

Suspending an Appraisal

SOP statement

To detail the process an appraiser should follow, and define the action they should take in a situation where they feel an appraisal should be suspended. The decision to suspend an Appraisal remains with the Appraiser themselves.

Introduction

This document prescribes the process which should be followed when a concern is raised *during* the appraisal discussion.

Very rarely an appraiser will need to suspend an appraisal due to the doctor providing information which raises a concern to the appraiser. This concern may present itself during the appraisal verbally, it may be implied or related to the provision of, or of lack of supporting information. Concerns can include (but are not exclusive to):

- Clinical concern
 - Lack of Clinical or Practice knowledge
 - Known Significant event or Serious Untoward Incident where learning is considered absent or poor
- Doctors health
 - Concern over drug or alcohol abuse
 - Stress
 - Excessive working hours
 - Probity issue
 - Inferred knowledge but there is a doubt about its validity
 - Financial

The appraiser is not expected to personally escalate the doctor to Practitioner Performance; this will be done by the relevant Programme Manager once information is received from the Appraiser and Senior Appraiser.

Scope

This SOP indicates the actions which should be taken by the appraiser and NHS England Central Midlands in the event an appraiser is required to suspend an appraisal.

Purpose

The purpose of the SOP is to ensure that an appraiser and the doctor are fully supported if concerns are raised which have the potential for impacting on patient safety or where staff or the individual's safety is called into question.

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Roles and responsibilities

- **Appraiser**
 - to confirm with the appraisee that the appraisal meeting needs to be suspended and that they intend to seek further advice from NHS England Central Midlands
 - To inform the appraisee of the reason why the appraisal meeting needs to be suspended.
 - To inform the appraisee that based on the information provided, they will likely be referred to Practitioner Performance for further review.
 - The Appraiser is not to attempt to rectify the situation.
 - To make urgent contact with their Senior Appraiser and local Appraisal and Revalidation Office
 - To document their concerns and email to the Appraisal and Revalidation Team using the generic inbox, copying in the Programme Manager/s and Appraisal Clinical Lead

- **Senior Appraiser** (Appraisers aligned SA unless an alternative is required due to absence)
 - To discuss the concerns raised with the appraiser and provide advice to the appraiser.
 - Document the discussion and any advice given to the appraiser and send to the Appraisal Lead and relevant or available Programme Manager
 - To undertake a review of the doctors last three appraisals and feed back findings to the Programme Manager/s and Appraisal Clinical Lead

- **Appraisal Clinical Lead for NHS England Central Midlands**
 - To acknowledge concerns raised
 - Review information provided and assess any risk to patient, staff or doctor safety
 - To provide any comments or advice to Senior Appraiser and or Programme Manager to action
 - To inform the Responsible Officer, confirming when the Doctors revalidation is due.

- **NHS England Appraisal and Revalidation Team – Programme Managers**
 - To receive information from Appraiser, Senior Appraiser and Appraisal Lead for collation
 - Summarise information and complete referral to the Pre-Information Gathering Group ('PIGG') form, for the attention of Practitioner Performance.
 - To take the lead in the management of the doctors appraisal programme
 - To keep the doctor informed of progress via email, and/or a letter sent recorded delivery (Appendix 2).

- **Practitioner Performance Team**
 - To receive the information provided by the Programme Manager for Appraisal via the PIGG process – information will initially be sent to the PPT Generic Inbox
 - To follow the national framework in managing performer concerns
 - To report back to the Appraisal Team regarding the progress of the case and the outcome

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Actions and Outcomes

To ensure concerns identified at the appraisal meeting are appropriately escalated and managed within NHS England Central Midlands Governance arrangements

To ensure the appraiser is supported and receives effective support to enable them to handover any concerns to the Appraisal and Revalidation Team.

To ensure the Doctor is aware of the reasons for suspension of the Appraisal, and kept informed through to the point he is referred to the PIGG

To mitigate any risk to patient safety, safety of staff and or the doctor.

Documentation by the Appraiser and Senior Appraiser of issues raised and discussed in order to provide an audit trail.

Information to be recorded within the appraisal summary should be limited to the fact that the appraisal needed to be suspended. A suggested form of word is as follows:

- “During the discussion, information came to light which required me (Appraisers name) to suspend the appraisal and to refer the concern to NHS England Central Midlands Appraisal and revalidation Team for action and/or consideration”.

Programme Manager to escalate concerns to Practitioner Performance Team for consideration and further action.

Monitoring

Process to be reviewed annually to ensure process fits within NHS England Appraisal and Revalidation Policies.

Review of process to be actioned immediately where situation arises.

Distribution and implementation

All members of the appraisal and revalidation team to be familiar with the process detailed within this document.

