



### ***What is the buddy scheme?***

The aim of the buddy scheme is to pair anaesthetic trainees with more senior trainees as a point of contact who they can approach for informal advice and support. This could be insight into how anaesthetic training works, the setup of the Mersey deanery, advice about starting on calls or how to use the online portfolio. It could also be advice about courses, useful books/resources/revision tips, general advice about living in the Mersey region or anything else you can think of!

### ***How does it work?***

Each core trainee/ST3 who signs up will be allocated a buddy, who will be a more senior trainee (anybody from CT2-ST7). At, or prior to, induction, the junior trainee will be asked for their permission to share their name and email address with an allocated senior trainee volunteering on the buddy scheme. Initial contact will then be initiated by the senior trainee via email. The junior trainee will hopefully respond, and it is then up to each individual pair to decide on how to continue communication, whether this is meeting in person, continuing with email contact, video calling or any other form of communication. Where possible, trainees will be from the same hospital. There is no set time over which the buddy pairing should continue, it may be just for the first few months, or may continue much longer into training, it really is up to you!

### ***How is buddying different from mentoring?***

Buddying is an informal relationship between two trainees, that is designed for simple advice and support. Mentoring may be defined as a “learning relationships which help people to take charge of their own development, to release their potential and to achieve results that they value”<sup>1</sup>. Mentoring is therefore designed to help people work through specific issues to develop a plan of action. Where mentors have often had formal training, this is not a requirement to be a buddy. If you are interested in either undertaking some mentoring training and becoming a mentor, or becoming a mentee, then please contact us and we will try and put you in touch with the right people.

Importantly, the buddy scheme is not designed to encroach on the role of Educational Supervisors, who should still be first point of contact for any serious concerns/problems.

### ***Is it only CT1s that can have a buddy?***

The buddy scheme has been running for CT1s since August 2019. The scheme is also available to trainees returning to work after a period of absence, CT2s starting at the Women’s Hospital and, from August 2020, new starter ST3s. If you are not a new starter and want to be paired up with a buddy then send us an email at [merseybuddies@gmail.com](mailto:merseybuddies@gmail.com) and we will see what we can do!

### ***How do I volunteer as a buddy on the scheme?***

The buddy scheme relies on the goodwill of trainees. If you are CT2 or above, and willing to help out then please let us know at [merseybuddies@gmail.com](mailto:merseybuddies@gmail.com).

### ***How is my data stored?***

All junior trainees will be asked at enrolment for permission to share their email address with the allocated buddy (who will then make initial contact via email). There is no obligation to share this information or to take part in the scheme. Information submitted via any trainees involved in the scheme, including email addresses/names/training grades/relevant hospital placements/LTFT status will be stored on a password-encrypted database and used to form a mailing list, accessible only to those involved in organising the buddy scheme. It will not be shared with any third parties and will not be stored for a period of time exceeding 18 months. If at any time you wish to remove your information from the database, then please let us know.

### ***References***

1. Connor & Pokora Coaching and Mentoring at Work 2012