



Guy's and St Thomas'
NHS Foundation Trust



Visiting Professional Programme: ACU

Introduction

The Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust ACU Visiting Professional Programme (VPP) is designed to provide international visiting professionals with the opportunity to experience our leading assisted conception unit first hand. The programme offers a unique chance to be fully integrated within a fertility service which is at the forefront of clinical activity, training and research.

The programmes are designed by our clinical leads to provide unique development experiences which enable visiting professionals to broaden their clinical expertise and learn new skills that can be transferred back to their work place. We are excited to deliver exclusive access to observe and work alongside our assisted conception unit and to provide an opportunity for international professionals to gain insight into our Trust and the role that our staff play within the NHS.

Who should apply?

This programme is intended for non-U.K. registrars and consultants who specialise in assisted conception.

Visitors have the choice of applying for a hands-on attachment or observership programme. Those wishing to apply for a hands-on attachment must have GMC registration and NMC registration. You can apply for GMC registration directly through the main GMC website (www.gmc-uk.org), alternatively The Royal College of Physicians run a medical training initiative which facilitates GMC registration and provides sponsorship for a Tier 5 visa. You can find out more about their Medical Training Initiative by visiting their website (www.rcplondon.ac.uk/education-practice/advice/medical-training-initiative). NMC registration can be applied for via www.nmc.org.uk.



Duration

It is recommended that in order to get the most out of the ACU programme, that visiting professionals undertake a placement of at least 6 weeks. However, the programme's duration can be tailored to the specific learning requirements of those visiting the Trust.

Format

The ACU programme is delivered within the hospital work place and it includes exposure to clinics, inpatient ward rounds, multidisciplinary team meetings, depending on the length of programme that visitors request.

Visiting professionals will be aligned with supervisors from within the clinical teams who will facilitate agreed learning and development needs. We would expect visiting professionals to be totally integrated in the day to day service within our ACU team.

We will also provide visitors with the opportunity to get involved in research and improvement projects.

Overall aims

The programme is aimed at those who wish to upgrade their knowledge and gain insight into Fertility and Assisted Conception practises used within Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust.

The aims of the programme include:

- The opportunity to have direct experience and exposure to clinics and ward rounds at a leading assisted conception unit
- Participation in multidisciplinary team meetings
- Access to departmental seminar programmes and trust wide programmes
- The opportunity to develop networks and close links for future close working relations through peer mentorship throughout the programme from a named mentor
- The opportunity to complete specialty projects and research with a view to submission for peer review.

Individual weekly timetables will be created depending on each visiting professional's requirements.

Sample timetable

WEEK		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	AM	Egg Collection	Follow up	HSG	Morning MDM PGD (Meeting)	Scanning with nurses
	PM	New patient clinic	Theatre (St Thomas Hospital)	Reproductive Medicine Clinic Post clinic meeting	Embryology Lab 17:00 Teaching and case discussion	Pregnancy scan
2	AM	Embryo transfer	Donor clinic	Oncol	Egg collection / surgical Sperm Retrieval	Ovulation induction/ Follicle tracking scan
	PM	Andrology Clinic	Theatre (St Thomas Hospital) or Donor Clinic (Dr Karkanakis)	Reproductive Medicine Clinic Post clinic meeting	PGD clinic	HyCoSy

ACU service

Established in 1991, the Assisted Conception Unit at Guy's and St Thomas' has developed a reputation for excellence in both NHS and private infertility treatment.

We are one of the leading innovators in the field of fertility and a trusted choice for people trying to conceive. The unit is located on the 11th floor at Guy's Hospital and has recently been refurbished with state-of-the-art facilities. We have dedicated labs, theatres, and procedure rooms, all designed to be a contemporary and calming space. Featured on the BBC and other television channels, our fertility treatments and services are led by world renowned clinicians.

Patients are treated by a team of experts who are constantly researching and innovating the field of fertility and in particular IVF. The techniques that we have developed have been implemented by clinics around the country. At the Assisted Conception Unit at Guy's and St Thomas' patients will be able to access treatments by the people who developed them.

We are also the largest and most successful clinic in the UK for preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGD) and are licensed to carry out stem cell research.

We are proud to say that our commitment to pioneering research and the expertise of our clinicians has given us good success rates, helping to increase the chances of conception.

At the Assisted Conception Unit, every patient is treated as an individual. We understand that works for one patient may not be successful for another. So when it comes to treatment and care we don't make any assumptions whether that is for IVF or a more complex condition.

We pride ourselves on the comprehensive services we offer – everything from initial investigations through to specialised procedures.

Patients are given all the advice and support they need every step of the way, together with professional counselling services to help you cope with the emotions involved in fertility treatment.

At the Assisted Conception Unit we have a dedicated and experienced team, state-of-the-art facilities and a track record in supporting our patients through their treatment.

Pre-implantation genetic diagnosis (PGD)

Pre-implantation genetic diagnosis (PGD) is available to couples that are at risk of having a child with a specific genetic or chromosome disorder, such as cystic fibrosis, sickle cell disease or Huntington's disease.

