

Aim

To identify areas within the FY1 resident doctor rota at a Lanarkshire DGH for change to improve ward and therefore patient continuity. This aimed to improve staff wellbeing and help prevent burnout by analysing the current rota, implementing changes, and re-analysing the impact of the subsequent rota on ward continuity

Methods

A qualitative survey was sent to the 2024/2025 FY1s who had completed a medical/COTE block during block three of their FY1 (2025), allowing the identification of key issues regarding the rota. This helped to highlight specific shift patterns and issues which could be improved. A four-month period was then analysed (see data points collected). A new template was then proposed, and the same process was repeated following its implementation

Data Points Collected

- Total Number of Wards Worked On
- Instances of Working on a Ward for a Single Day
- Instances of working on a medical ward while on COTE LD (or vice versa)
- Maximum Number of wards worked on in one week (Monday - Friday)
- Maximum Consecutive time spent on one ward (weeks)
- Number of Individual Weeks working on one ward (Mon-Fri)
- No. of separate times working on ward >2 weeks (consecutively)
- No. of time working on ward >3 weeks (consecutively)



Results

Incidents of mismatch between in-hours wards and out-of-hours cover fell by 95%

Single-day ward working reduced by >31%

The number of weeks worked on one ward increased by 17.9%

Average maximum number of consecutive weeks increased from 3.04 to 3.6

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Conclusion

FY1 can often be a challenging time for new resident doctors as they learn to balance work and cope with the stress of the new responsibility placed upon them. It is important to recognise the need for a supportive and effective rota system to ease this transition.

The updated rota has greatly improved appropriate ward cover during on-call shifts, ultimately improving patient continuity, both in and out of hours.

The consistent time worked on a single ward was also improved, allowing the potential for better relationships to develop between the FY1 and other staff on that ward, as well as patients. This overall improvement aims to enhance patient safety and doctors' well-being through consistency and appropriate on-call cover.