

## **Box S1 – Interview Schedule: Informal Peer Support in Primary Care**

### **Introduction**

How long have you been working as a GP?

How long have you been working at your current practice?

What GP role do you occupy at your current practice?

How many people do you work with at your practice?

### **Interview Questions**

1. Can you describe an instance you felt particularly engaged with your work?
  - a. What about the situation (or yourself) made you feel this way?

As you may know, the NHS is currently suffering with a burnout crisis, and this is cited as one of the main reasons for poor GP retention rates. Burnout is the result of excessive work-related stresses and has three key dimensions:

- Emotional exhaustion which refers to feeling emotionally worn-out and drained.
  - Depersonalisation which refers to feeling distant or indifferent towards your work. This might manifest as negative, cynical, or callous behaviours.
  - Lack of personal accomplishment which refers feelings of failure in your work.
2. What are the main ways you manage your emotions at work?
    - a. How do you stay feeling connected to your patients?
    - b. And colleagues?
    - c. And finally, how do you maintain a sense of personal accomplishment at work?
  3. Can you describe a recent time a colleague has supported you at work?
    - a. What were the benefits of their action?
    - b. Were there any unwelcomed effects?
    - c. How often do you receive support from your colleagues – not at all, occasionally, sometimes, often, very often?

4. Can you describe a recent time you have supported a colleague at work?
  - a. What triggered you to do this?
  - b. What were the benefits of your actions?
  - c. Do you think there were any negative consequences to your actions?
  
5. Can you describe a time that you have wanted support whether that be emotional or practical support from your colleague?
  - a. How comfortable were you seeking support from a colleague?
  - b. What encourages you to seek support from a colleague?
  - c. What prevents you from seeking support from a colleague?
  
6. In your workplace, are there any people that come to mind that support you the most?
  - a. What are their roles?
  - b. What is it about them in terms of qualities, characteristics etc. that makes them a good source of support for you?
  
7. Do you have any support structures (e.g., physical/virtual space, a routine or practice that creates more opportunities for support) that you rely on to manage your emotions, feelings of connection with your work, or feelings of efficacy?
  - a. Probe with WhatsApp group chats, staff room or going into each other's rooms

Some practices have formal structures in place to aid colleagues with supporting each other. These are structures which are perhaps organised and implemented by your practice, or regional or national bodies.

8. Have you experienced any formal structures of support at your workplace or during your training?
  - a. Probe with Balint groups/Schwartz round

9. From everything you have mentioned, what would you consider to be the most valuable method in which colleagues can support each other?
  
10. Were you taught about the importance of peer support at any point in your career?
  - a. Probe with medical school, GP training schemes

**Table S1** – Practice location and socioeconomic status of practice population (2019)

<b>Region</b>	<b>Local Authority District Name</b>	<b>Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD19) Rank of Average Score</b>	<b>N = 15</b>
London	Barking and Dagenham	21	1
	Ealing	105	1
	Harrow	207	2
	Kensington and Chelsea	121	1
	Redbridge	173	1
North East England	Newcastle upon Tyne	41	1
North West England	Manchester	6	1
Yorkshire and the Humber	Leeds	55	1
East Midlands	Lincoln	60	1
West Midlands	Sandwell	12	1
East of England	Cambridge	210	1
	North Norfolk	127	2
	Ipswich	71	1

Practice locations have been stratified according to their local authority district. The socioeconomic status of the practice population has been expressed by the rank of average Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD19) score (out of total 317 local authority districts). This is a comprehensive evaluation of seven domains including income, employment, education, health, crime, barriers (to housing and services), living environment. The lower the rank the more deprived the local authority district. This data was extracted from English Indices of Deprivation 2019, Local Authority District Summaries available from the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Governments (UK).

**Table S2** – Practice location and ratio of GPs per 10,000 in population (2013/14)

Region	Local Authority District Name	Ratio of GPs per 10,000 population	N = 15
London	Barking and Dagenham	6.9	1
	Ealing	6.5	1
	Harrow	6.7	2
	Kensington and Chelsea	7.4	1
	Redbridge	6.4	1
North East England	Newcastle upon Tyne	8.0	1
North West England	Manchester	7.4	1
Yorkshire and the Humber	Leeds	7.3	1
East Midlands	Lincoln	6.4	1
West Midlands	Sandwell	6.8	1
East of England	Cambridge	9.8	1
	North Norfolk	7.5	2
	Ipswich	7.9	1
	<b>Mean for Sampled English authorities</b>	7.3	
	<b>Mean for All English authorities</b>	7.5	

Practice locations have been stratified according to their local authority district. The ratio of GPs per 10,000 in population (2013/14) reflects the health service provision in each authority. The lower the ratio the greater the number of patients to GPs in that local authority, potentially impacting GP stress and burnout rates. This data was extracted from the Local Government Association records (last updated on 25/12/2022).