



Revalidation Support Team

Case manager

Person specification and competencies

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Introduction

Revalidation of doctors is a key component of a range of measures designed to improve the quality of care for patients; it is the process by which the General Medical Council will confirm the continuation of doctors' licences to practise in the UK. The purpose of revalidation is to assure patients and the public, employers and other healthcare professionals that licensed doctors are up to date and fit to practise.

Through a formal link with their organisation, determined usually by employment or contracting arrangements, doctors will relate to a senior doctor in the organisation, the responsible officer. The responsible officer will make a recommendation about the doctor's fitness to practise to the General Medical Council (GMC). The recommendation will be based on the outcome of the doctor's annual appraisals over the course of five years, combined with information drawn from the organisation's clinical governance systems. Following the responsible officer's recommendation, the GMC will decide whether to renew the doctor's licence.

The responsible officer is accountable for the quality assurance of the appraisal and clinical governance systems in their organisation. Improving these systems will support doctors in developing their practice more effectively, which will add to the safety and quality of healthcare in the UK. It will also enable the early identification of those doctors whose practice needs attention, allowing for more effective intervention.

All doctors wishing to retain their GMC licence to practise will need to participate in revalidation.

This publication has been prepared by the NHS Revalidation Support Team (RST). The RST works in partnership with NHS England, the Department of Health (England), the General Medical Council and other organisations to deliver an effective system of revalidation for doctors in England.

Purpose and context

In 2011 the NHS Revalidation Support Team (RST) undertook an online survey in England around responding to concerns about a doctor's practice in the previous 12 months. There were also workshops facilitated in all ten of the then strategic health authorities (SHAs) with members of the responding to concerns teams (responsible officers, human resource directors and others).

The survey and workshops resulted in the RST publication *Supporting Doctors to Provide Safer Healthcare: Responding to concerns about a doctor's practice* in March 2012¹. One of the areas of need was training of case investigators. The RST, in partnership with the National Clinical Assessment Service (NCAS), has trained over 1,000 case investigators since January 2013.

A need for case manager training was also identified. This training is being delivered to appropriate delegates in 2013-14. Case managers are usually, but not exclusively, responsible officers.

This document outlines the person specification of a case manager. It covers requirements of the person in the case manager role in the following areas:

- qualifications
- experience
- skills
- knowledge
- attitudes.

Primary audience

This document is primarily for those who are currently case managers or intending to take up this role. Others who may be interested in this document include:

- responsible officers (ROs)
- medical appraisers
- human resource managers
- occupational health professionals
- case investigators.

¹ A revised version was published in March 2013.

What is a case manager?

A case manager is an appropriately trained individual who is commissioned by a healthcare organisation to determine whether there is a problem to address in a doctor's performance. A case manager is usually appointed internally by the healthcare organisation and follows the processes of that organisation in this role. The case manager is usually a senior member of the organisation's staff. He/she is usually the responsible officer of the organisation but not always. *Maintaining High Professional Standards in the Modern NHS* (Department of Health, 2003) normally requires the case manager to be the medical director/responsible officer for cases involving consultants or clinical directors but the role can be delegated.

The role of the case manager involves:

- appointing an appropriate case investigator taking into account the role and speciality of the doctor under investigation and the scope and terms of reference
- writing the terms of reference
- ensuring the case investigation is carried out efficiently
- ensuring confidentiality, proper documentation of the process and access to any documentation required by the case investigator
- ensuring the doctor has appropriate support
- making judgements on the basis of the report and other evidence
- ensuring there is no conflict of interest or appearance of bias
- determining the next steps on receiving and considering the report.

The case manager should take appropriate advice throughout the process especially from the director of human resources but he/she may need advice from NCAS , medical royal colleges and others.

Person specification

The **essential** requirements are the experience, skills and knowledge of the person undertaking the role. The qualifications and attitudes are **desirable** for an effective case manager, but some could be developed through training. It is essential that such training is carried out before a person becomes a case manager.

Qualifications

- educated to degree level or equivalent
- has completed appropriate case manager training or can demonstrate of knowledge of the training themes
(This may not be essential requirement prior to appointment but should ideally be completed before taking up the role of case manager.)

