

Revalidation matters

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Welcome to the first edition of Revalidation Matters

This newsletter aims to bring you a monthly update on revalidation, keeping you informed of progress, events and guidance.

The beginning of April saw a new phase in the implementation of revalidation. Up until October 2013, the programme was driven by the RST (Revalidation Support Team), on behalf of the Department of Health. As NHS England took on overall responsibility for the programme throughout England, the RST handed over its functions, closing on March 31. We are indebted to our colleagues at the RST for the solid base of work that is now in place and for the true spirit of collaboration that we have enjoyed over the last 12 months.

We begin year 2 of the revalidation implementation programme with a number of challenges - not least doubling of the numbers of doctors going through the process, in an economic climate that does not get any easier. That said, I am pleased to report that funding has been secured to continue our support of revalidation, enabling us to provide co-ordination and calibration, to support you as responsible officers and integrate the programme with the overall drive towards quality improvement that underpins everything we do.

I am looking forward to seeing you at the 'Ahead of the Curve', Responsible Officer Conference in Brighton, 4 and 5 June.

Mike Bewick
Deputy Medical Director, NHS England

Progress to date on revalidation

The data published by the General Medical Council (GMC) tells us that 26,632 doctors in England have been through the revalidation process, as of 31 December 2013, with 21,703 positive recommendations and 4,923 deferrals (18% or 11% excluding trainees). This means that we are on track, with 20% of doctors revalidated in 2013/14. You will be aware that the GMC has set out a schedule in which a further 40% of doctors will be expected to revalidate by end March 2015.

We will be monitoring systems closely over the next few months, to assess the impact of doubling the throughput on the robustness and consistency of the process.

New deferral guidance available

In light of the variance we have seen in the rates of requests for deferral of doctors' revalidation and the length of deferral time considered appropriate, NHS England has developed guidance for its responsible officers, which may be helpful to responsible officers in other organisations. [The guidance](#) sets out the criteria on which deferral should be requested and the recommended length of time for specific circumstances. It has been developed in collaboration with the GMC and we hope that responsible officers will find it helpful.

Framework of Quality Assurance launched

One of the most important pieces of work we have delivered recently is a mechanism by which responsible officers can provide assurance that the systems underpinning revalidation in their organisations are effective and meet national standards.

Earlier this month we launched the [Framework of Quality Assurance](#) (FQA), which provides - in one place - all the processes and reporting mechanisms available to responsible officers to provide assurance on the integrity, consistency and rigour of the systems underpinning revalidation.

Ahead of the Curve

National Responsible Officer Conference (4/5 June, Brighton)

This [national event, to be held at the Hilton in Brighton](#), has been designed to bring together every responsible officer in the country. The programme is specifically aimed at the responsible officer role, decision-making and thresholds for intervention and it is expected that every responsible officer in England will attend. We suggest that accommodation is booked early, as we understand that there are events running at other venues in Brighton at this time.

Note: the hotel is 800m from Brighton train station and there are direct trains from London St Pancras (1hr 15min), London Bridge (58m) and London Victoria (52m).

Model of Engagement for Appraisers for NHS England issued

The Model of Engagement for Appraisers who will work as Independent Contractors providing appraisals for general practitioners, most responsible officers, and other doctors with a prescribed connection to NHS England, was issued on the 1st April. [Mike Bewick wrote out to all appraisers](#) on 2nd April 2014 summarising the latest appraiser documents and processes.

Work underway on responding to concerns

Work on the policies for responding to concerns, appropriate to the various mechanisms of employment or contracting for doctors is on-going and will continue over the coming months. For doctors employed by or contracted to NHS England, work is underway to align responding to concerns processes with those underpinning the Performers List system. Discussions on Professional Support Units are progressing, with a very positive dialogue with the National Clinical Advisory Service (NCAS).

Responsible Officer Guidance and Protocol to be launched

The newly revised guidance is to be published by DH as owners of the policy on revalidation. It is currently with colleagues in the devolved administrations for comment and will shortly be published on the [revalidation page of the NHS England website](#).

The GMC have also published [third edition of the responsible officer protocol](#).

Prescribed Connections report updated

To provide further clarity around prescribed connections of doctors to designated bodies, [the documentation on establishing the correct prescribed connection](#) has been updated.

Locum Agencies list made available

The Crown Commercial Service has published a [definitive list of locum agencies](#) on the GPS framework i.e. these are all locum agencies who are designated bodies under the responsible officer regulations.

(see 'Revalidation Responsible Officer Information.pdf' under the documents heading).

Feedback or Questions

We hope you have enjoyed reading this newsletter. We are very keen to hear from you and to provide you with a helpful, easily accessed source of information. If you have any feedback, questions or issues you'd like us to address in future issues please contact: england.revalidation-pmo@nhs.net.