

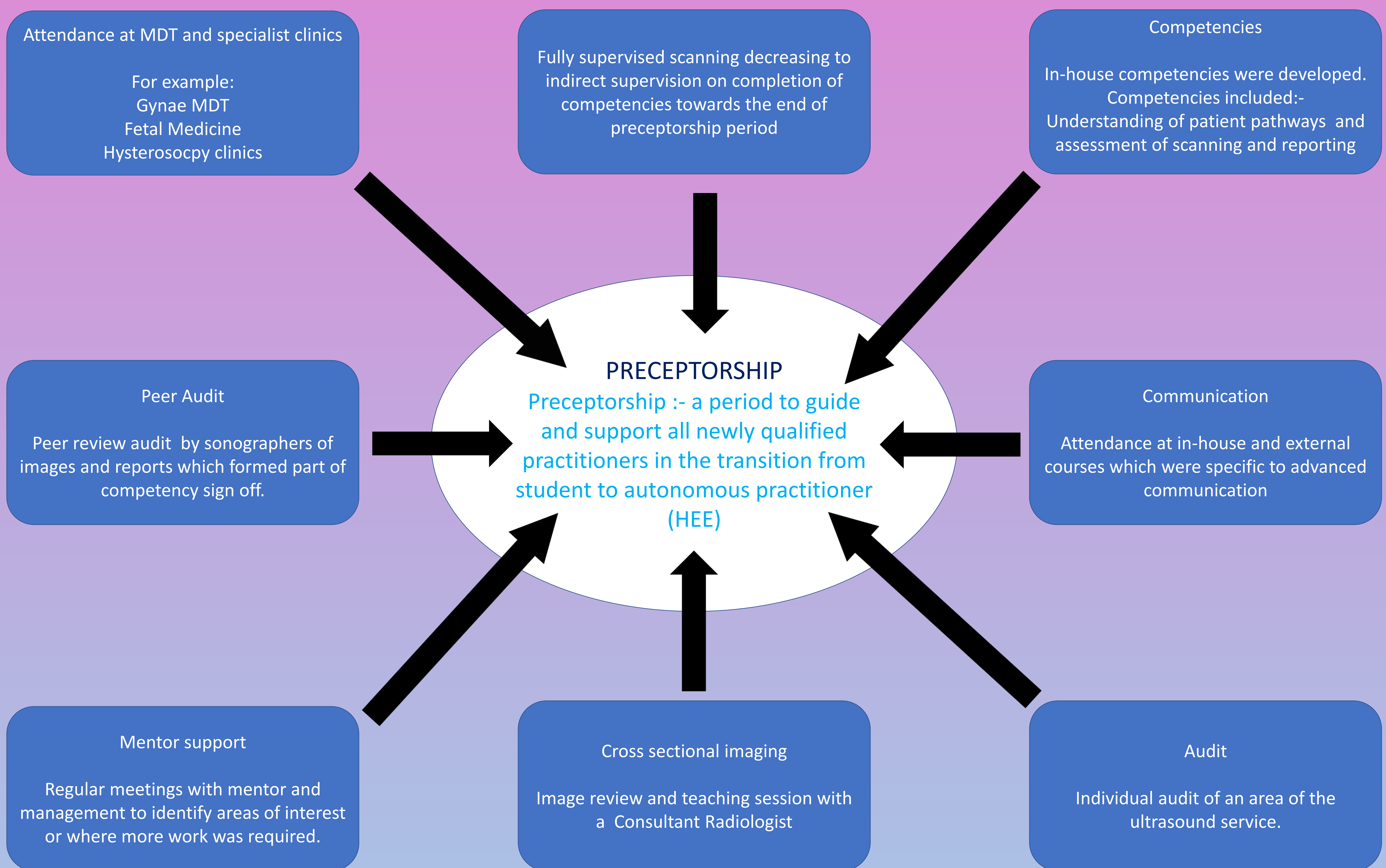
Preceptorship – Newly Qualified Graduate to Sonographer.

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With the introduction of an undergraduate pathway for ultrasound training, it is essential that newly qualified sonographers are supported upon graduation to work at the level expected of a sonographer. A robust preceptorship period is important to ensure they are supported and have all the skills and experience required to have a smooth transition from a newly qualified practitioner to autonomous sonographer.

Currently no specific sonographer preceptorship framework exists, but the underlying principle is the same for all healthcare professionals. The preceptorship period should be structured to develop confidence as an independent practitioner whilst refining skills and knowledge under the supervision of an experienced member of the team (preceptor). Evidence shows that this protected time learning best practice from expert colleagues will not only provide a firm foundation for the expectations required, but will also provide a framework for lifelong CPD and learning. As a department, investing in preceptorship for new staff members also has benefits which include :- improved recruitment and retention, better patient experience, reduced staff sickness, improved morale and a workforce who are more confident in the skills they have.



In August 2020 , we employed 2 preceptorship sonographers who had completed the BSc Medical Ultrasound at Birmingham City University. Whilst completing a PG Cert in Preceptorship we developed our own ‘in-house’ preceptorship programme to support them during their first year.

A logbook of evidence was collected over the preceptorship period which included a log of the number and type of scans performed, interesting cases, reflections on situations which had gone well / not so well, additional clinical experience, feedback from sonographers and mentor, audits and plans for any future learning which was identified.

On completion of the preceptorship period both are now working within the department as autonomous sonographers in abdominal, obstetric and gynaecological ultrasound. They have completed all the required competencies and have now enrolled to complete the PG Diploma in Medical Ultrasound and are very much an asset to our team.

References:
<https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/capitalnurse/workstreams/preceptorship>
<https://www.nhsemployers.org/articles/preceptorships-newly-qualified-staff>