

BMA

Scotland



Management Steering Group



Recognition, Support and Development

A charter for SAS doctors in Scotland



British Medical Association
bma.org.uk/scotland

Introduction

This Charter has been prepared jointly by the British Medical Association (BMA) Scotland, and Management Steering Group (MSG), which includes both NHS Scotland employers and the Scottish Government Health and Social Care Directorate (SGHSCD). It demonstrates a commitment to supporting and developing the role of the SAS doctor as a valued and vital part of the medical workforce in Scotland. This Charter supports the Scottish Government 2020 Workforce Vision¹ recognising the valuable role that SAS doctors play in improving patient care in Scotland, valuing and empowering them to work to the best of their ability. It also acknowledges the SAS Charter developed by the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, which covers similar ground.²

This Charter is in recognition of the fundamental role that SAS doctors hold in the delivery of high quality, safe medical care for patients in Scotland.

It sets out both the rights and responsibilities of SAS doctors and their employers, with a commitment to support and enable SAS doctors to realise their full clinical potential to deliver the best patient care.

With around 1,300 SAS doctors working across the NHS in Scotland³ in a wide range of secondary care specialties and roles, they make up a significant proportion of the senior medical workforce. While most are associate specialists, specialty doctors or staff grades, a number of GPs also work, often part time, as SAS doctors in secondary care roles.

As senior clinicians, SAS doctors bring experienced and specialist care, possessing individual and often highly specialised skills. As they gain experience, they develop the ability to work independently and to also take broader roles through other activities such as teaching and audit. Many SAS doctors hold roles in training as Clinical and Educational Supervisors, and as NES trained medical appraisers for their colleagues including consultants.

SAS doctors must be supported in their ongoing career development and progression, with recognition and support of their continuing educational and training developmental needs. It must be recognised that adequate supervision, training, appraisal and mentoring of all doctors is essential and should not be restricted to those in formal training programmes or to individual groups of doctors.

Recognition and value

SAS doctors as senior clinicians are often members of multidisciplinary teams involved in the management of clinical services and patients. They are leaders, managers, appraisers, and Clinical and Educational Supervisors.

- SAS doctors must be fully recognised, respected and valued by their employers and colleagues for their diverse roles and their vital contribution to patient care and the wider NHS.
- Where SAS doctors have overall responsibility for patients this must be recorded accurately under an individual SAS doctor's name to ensure accuracy and transparency in patient coding. NHS Boards, Medical Directors and other relevant staff should be aware of the need for appropriate and correct patient coding.
- SAS doctors should be given the opportunity to apply for roles in medical management as appropriate to their knowledge, experience and expertise.

1 Scottish Government (2013) Everyone Matters:2020 Workforce Vision

2 Charter for SAS Doctors:
<http://www.rcpe.ac.uk/sites/default/files/files/RCPE-SAS-Charter-FINAL-June-2013.pdf>

3 ISD Scotland. NHS Scotland Workforce – Medical and Dental. Data as at 23 June 2014.
Available at: <http://www.isdscotland.org>

Professional and career development

SAS doctors should be fully supported in their ongoing career and professional development

- All SAS doctors, their employers, Directors of Medical Education, Training Programme Directors and SAS Local Educational Advisers must recognise and be committed to the requirement of ongoing Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and career long education and development.⁴
- Employers must recognise the range of educational requirements of SAS doctors and support flexible CPD to ensure recognition of the varying learning needs and special interests of SAS doctors.
- SAS doctors and their employers must recognise that service and educational needs must be balanced, and considered in parallel.
- There should be protected time for training and other professional activities for SAS doctors so that they can meet their individual professional, educational and career developmental needs.⁵ For doctors on the Specialty Doctor or Associate Specialist (2008) contract this should be a minimum of one Programmed Activity (PA), and equivalent arrangements should also apply to other SAS doctors. Job plans for SAS doctors must be agreed on an annual basis as a minimum, and all SAS doctors should have a named clinical lead with whom they should meet to develop and review their personal job plan.
- All SAS doctors are eligible for an average of 30 days funded study leave over a 3 year period.
- SAS doctors and NHS Boards may also seek and promote opportunities for professional development through the SAS Professional Development Fund, funded through NHS Education for Scotland (NES).⁶ SAS doctors should have ready access to the support of a dedicated SAS Educational Adviser who will assist with application criteria. Information and funding application arrangements are co-ordinated by NES. Any funding allocated is additional to local NHS Board study leave budgets and routine CPD.
- All SAS doctors and their employers must fully engage in the appraisal and revalidation processes in line with GMC guidance⁷ and agreed local arrangements. SAS doctors should have an annual appraisal with a named NES-trained appraiser. Appraisals must address ongoing educational development which should result in a Personal Development Plan (PDP). The appraisal process is separate from any Job Plan Review but the PDP will inform the job plan review of any educational or developmental requirements for the following year. Employers should facilitate access to the resources (including the time to learn) to support PDPs and SAS doctors' job plans must also allow sufficient time for appraisal training, appraisal preparation and the appraisal itself.
- It is essential that NHS Boards ensure that those SAS doctors wishing to apply for Certificate of Eligibility for Specialist Registration (CESR) related training placements are properly supported to identify and meet their needs and competencies. This may include the requirement for secondment for top up training and the possible application to the SAS Professional Development Fund for funding for backfill.

4 The GMC has produced CPD guidance for all doctors, emphasising the importance of planning for career progression, patient safety and revalidation: http://www.gmc-uk.org/education/continuing_professional_development/cpd_guidance.asp

5 Joint job planning guidance was agreed on a UK-wide basis in November 2012 and can be found on the MSG and BMA websites: <http://www.msg.scot.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/SAS-job-planning-guide.pdf>

6 Further details of the SAS Professional Development Fund and the role of the Educational Advisers can be found on the NES website: <http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/education-and-training/by-discipline/medicine/about-medical-training/supporting-specialty-doctors.aspx>

7 More information is available on the GMC website: <http://www.gmc-uk.org/doctors/revalidation.asp>

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