The aim is to obtain and fertilise a number of eggs. The fertilised embryos develop for three days and then one or two cells are removed from each embryo. The genetic material (DNA and chromosomes) from the cells are tested for the known disorder in the family. Up to two unaffected embryos are then transferred into the uterus. If the pregnancy is successful, the baby should not be affected by the disorder it was tested for.

The centre for pre-implantation genetic diagnosis works closely with the genetics department and is the largest and most successful centre in the UK for PGD, with over 600 babies born as a result of this treatment.

Clinics

- New patient
- Reproductive Medicine
- Donor clinic
- Andrology Clinic
- PGD clinic
- Ovulation induction clinic

Faculty

Our team is made up of medical and scientific specialists, who are all dedicated to giving a comprehensive and caring service of the highest standards. We work within the Assisted Conception Unit (ACU) with the help of a large team that provides care for all patients needing to use these specialised services. A number of the ACU staff will usually be involved in patients' care, and we work together to give a comprehensive service.

Administration team

A member of the Assisted Conception Unit (ACU) administration team will probably be the first person patients meet when they come to the unit. They are responsible for keeping patient records, answering initial queries and making sure a doctor or nurse responds to patient questions when appropriate.

Genetic counsellors

Patients will meet a senior preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGD) genetic counsellor and sometimes an ACU nurse or doctor on their first visit. The clinical genetics service works closely with the ACU to ensure that patients receive the most comprehensive information available.

Nurses

The PGD team works closely with the ACU nurses who plan patient treatment schedules and teach them about any medications used in their treatment. The nurses perform ultrasound scans, blood tests and assist in egg collection and embryo replacement procedures.

Doctors

Patients will then meet a PGD doctor on their second visit to us. Our team of doctors will oversee all aspects of a patient's treatment in the unit and perform ultrasound scans, egg collection and embryo replacement.

Embryologists

The embryologists are responsible for looking after patient eggs, sperm and embryos whilst they are in the laboratory. After egg collection, they prepare the eggs and sperm for fertilisation and look after the embryos. They also perform intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI) where it is needed and embryo biopsy.

Scientists

A team of scientists in the laboratory perform the important chromosome or genetic testing for PGD cases. Patients are likely to meet them during a treatment cycle before embryo transfer.

Doctors



Mr Yacoub Khalaf

Director of the Pre-Implantation Genetic Diagnosis Programme

I am the Director of the PGD service and coordinate the work of this large and effective team. I offer medical care directly to couples coming through PGD treatment. I am responsible for our Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) research licences, and oversee the academic and research part of the team. I strive to ensure that our centre continues to provide good evidence-based medical treatment and that we continue to lead in the field.



Dr Jan Grace

Consultant in Reproductive Medicine

I see patients at second appointments to get them ready to start treatment, and see them for follow up. I am involved in planning and monitoring cycles and perform egg collections and embryo transfers.



Dr Tarek El-Toukhy MD MRCOG

Consultant in Reproductive Medicine

I am one of the consultants within the PGD team and am based in the ACU. I see patients to prepare them for their treatment cycle, look after them throughout their cycle and perform their egg collections and embryo transfers. I am responsible for reporting the results of our PGD cycles to the team and to the ESHRE PGD Consortium regularly.

Genetic counsellors



Alison Lashwood

I am a trained nurse and genetic counsellor. I have worked within the PGD team from the beginning and have helped to develop the service over the years. I am responsible for the organisation of the PGD process and I see couples in clinic to discuss the procedure and what is involved so that they can make a decision about whether they wish to proceed.



Professor Frances Flinter

Consultant Clinical Geneticist and Caldicott Guardian

I see couples to discuss the genetic diagnosis in their families and possible ways that we could help them have healthy children in the future.

**Sarah Ross and Sara Levene**

Sarah is a trained nurse who specialises in genetics and Sara is a trained genetic Counsellor. We work together with Alison Lashwood, Frances Flintner and Genevieve Say within the Genetics arm of the PGD service. We see couples with genetic conditions who have been referred for PGD to discuss what is involved in treatment. If they wish to proceed we organise the laboratory analysis and help make an application for funding for treatment. We are also available for support before, during and after treatment.

Scientists**Pamela Renwick**
Consultant Clinical Scientist

I have over 17 years experience of working in a diagnostic molecular genetics laboratory and I have been involved with clinical PGD for the past 11 years. I now lead the molecular genetics team which performs DNA amplification based tests for monogenic disease. I was responsible for the development and introduction of the Preimplantation Genetic Haplotyping approach in 2006, which we now use routinely. I advise the team on the testing for monogenic disease.

**Professor Caroline Ogilvie**
Consultant Cytogeneticist

I am a consultant scientist within the Cytogenetics Department. I have been part of the PGD team from the beginning. I have helped to develop both the FISH service for chromosome rearrangements and the PGH service for monogenic diseases.

