

# Physicians Associates in Primary care

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East Sussex Better together Alliance

# Support so Far

- ▶ Providing practices some financial support to host Physician Associate Students and to carry out an evaluation of the experience of PAs themselves together with their educational supervisors within their practices.
- ▶ Questionnaires sent to all supervisors and PA students in their first year in the East Sussex Better together area

# Results of survey at 6-9 months in Year 1

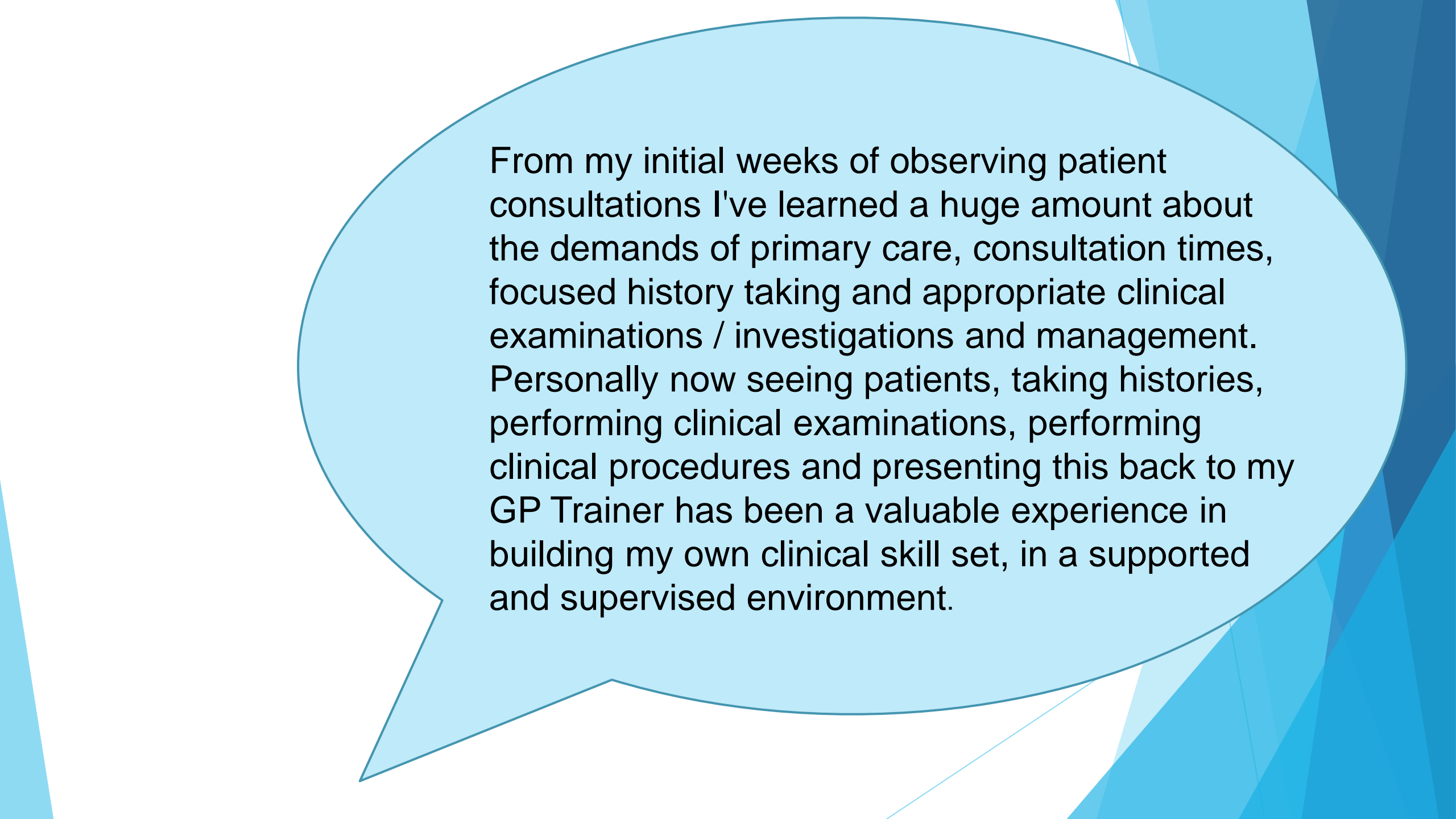
- ▶ In this first year 1 day a week in a training practice aiming to consolidate the theoretical learning.
- ▶ The main points that emerged were that both the GP trainers and the PAs had enjoyed the placement - the PAs because of the patients that they saw and the GPs because of the chance to work with stimulating students and because they felt they were possibly contributing to the future GP workforce.
- ▶ The PAs all felt that they might like to work in primary care.
- ▶ All the GPs felt there was a potential role for PAs in primary care.
- ▶ Both PAs and GPs felt it was too early to understand completely how they might fit into primary care and whether the course was preparing them for it. Most respondents felt that a block in GP in the first year would have been useful. There was also a feeling that the GP placement part of the course could be a bit more flexible and allow a bit more patient contact.

Yes, I would like to work in primary care after completing my training.

Primary care provides exposure to a wide variety of conditions that possibly may not be seen on a routine basis if I were to work within a specialist department in secondary care.

There are some patients that I have seen a few times within my placement, and I have enjoyed being able to get to know them – this is something that I feel may be more difficult within secondary care.

**What did Students themselves think about primary care ?**



From my initial weeks of observing patient consultations I've learned a huge amount about the demands of primary care, consultation times, focused history taking and appropriate clinical examinations / investigations and management. Personally now seeing patients, taking histories, performing clinical examinations, performing clinical procedures and presenting this back to my GP Trainer has been a valuable experience in building my own clinical skill set, in a supported and supervised environment.

