

Dear RCGP

SLOVTS (South London Vocational Training Schemes) represents the Guys & St Thomas', Kings' and Lewisham vocational training schemes. We recently had our annual trainer away day in which 56 trainers attended. We spent some of the time discussing growing concerns about the ePortfolio. This was stimulated after several emails amongst the London programme directors and a survey from the St Thomas' trainees, which came about because of them voicing their difficulties with the ePortfolio. The conclusion from our SLOVTS away day was that we would write a letter to the RCGP to voice our grave concerns regarding the current ePortfolio.

Whilst we acknowledge there are some very useful elements to it, like the addition of video as a formative tool and encouraging reflective learning, there have been some less useful and almost "tick box" aspects which are difficult for us to promote and for the trainees to adhere to. Specifically we as educators and trainers felt that

- There is too much emphasis on quantity rather than quality.
- Two learning log entries per week is unrealistic and too much especially in busy hospital posts.
- The whole form of the ePortfolio runs counter to a learner-centred approach. It feels mechanistic and imposed rather than formative and educational.
- The ePortfolio and its demands can easily become the centre of the learner's concern, rather than the learning itself.
- The IT support for trainers when the ePortfolio goes wrong is not adequate. Replies taking several weeks is unacceptable given we are constantly chasing trainees to complete their ePortfolio in time; yet are told if we cannot complete an educational supervisor's review due to IT issues, it does not matter. The inconstancy in these messages back to trainees is not helpful.
- The website needs to be supported by a much better server as it regularly is inaccessible especially on weekends when trainees post on call/nights wish to complete it.

We wonder if a period of engagement with trainees and trainers may help improve the ePortfolio and transform it from a potential punitive tool to a much more formative one that forms part of a summative assessment (MRCGP).

Kind regards

The Programme Directors of Guys' & St Thomas', Kings' and Lewisham VTS that form the SLOVTS Board which represents SE London GP trainers