Experience

- involvement in management at a senior level (e.g. medical director or deputy, associate medical director, clinical head of service etc.)
- some experience of judging or reviewing evidence against a standard and triangulating data

Skills

- ability to assess evidence and decide whether an investigation is necessary
- high level of interpersonal and communication skills including accessing information and opinions as required
- ability to judge the need for support of those involved and access this (e.g. occupational health, mentorship)
- ability to make judgements on the need for a doctor's practice restriction (and what this involves) or suspension/exclusion
- manage the restriction, suspension/exclusion process
- developed organisational and planning skills, including providing the case investigator with appropriate evidence to start the investigation
- ability to write focused terms of reference for an investigation including the flexibility to review and re-write these if the case investigator brings appropriate data to indicate this is needed
- ability to lead where necessary and advise the case investigator on process issues to keep to timescales
- ability to seek out advice and judge it as required (e.g. NCAS, medical royal colleges)
- ability to interpret relevant guidance documents and standards

- ability to ensure safeguards are in place to avoid breaches of confidentiality
- interpretation of the report and any other information in order to decide on outcome/next steps
- ability to structure and write recommendations for the doctor and organisation and implement these
- presentation skills including ability to present the case to a disciplinary panel

Knowledge

- understands the role of a case manager
- must engage in continuing professional development for the role
- knowledge of the revalidation and regulatory process, including *Maintaining High Professional Standards in the Modern NHS* (for case investigators of employed doctors) or *The National Health Service (Performers Lists) (England) Regulations 2013* (for case investigators of contractors) and/or organisational policies and processes
- knowledge of equality and diversity issues
- knowledge of the process of investigation and its independence from the case manager role (not essential prior to appointment as will be part of training in the role)
- knowledge of the requirements of information governance
- knowledge of organisational governance structures and standards
- knowledge of processes involved if restricted practice, suspension/exclusion required
- knowledge of remedial processes (e.g. occupational health, coaching, mentorship etc.)

Attitudes

- motivated, conscientious and able to deliver to deadlines
- demonstrates integrity and has strategies for dealing with potential challenges to this
- has respect of and for colleagues
- resilient and objective in situations of conflict
- committed to keeping up to date and fit to practice in the role of case manager.

Competency framework for case managers

A case manager is an appropriately trained individual who is commissioned by a healthcare organisation to determine whether there is a problem to address in a doctor's performance and take appropriate action.

Some core competencies must be recruited and selected for; others may be developed through training. The generic core competencies for case managers below are derived from the core competencies for a case investigator, the learning objectives and the pre-course reading for case manager training, and the person specification for a case manager:

Competency framework for case managers		
1	Professional responsibility: to maintain credibility as a case manager	
	Competency	Behaviour
1.1	High standards of professional responsibility, personal integrity, effectiveness and self-awareness	<p>Maintains high professional credibility</p> <p>Acts as a champion and role model for doctors under investigation and case investigators</p> <p>Demonstrates insight and self-awareness</p> <p>Reflects on feedback and adapts behaviour as a result</p> <p>Declares conflicts of interest and ensures that there is no appearance of bias</p>
1.2	High standards of resilience and objectivity	Resilient and objective at all times and particularly in situations of conflict
1.3	Develops and maintains professional competence as a case manager	<p>Undertakes appropriate personal and professional development and seeks out support, feedback and performance review in all professional roles</p> <p>Adds development needs as a case manager to their personal development plan</p> <p>Leads efforts to evaluate and improve local systems and processes</p>

2	Knowledge and understanding: to understand the role and purpose of the case manager and to be able to undertake effective case management	
	Competency	Behaviour
2.1	<p>Understands the regulatory processes for the investigation of performance concerns</p> <p>Understands local, regional and national governance structures, including the <i>Good Medical Practice</i> framework, <i>Maintaining High Professional Standards in the modern NHS</i> (for case investigation of employed doctors) or <i>Performers List Regulations</i> (for case investigation of contractors) and/or organisational policies and processes</p>	<p>Demonstrates understanding of the regulatory processes and the investigation of performance concerns</p> <p>Performs the case management following all appropriate processes and standards</p>
2.2	<p>Understands the role and responsibilities of those involved in investigations</p>	<p>Understands and works within the limits of the case management role and responsibilities, setting appropriate boundaries, especially from the investigative process</p> <p>Appoints an appropriate case investigator taking into account the role and speciality of the doctor under investigation, any conflict of interest and the scope and terms of reference</p>
2.3	<p>Understands quality and safety systems and relates this to the context of the doctor's work</p> <p>Understands the processes involved if there is a restriction of practice, suspension or exclusion required</p>	<p>Applies knowledge of quality and safety systems to make decisions to restrict a doctor's practice or suspend/exclude the doctor, and applies these decisions to local and national processes</p> <p>Adapts approach to the work context of the doctor</p>
2.5	<p>Understands relevant legislation and guidance including equality and diversity, bullying and harassment, data protection and confidentiality</p>	<p>Maintains knowledge of relevant policies and legislative frameworks and applies the principles in practice</p> <p>Demonstrates fairness and equality and</p>