Yes - seeing patients in surgery who have already been telephone triaged to ensure "correct" case mix

Yes – I think as part of a supportive practice, PAs could work in primary care – acute illnesses, but also some chronic disease management – not dissimilar to PP role

I can see PA acting as data gatherers to free up doctor's time, taking a history and examining the patient and then feeding back to a GP for more complex management decisions. They could also help meet some of the demand for managing minor illness

What about their GP educational supervisors?

Enthusiastic learner; rewarding to teach basic clinical skills and make an impact on their education

Hosting a PA student has meant I have brushed up on my own clinical examination skills to help teach our student. I have also learnt more about the role of a PA, their training and ongoing professional development after graduation

**Further enhancement of multi-disciplinary team approach. Engaging trainee, keen to learn, keen to help. Pro-active learner.**

# Ockham Health GP Joanna Munden

- ▶ PAs useful as a crossover between the nursing team and the GPs
- ▶ Working independently within the team
- ▶ Telephone triage
- ▶ Help with visits
- ▶ Chronic disease management



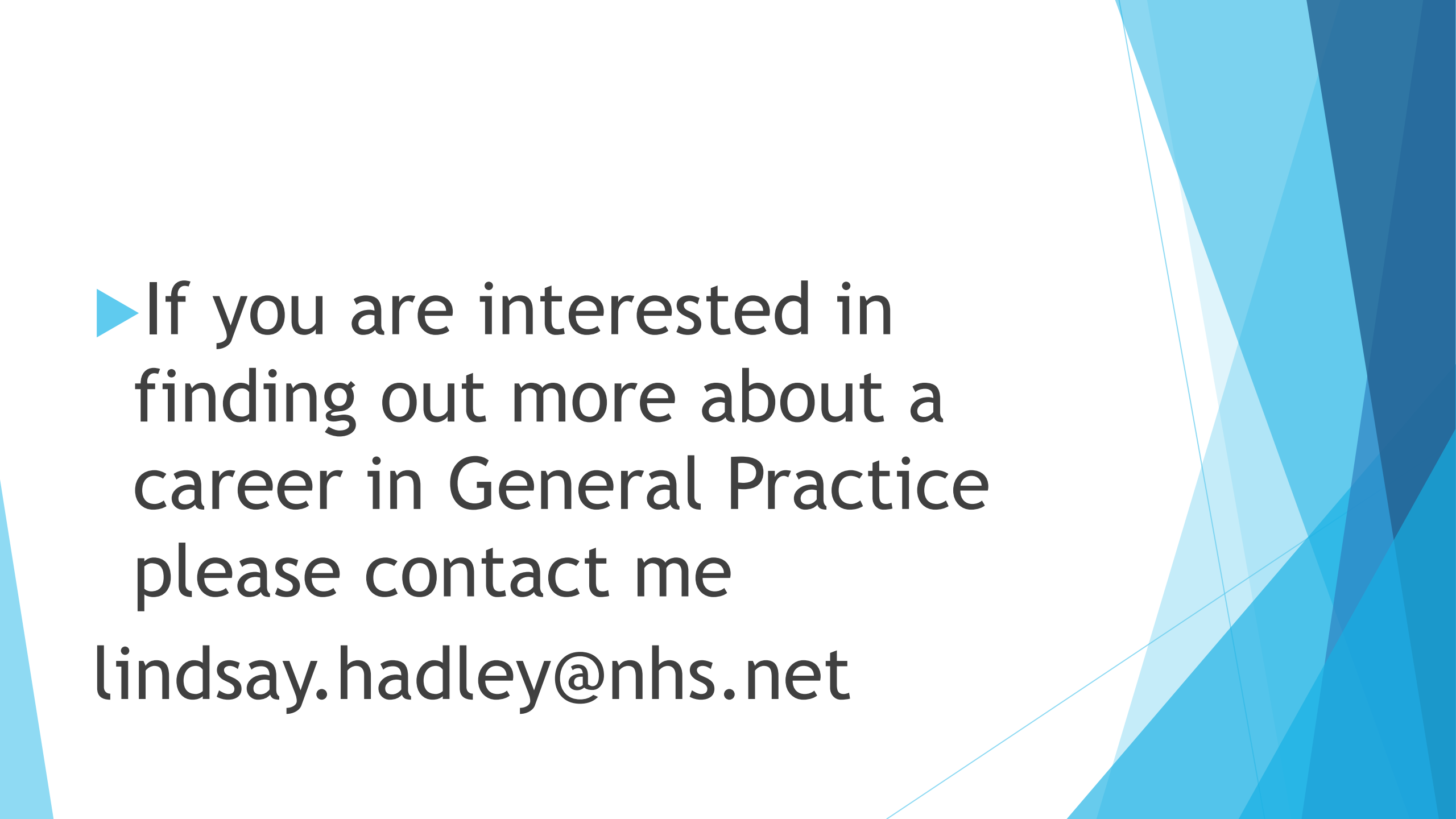
# Going Forward

- ▶ A community post qualification rotation would be ideal ...
- ▶ There's a **£5000** preceptorship allowance to support the supervision and educational needs for any qualified physician associate working in primary care for their first year.
- ▶ East Sussex Learning Together is committed to paying for the PA conversion to MSc course for 4 individuals and to supporting PAs to find practices.
- ▶ Working in conjunction with ESHT, we hope to provide clinical experience in medicine A and E. The local Hospice has also agreed to support placements
- ▶ East Sussex Learning Together is also committed to providing on going learning sets for those in new roles in General Practice

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**A little plug for East Sussex!**

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- ▶ If you are interested in finding out more about a career in General Practice please contact me  
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