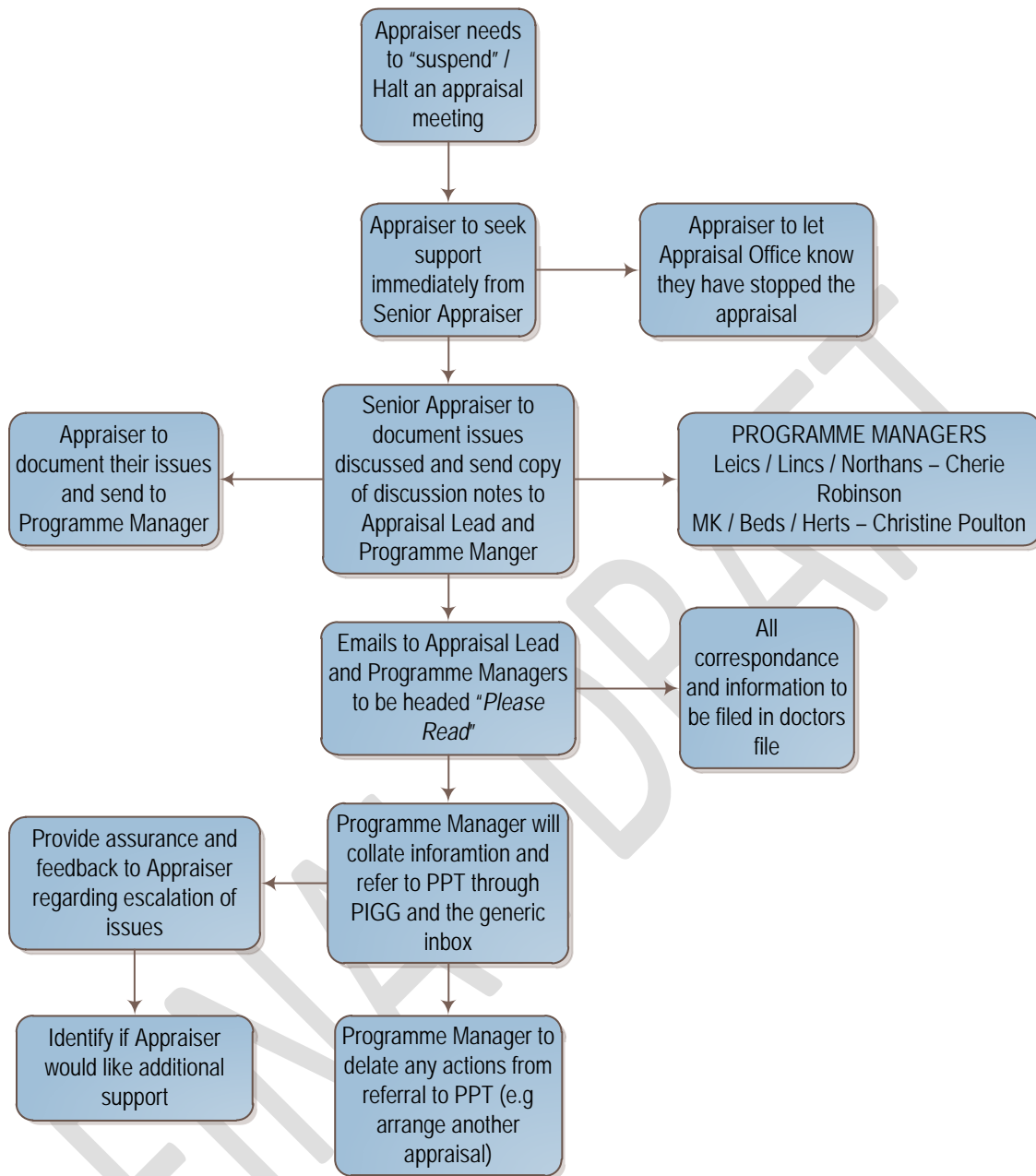
Document to be reviewed and consulted upon by the Senior Appraisers and RO before introduction

Appraisers to receive copies of this document to be implemented after RO approval

Practitioner Performance Team to be cited on the process within this document to ensure they are aware of the referral to PIGG process

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Appendix 1 – Process Flow Chart



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Appendix 2 – Letter template for keeping doctor informed



Central Midlands
Charter House
Parkway
Welwyn Garden City
Hertfordshire
AL8 6JL

Our Ref:

Dr

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

england.centralmidlands.appraisals@nhs.net

Tel: 0113 8248881

Dear Dr XXXX

Suspension of your appraisal on [date]

Following the suspension of your appraisal by your appraiser Dr xxx on the above date, I am writing to advise you that we have referred your case into the NHS England Central Midlands Practitioner Performance processes to consider formal regulatory and/or Performers' List action as appropriate.

The performance team will be in contact with you in due course but if you have any concerns or queries I can be contacted at the following address:

england.centralmidlands.appraisals@nhs.net

This letter has been sent by email and hard copy to the most recent address you have supplied to the Medical Performers' List Team.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Greening', written in a cursive style.

Dr Sarah Greening

Associate Medical Director, revalidation

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