		<p>makes allowance for differing backgrounds and requirements</p> <p>Deals with confidential data in accordance with information governance policies and guidelines</p> <p>Ensures confidentiality, proper documentation of the process and access to any documentation required by the case investigator</p>
2.6	Understands the potential legal challenges to an investigation	Ensures that the investigation is conducted in such a way as to minimise the risk from a potential legal challenge
2.7	Understands the importance of remedial interventions and knows their range and availability	Ensures that opportunities for remediation and options for interventions are appropriately applied in every case
3	Professional judgement: to analyse and synthesise information presented before and following an investigation including the identification of corroborating evidence, weighting of information and judging there is adequate support for all parties involved in the process	
	Competency	Behaviour
3.1	<p>Able to determine whether there is a problem to address in a doctor's performance</p> <p>Maintains and applies skills in evaluating the category and level of concern, while appreciating that there may be considerable overlaps</p> <p>Able to identify any external factors such as organisational failings, (policies, processes, teamwork etc) which have contributed to the concern about the doctor's practice</p>	<p>Identifies facts around an event or set of circumstances and evaluates them to determine whether there is a problem to address</p> <p>Demonstrates ability to evaluate the category and level of concern and acts accordingly including the need to commission an investigation, making an appropriate judgement about risk stratification</p> <p>Suggests options/action plan to address external factors and organisational failings</p>
3.2	Able to judge whether there is a patient safety issue or increasing performance concern	Responds appropriately to patient safety issues and significant signs of increasing performance, conduct or health concern

3.3	Maintains and applies skills in evaluating and weighting the evidence, including the case investigator's report Able to judge the credibility of all the evidence and identify corroboration	Demonstrates ability to evaluate the case investigator's report along with any other evidence Demonstrates accurate assessment of the weight to put on evidence Demonstrates insight into the credibility of evidence and its triangulation/corroboration
3.4	Able to judge whether there is a need to call on additional expertise to inform the decision and next steps to take	Takes appropriate advice throughout the process, particularly from the Director of HR, occupational health (OH), NCAS etc. Calls on appropriate additional expertise when required in a timely fashion Decides on next steps including; no case to answer, remediation, disciplinary action
3.5	Ability to judge whether the doctor, case investigator, witnesses and complainants have appropriate support throughout the process	Demonstrates knowledge of appropriate support routes for all parties Demonstrates support of the doctor by appropriate signposting as required and when needed (e.g. OH, mentorship, professional bodies) Demonstrates support of the case investigator by timely response to requests for advice about processes, support for witnesses and data required whilst remaining separate from the investigation process itself
4	Communication skills: to facilitate an effective process of gathering evidence including appointing/supporting a case investigator and supporting the doctor and witnesses to enable good quality decisions on next steps	
	Competency	Behaviour
4.1	Develops and applies good personal communication skills including presentation skills	Builds rapport Demonstrates good communication skills including active listening Explains available evidence and need for investigation (if appropriate) Explains processes and provides information/policies being followed Presents the case effectively

4.2	Able to liaise and coordinate effective communication between all those involved in the investigation, including the RO (if not case manager), NCAS, GMC Employer Liaison Advisor, witnesses, complainants and others	Brings together the relevant people in the case Ensures that all parties are kept informed about progress and involved at an appropriate level and in a timely fashion Maintains effective communication channels at all times
4.3	Able to communicate effectively with external stakeholders, including the media	Communicates with external stakeholders including media as required following organisational policy
4.4	Able to write and review robust and meaningful terms of reference	Writes appropriate terms of reference, and ensures the case investigator follows the terms of reference Reviews the terms of reference and amends them if required in the light of the evidence
4.5	Able to produce a high quality written case summary bringing together the evidence uncovered in the investigation and any other information to enable appropriate next steps/decisions	Completes case management summary documentation to a high standard Ensures that the case summary comes to robust and considered conclusions sufficient to inform appropriate next steps
5	Organisational skills: to ensure processes are followed so that the case can come to an appropriate and timely conclusion, including facilitating needs/support of case investigator, doctor and witnesses	
	Competency	Behaviour
5.1	Able to manage the case effectively, with effective management of time and workload, for both self and others	Works effectively within tight time-frames and responds in a timely way to all parties Ensures case investigator has capacity to meet timescales and reports in a timely manner Demonstrates appropriate time-management to conclude the case efficiently including panel/appeals processes if required Highlights issues or delays promptly and informs relevant parties

5.2	Able to plan outcome/decisions which meet national requirements	Ensures investigation is conducted within appropriate timescales and reaches outcomes that meet national requirements, including implementing remedial plan if required
5.3	Facilitates all parties in engaging effectively with the case investigation, providing and signposting appropriate support	Supports case investigator, doctor and witnesses and all parties involved with the investigation appropriately Is aware of and signposts additional support for them to access where needed
5.4	Sufficient computer skills to perform the role of case manager	Demonstrates sufficient computer skills to perform the role of case manager, using electronic communication methods and IT effectively