



Bristol Mentoring scheme

What are mentoring skills?

There is considerable overlap between mentoring skills, motivational interviewing and 'advanced' consultation skills.

Mentoring, as we teach and support it in Bristol, is designed to offer a supportive and facilitative relationship which the mentee (the person being mentored) can use in a variety of ways. These include

- problem-solving
- discovering new perspectives on a present situation
- overcoming obstacles
- planning career or personal change
- gaining greater self-awareness
- finding answers to educational questions
- learning more effectively
- feeling personally understood and supported

How can mentoring skills be used?

We advocate both co- mentoring and mentoring in groups.

Co-mentoring is where 2 people mentor each other for mutual benefit

Group mentoring uses the skills of mentoring within small groups in order to address and overcome questions, difficulties or dilemmas. These are usually clinical or professional. Mentoring skills can usefully be employed both in existing small (study) groups, and in groups set up specifically to provide mentoring support to members.

In some cases, it may be possible to find a mentor for those interested specifically in being mentored by a (usually more senior) colleague. Please ask if this is where your interest lies.



Additionally, mentoring skills are transferable to the consultation, particularly in order to promote health behaviour change.

How can I acquire mentoring skills?

We offer skills development sessions through the year, at different levels from complete beginner to experienced mentor. These take place from 7 to 10pm on a range of different evenings in the week. Our venue in 2007 is Engineers' House on the Promenade in Clifton. The evenings always begin with a light supper.

Although we encourage mentors and mentees to complete a 3 session skills development programme, you can do this over time, and will be able to mentor effectively after 1 or 2 sessions.

Alternatively, I can provide training in effective group mentoring by coming to a meeting of your small group. Please ask if you'd like to set this up.

Where it is helpful, I can also 'match' prospective co-mentors into suitable partnerships, or assist those interested in forming new mentoring groups.

For those actively involved in mentoring, there are ongoing support sessions available, as well as a confidential supervision/help service.

Who can participate?

Most of those who have accessed the training since the scheme began in 2004 are GPs, although practice nurses and managers have also participated, and continue to be very welcome.

Increasingly, doctors working in secondary care are also taking part.

What does it cost?

All mentoring skills training is currently free of charge to PCPD and CPD scheme members. For non-members, the cost is £40 per session, or £100 if a full 3 session training programme is booked.

What is the commitment?

By coming to an introductory session you are making no commitment to enter into a mentoring relationship – merely demonstrating a curiosity to find out more!

If you choose to try out co-mentoring, we suggest that you commit to at least 3 meetings before reviewing whether you both wish to continue.