form R. For those in Core/Speciality training, if you take more than 14 days out of training (when you would normally be at work), a review will be triggered of whether you need to have your CCT date extended. This review would normally occur at your ARCP and extension is not automatic.
  - This applies whatever the reason for time out of training and includes days taken for sick leave or industrial action. If you are concerned that you have missed training opportunities due to time out of training, you should discuss with your supervisor or TPD. As always, progression is capability based, so as in the previous guidance, we would encourage trainees to be evidencing their learning in their ePortfolio and finding training opportunities now, in preparation for potentially missing training opportunities due to industrial action across the MDT.

We have also put together some general [FAQs for all members on industrial action](#).

# Resources for financial pressures and rising cost of living

We have received concerns that the rising cost of living is affecting trainees. If you or a colleague is looking for support there are a range of organisations, services and websites which can offer help. The Academy of Medical Royal Colleges has put together a