



Become a Paediatric Neurologist!

Paediatric neurology is a fascinating branch of paediatrics

Neurological problems are unfortunately common in children. Paediatric neurology is an exciting and dynamic field in which considerable advances in the understanding of neurological disease, diagnostic abilities and treatments are made on a regular basis.

Headline conditions include epilepsy, cerebral palsy, hydrocephalus and brain tumours. However, neurologists treat a wide diversity of other conditions from those affecting the peripheral neuromuscular system such as Duchenne muscular dystrophy and neuropathies, to those affecting the spine with inflammatory / structural abnormalities, and also many affecting the brain.

Within the brain itself particular groups of conditions include vascular abnormalities, neuronal migration disorders, paroxysmal ones such as the different epilepsies, metabolic conditions, and many more recently identified genetic conditions.

When children have neurological conditions it very often affects their cognitive function. As a result neurologists have expertise in advising on comorbidities such as intellectual disability, memory difficulties, attention and hyperactivity problems. Another large group of disorders are those where children present with problems doing something, such as moving a leg, due to psychological difficulties.

As a result of the fascinating diversity of conditions that neurologists identify and treat, the training is slightly longer and more sophisticated than other specialities and the service is more centralised in regional hubs.

“...but isn't it really hard?”

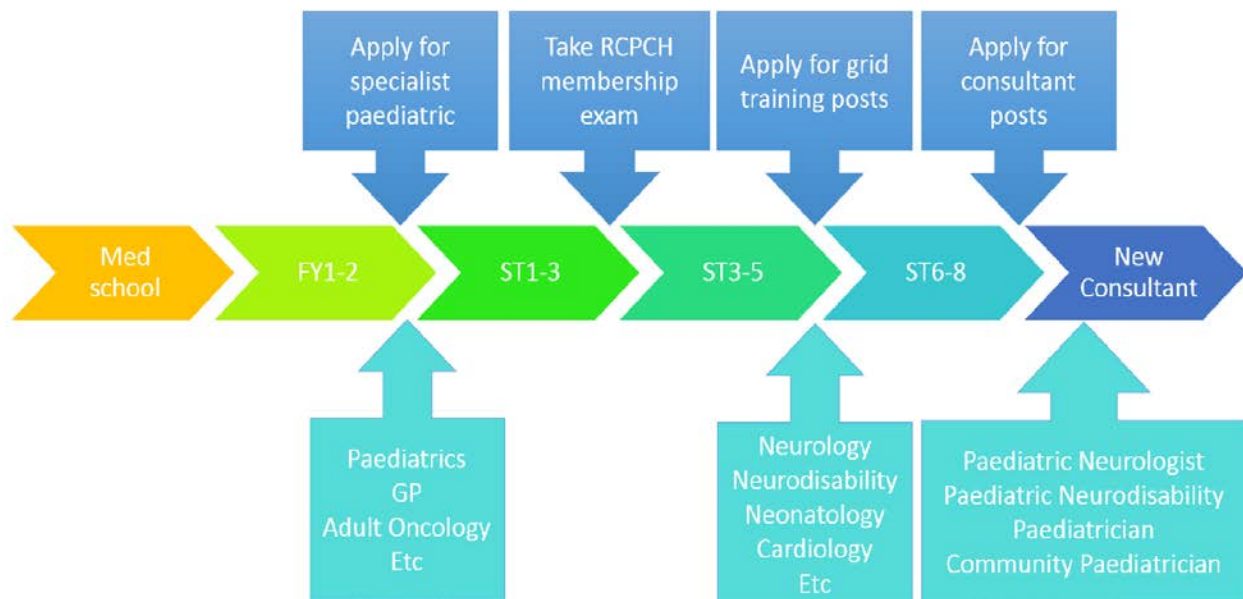
There are common misconceptions about paediatric neurology training ... you do not need to have the potential to win a Nobel Prize! **Don't be put off by myths.** In reality there is a shortage of high quality trainees applying for paediatric neurology.

If you are motivated and interested, it is very likely you will be able to get a training post. However, paediatric neurology is a fascinating and diverse speciality, and having some type of evidence on your CV that you have some knowledge of the speciality, are able to keep up with current trends, for example by attending BPNA courses, attending regional meetings and epilepsy networks, undertaking audits, and even presenting or having a publication if possible, are very helpful.

Find out more...

What is the training pathway?

Most trainees enter specialist neurological training via the national grid in year 6 running through for a further 3.5 years.



Throughout your training, the British Paediatric Neurology Association has programmes in place to support and educate you. We encourage all paediatric trainees, whether or not you choose to specialise in neurology, to attend our 1 and 2-day courses and enrol on our distance learning programme to gain training in fundamental skills that will improve your clinical skills no matter what consultant role you pursue. Below are educational programmes and support on offer to you from the BPNA at different stages.

