

For the attention of:

NHS England Directors of
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Clinical Leaders and Accountable
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Copy:

NHS England Regional Directors
NHS England Heads of Primary Care

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Dear colleagues

RE: Support for practices entering Special Measures

I am writing to confirm extension of the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) programme providing expert peer advice and support to GP practices placed in special measures by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

This programme will now continue to 31st March 2017 supporting the first wave of CQC inspections and to inform how best to support practices in the future.

Details of this programme are set out in Appendix 1 of the [Framework for responding to CQC inspections of GP practices](#). However for clarity the following information applies:

Eligibility

Other than in exceptional circumstances, all practices placed in special measures should be offered timely access to RCGP support.

Where there is a contractual notice consideration, the following principles apply:

- Each case should be considered on its individual merits - remedial or breach notices alone should not prevent practices eligibility to an offer of support.
- Notice of Termination (issued or in process of being issued) renders practices ineligible for support.

Where practices in special measures have not made sufficient improvements and face a further 6 months in special measures the following principles apply:

- Where the practice has not previously taken up the support offer, the practice is eligible for support.
- Where the practice is already receiving support and there is funding remaining this may be rolled over into the second 6 month period of special measures to continue delivery of the agreed (or any amended) improvement plan.
- Where the practice has received the maximum level (£10k) of support in the first 6 months period, eligibility for further support is discretionary, but in general commissioners would want to support a practice where there is evidence that the practice has properly engaged and progress is being made.

In all circumstances above, if there is evidence of significant previous investment in the practice failing to result in improvement, commissioners may consider this as evidence that further investment is unlikely to be cost effective. In these incidences, commissioners may decline to fund further support, but should discuss their concerns with the RCGP and ensure there is clear document the rationale for the decision.

Funding

Local commissioners (NHS England and CCGs acting under Delegated Agreement) must ensure that practices entered into special measures are made aware of this offer of support from RCGP during 2016/17 and in a timely manner.

The funding terms for practices accepting this support are local commissioners providing up to £5,000 of funding directly to the RCGP, with matched funding by the practice. Local commissioners will need to meet these costs from their primary care allocation.

Yours sincerely



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Head of Primary Care Commissioning
NHS England