Do you know about the Supported Return to Training programme (SuppoRTT)? If not, you should!

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The conviction of Hadiza Bawa-Garba for gross medical negligence and manslaughter reverberated throughout the medical profession. The day that 6-year-old Jack Adcock died was Dr Bawa-Garba’s first day on-call after a long absence from work due to maternity leave, and this has been cited as one of the factors that contributed to the events that led to his death.

It can be extremely difficult to transition back into medical work after a period of time away, and this case brought into sharp focus the importance of supporting doctors when they return from long periods of leave. In the words of one trainee: ‘I was judged and feel stupid, as a year ago I could have done these things with my eyes closed.’ Dr Bawa-Garba’s case demonstrated that the culture of ‘just crack on’ needs to change.

The government has now provided £10 million per year in a new investment to improve the return to work process. Health Education England (HEE) has used this to develop the Supported Return to Training Programme (SuppoRTT), which builds on the core principles discussed in the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges Return to Practice guidance that was revised in 2017. The purpose of the SuppoRTT programme is to enhance the experience of doctors returning to clinical practice enabling them to regain their confidence and previously acquired skills quickly and safely, significantly benefitting the wellbeing of our workforce and the safety of our patients.

What to do next
For everyone
- Visit your local HEE office website, details of which can be found at: www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/supporting-doctors-returning-training-after-time-out
- Find the SuppoRTT champion at your trust for further advice on the programme

Find the SuppoRTT champion at your trust
- Watch the 5 minute video demonstrating how to have a return to work conversation with a trainee: https://bit.ly/2RkGxl4

For consultants who supervise trainees
- Visit: https://mysupportt.com

For NHS HR / managers
- Ensure your trust has a SuppoRTT champion and that they have the resources they need to fulfil the role: www.lpmde.ac.uk/professional-development/inductreturnretain/rtp/supportt-champions-1

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