**Dr Elaine Ronaldson and Jane Trussler**

We work as part of a team of scientists involved in providing the PGD service and our work involves designing and optimising molecular diagnostic assays for genetic disorders. These tests are initially used to determine whether families can be offered PGD and subsequently in the analysis of a single cell following embryo biopsy. If required, we can see patients to discuss these results.

Virginia Bolton

Head of Clinical Embryology

Davinia White

Ovulation Induction, Egg Donation, Surrogacy

Nivedita Reddy

Fertility Preservation Co-ordinator

Julia Keepika

Andrology Clinical Co-ordinator

Majed Shabir

Andrology Service Lead ACU

Nurses**Assisted Conception Unit nurses**

- Alice Denga (Matron)
- Angela Stiles
- Christine Cross
- Debbie Sutton
- Charlotte Yearwood-Martin
- Jean Bvumbe
- Jocelin Effah
- Julie Rigelsford
- Magnolia Arieta
- Yanmei Dong
- Rachel Dyer
- Regina Metzger
- Rosemary Gebhardt
- Tamara Labrunee
- Yemi Adegbile
- Chantel Dunn
- Aleli Marquess
- Alina David
- Claire Gardener
- Lucy Wang

We form part of a team of nurses who look after both the unit's infertility and PGD patients. We take some of your scans, teach you how to take the medication and look after you during and after the procedures involved in treatment. We also offer support and advice by telephone.

Embryologists**Assisted Conception Unit Embryologists**

The embryologists work in the clinical embryology laboratories.

- Virginia Bolton
- Aida Kaffel
- Alison Jones
- Dina Castrojas
- Eleanor Wharf



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- Elaine Taylor
 - Eina Rahman
 - Fiona O'Mahoney
 - Joanna Geary
 - Luna Kadi
 - Maxine Semple
 - Sophie Bird
 - Yaser Dajani
 - Maria Onoufriou

PGD Coordinator

Chantel Dunn

PGD Coordinator, Centre for PGD

I am the PGD coordinator for the Centre of PGD at the Assisted Conception Unit. I create your medical notes and arrange the initial and follow-up consultation with the PGD doctors. I will be your main point of liaison between the doctors, nurses and embryologists from first consultation throughout the treatment cycle. I am responsible for answering calls and responding to your queries.

Fees

A course fee per week will be applied. This excludes accommodation and travelling expenses. Participants will be provided with a certificate at the end of their attachment.

Registration and enquiries

To register for the Visiting Professional Programme – ACU please complete the application form at www.guysandstthomasevents.co.uk and return to:

Education and Events

Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust
vpp@gstt.nhs.uk

Telephone: + 44 (0)20 7188 7188 extension 55865

Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust is one of the largest Foundation Trusts' in the UK. It consists of St Thomas' Hospital, Evelina London Children's Hospital and Guy's Hospital.

The Trust provides a full range of hospital services, as well as specialist services including cancer, cardiothoracic, women and children's services, kidney care and orthopaedics. Guy's is a major centre for cancer and renal services with the UK's largest kidney donor programme, and is also a leading centre for genetics, stem cell and allergy research and cleft lip and palate. St Thomas' is a leading centre for the treatment of cardiovascular disease, stroke, HIV and dermatology.

The Trust has one of the largest critical care units in the UK and one of the busiest A&E departments in London.

It has an annual turnover of £1.2 billion and employs 13,500 staff.

Last year, the Trust handled over 2 million patient contacts, including:

- 1.07m outpatients
- 85,000 inpatients
- 88,000 day case patients
- 192,000 accident and emergency attendances
- 859,000 in community services
- 6,847 babies delivered

The Trust has 665 beds at St Thomas', 288 at Guy's, 144 at the Evelina London Children's Hospital and 64 in the community.

NHS statistics show that our patient survival rates are nearly 25 per cent better than the national average. This is one of the lowest standardised mortality rates in the NHS and provides an important indication of the quality of care provided by our clinical staff.

In 2013, the Dr Foster Hospital Guide awarded us Trust of the Year for safe care.

Care Quality Commission (CQC) rating

Guy's and St Thomas' achieved a 'Good' overall rating by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) with some services rated 'Outstanding'.

CQC inspectors visited the Trust's hospital and community services from 7-10 September 2015 with further unannounced visits taking place later the same month.

In its report, the CQC praises staff who its inspectors found to be 'highly committed to the Trust and delivering high quality patient care'.

Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust values

Our values help us to define and develop our culture – what we do and how we do it.

Making people aware of the Trust values, making them part of our culture and demonstrating them through the organisation helps us develop a shared way of acting.



Our values are a key part of everything that we do as an organisation, from being included in staff job descriptions and in our publications, through to our work on leadership development and performance management. Our five values are listed below:

1. Put patients first
2. Take pride in what we do
3. Respect others
4. Strive to be the best
5. Act with Integrity

Every day we aim to provide the most exceptional care to our patients from dedicated staff who follow our five values. Take a look at our video at <http://gti/services/organisational-devt/values-behaviours/our-values.aspx> to see what our values mean to them.

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