

To: Responsible Officers and Medical Directors
in England

NHS England and NHS Improvement
Skipton House
80 London Road
London
SE1 6LH

30 April 2021

Dear colleagues,

Professional standards activities in 2021/22

Further to my letters on [19 March 2020](#) and [3 September 2020](#) I am writing about professional standards activities as we enter a new appraisal year. Thank you to you and your teams for maintaining professional standards activities and supporting the Covid response in the way that you continue to do.

I have previously recommended to aim for full participation in appraisal by April 2021, with flexibility for doctors who need to be excused, or as soon as possible for those that have not done so. The [Appraisal 2020](#) model will remain the default model for doctors connected to NHS England and NHS Improvement. This is providing a useful development opportunity, supporting doctors through what has been a difficult time for many. I encourage responsible officers who have not yet done so to adopt it.

Feedback also suggests that the Appraisal 2020 model is a catalyst of professionalism as well as a vehicle for support. What comes next should therefore be a continued forward evolution to consolidate the benefits, whilst still ensuring that revalidation requirements are met. We are working on evaluation and next steps for appraisal and governance processes with partners across the UK, including the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, GMC and BMA. We will work with you with a view to implementing these in 2022/23.

Last year we cancelled the 2019/20 Annual Organisational Audit and we are now standing down the 2020/21 exercise. However, organisations will still be able to report on their appraisal data and impact of the Appraisal 2020 model later in the year. The annual Board report and Statement of Compliance is being updated to support this. The date for submission of this report is 24 September 2021.

Because they are already covered in the annual Board report, the Framework for Quality Assurance (Annex B) Quarterly Reports will cease from 1 April 2021.

I hope this information provides a useful steer. Doctors and their colleagues in the workforce have risen magnificently to the challenges of the pandemic. By developing the Appraisal 2020 model and ensuring that the next steps consolidate its benefits we will serve not just the profession but their teams and, ultimately, patients.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Stephen Powis
National Medical Director
NHS England and NHS Improvement