## Foundation Trainee Guide to Self-Development Time (SDT) – Yorkshire and the Humber (from August 2021)

**What is SDT?**

SDT is time within your work schedule that is allocated for non-clinical activities to support your career and personal development.

All Foundation doctors (FY1 & FY2) should be allocated the equivalent of 2 hours per week. This can be taken every week, or more likely, as a block (i.e. one day full every month).

**What about LTFT trainees?**

SDT is pro-rata. This means that if you work 60%, you get the equivalent of 60% of the SDT your full-time colleagues receive.

**How do I get my SDT?**

SDT for foundation trainees is still relatively new, and you may need to remind your trust and supervisors that you are entitled to it. In the first instance speak to your educational or clinical supervisor about scheduling your SDT into your work schedule. If this is not successful, then you should raise this with your Foundation TPD.

**What is SDT for?**

SDT is designed to allow you to develop your own career interests. It is not the same as study leave and should not be used for clinical activities.

An example of suggested SDT activities:

* Meetings with your educational and clinical supervisors. Historically lots of trainees have had to have these meetings outside of working hours. You should be scheduling this as self-development time, and therefore being paid for the time you spend in these meetings.
* Formal reflection and eportfolio activities. You are not expected to use all of your SDT for eportfolio activities, but it may be appropriate to use some of this time to ensure that your eportfolio is up-to-date and progressing in line with ARCP requirements.
* Quality improvement – SDT could be used for data collection, analysis and/or presentation of your work.
* Career exploration and development – SDT is not the same as a taster day (which is part of your study leave), but can be used for activities to support your career aspirations. This might include a trainee who wishes to enter radiology training spending 4 hours of SDT sitting with the reporting radiologist, or a trainee who wishes to enter paediatric training attending a safeguarding peer review meeting. You could also use SDT to visit a unit/department informally or to meet with senior doctors to discuss your career aspirations or speciality training application.
* Teaching – SDT may be used to prepare or design a teaching session that you are planning to deliver, and to ensure that you receive feedback for your eportfolio.
* E-learning – you should not be using SDT for mandatory trust or departmental e-learning. However, you could use SDT for additional elearning that would support your future career. For example, the NHS Improvement Academy has free modules on Quality Improvement, Human Factors and Behaviour Change.

**What is SDT not for?**

* Clinical work! SDT should be timetabled into your work schedule, and should not be spent carrying out your usual clinical duties (even if you are working in a speciality in which you have an interest)
* Mandatory trust or departmental induction or e-learning
* Taster days – taster days are a separate entitlement as part of your foundation years and should be taken as study leave. They are designed to include a longer period of time when you are exposed to a speciality in which you have an interest. There have been some difficulties taking taster days due to COVID19, but it is still not appropriate to use SDT instead of missed taster days. You could however use SDT to enhance your speciality interests (examples as above).
* Routine attendance at meetings such as governance or morbidity and mortality meetings. If you are presenting a case, carrying out teaching on which you will receive feedback, or presenting quality improvement work then you can use SDT for those meetings.
* Annual leave/time off in lieu – SDT is not time to be used to make up for extra hours you have worked in a department. You should exception report this and have either pay or time off in lieu at another time.

**Things to remember**

SDT is for you to develop your career and your portfolio which require time outside of normal clinical work.

You need to schedule the SDT in conjunction with your educational and/or clinical supervisor and plan how you are going to spend the time with them. You should then be able to account for your SDT when you next meet your supervisor.

**More Information**

HEE produce national documents on SDT in the foundation programme:

<https://www.hee.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/documents/SDT%20FAQs%20for%20Trainees%20%26%20Supervisors.pdf>

<https://www.hee.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/documents/SDT%20-%20Intended%20Uses%20of%20SDT.pdf>

Self-Development Time: Guidance on “Self-Development Time” can be found on both the [NHS Employers](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/e_RYCXr2xh4XYyxtV_PX8?domain=nhsemployers.org) website and the [Health Education England](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/hFB6CWQXOf65BgAs6JGBC?domain=hee.nhs.uk) website.