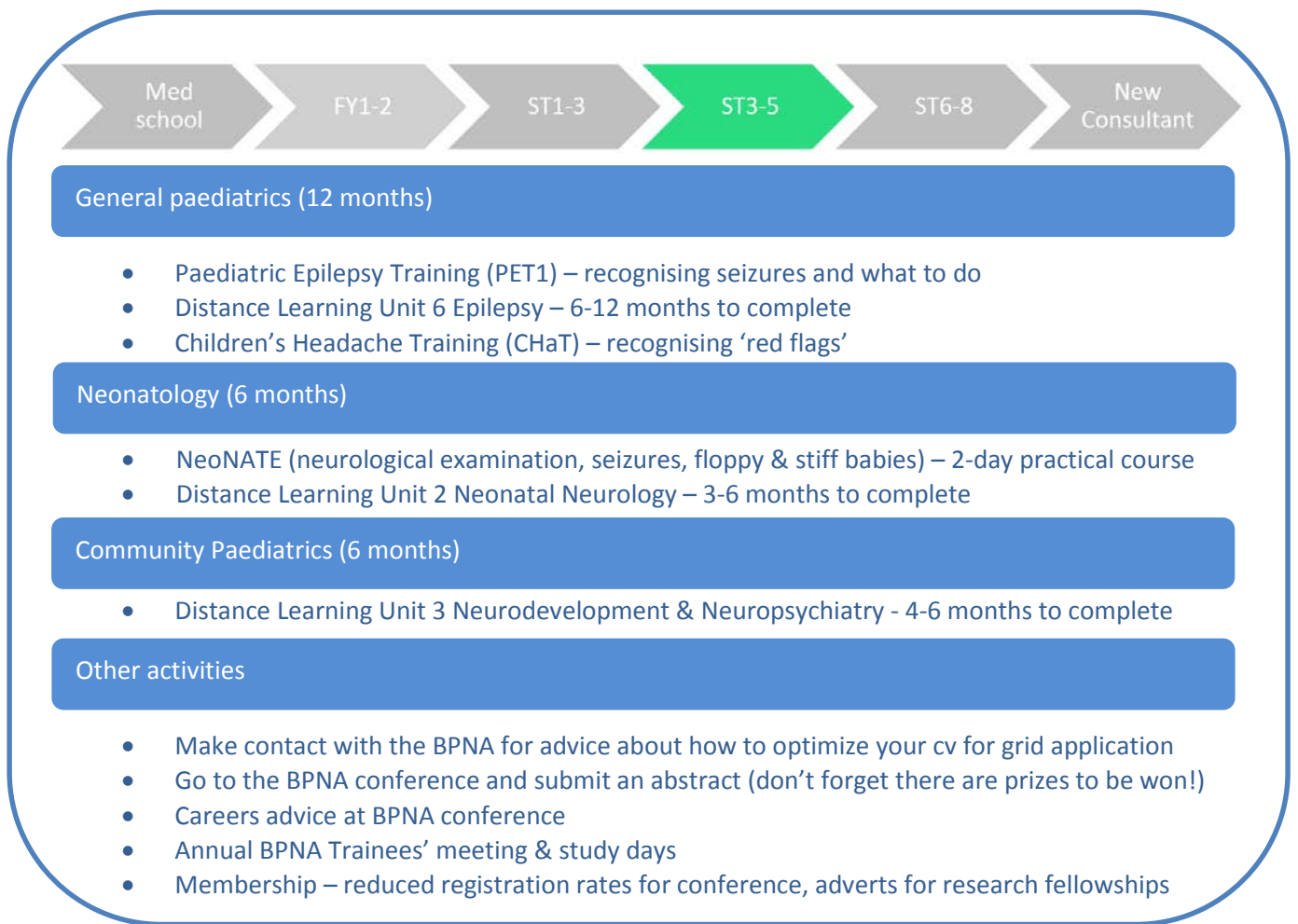


24-36m general paediatrics in acute settings: emergency duties, inpatients / outpatients & neonates

Come to the BPNA conference – we have special registration fees for trainees. There will be a career Q&A session especially for junior doctors, where you can ask everything you ever wanted to know. Why not submit an abstract? It maybe selected for a poster or platform presentation. The BPNA awards three prizes: Best presentation by a medical student, Best oral presentation by a trainee and Best poster presentation by a trainee. And remember BPNA conference abstracts are published in the journal *Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology*, so that counts as a publication. Don't forget to include the reference on your cv!

ST1-3 is good time to start thinking about attending Paediatric Epilepsy Training (PET1) where you will learn about recognizing different types of seizures and what do; Children's Headache Training (CHaT), where you will learn to recognize 'red flags'. You could also come to the annual Trainees' meeting for all trainees interested in paediatric neurology, which is a great opportunity to hear paediatric neurology focussed lectures and network.

Make contact with the BPNA for advice about optimizing your cv for grid application at ST5.



Academic Opportunities

In days gone by, all Consultant Paediatric Neurologists would complete a higher degree before starting as a consultant. Nowadays fewer do, however, there are opportunities for those who would like to pursue research and complete a PhD or MD. There are many centres in the UK that offer research fellowships, for example Newcastle, which is highly regarded for its mitochondrial and muscle research; London, which is highly regarded for its epilepsy and movement disorder research amongst other things; plus many other centres internationally.

The BPNA is committed to research and is working with Action Medical Research to award its first joint [Research Training Fellowship](#). This fellowship is for work in the field of childhood neurological diseases to begin in 2016. Hopefully there will be many more to follow!

Keep in touch

If you are interested in paediatric neurology we would strongly encourage you to make contact with the BPNA. Look out for the BPNA stand at conferences and careers fairs or email us direct at info@bpna.org.uk

ST4-6, please email Philippa Rodie at info@bpna.org.uk who will direct you to your local deanery lead who will **explain how to optimize your CV over ST1-4 for potential grid application in ST4/5**.



www.bpna.org.uk

The British Paediatric Neurology Association is the professional organisation for doctors who specialise in the care of children with neurological disorders. We are a charity (1159115) aiming to promote the health and well being of children with neurological disorders through:

- Training and education of professionals working in the field of neurosciences. (Throughout your training, and beyond, the BPNA has programmes in place to support and educate you)
- Research into neurological disorders affecting children & young people
- Improvement of knowledge of professionals, the public and patients and their families through scientific meetings
- Providing support to members to facilitate the delivery of these objectives