

Dear Colleague

Code of Practice – Provision of Information for Postgraduate Medical Training

Purpose

1. Following discussions between NHS Education for Scotland (NES), MSG and the BMA's Scottish Junior Doctors Committee a revised Code of Practice has been agreed. The previous version issued under [CEL 17 \(2011\)](#) is replaced and a copy of the revised code is attached at Annex A.

Background

2. The purpose of the code is to ensure that doctors in training have as much detail as possible about the programmes and the posts they are applying for, where they will be working, and their conditions of employment. It sets out the information that recruiting organisations and employers should provide to doctors in training at each stage of the recruitment process, the first post and subsequent rotations.

Coverage

3. The Code of Practice applies to postgraduate medical training recruitment in Scotland. It applies to recruitment to Foundation Training, Core, Specialty Training, LAT and GP training.

Action

4. NHSS Board Chief Executives and Human Resources Directors are asked to ensure that the revised Code of Practice is drawn to the attention of all those involved in the provision of information to doctors in training in Scotland.

Yours sincerely



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CEL 10 (2014)

May 2014

Addresses

For action

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ANNEX A

Code of Practice Provision of Information for Postgraduate Medical Training

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This code of practice sets out the agreed set of information for postgraduate medical training to help to ensure that doctors in training have as much detail as possible about the programmes and posts they are applying for, where they will be working and their conditions of employment, as far as it is reasonably practicable to do so.
- 1.2. NHS Education for Scotland (NES) and employing health boards who are responsible for the provision of information will continue to strive to ensure that all essential information needed to assist doctors in training in making important career and life choices is available.
- 1.3. It should be noted that recruitment for postgraduate medical training in Scotland is now undertaken as part of the wider UK recruitment. Whilst Board's in NHS Scotland will still have responsibility for recruiting to some specialties, for other specialties the lead recruiter may be a College or Postgraduate Deanery in NHS England. Whilst every effort will be made to ensure the Code of Practice is applied to all recruitment, there will be occasions when this is out-with the control of Board's in NHS Scotland.
- 1.4. This Code of Practice aims to support a process of continuing improvement. It lays out the agreed set of information that should be provided to doctors in training at each stage of the recruitment process, the first post and subsequent rotations.
- 1.5. There is an onus on all parties to provide quality, accurate and timeous information, where specified in this code.
- 1.6. **FP applicants only** – applicants should be aware that it is possible in exceptional circumstances that the programme they accept may be altered, although the applicant can be assured that any programme they undertake can deliver the outcomes required by the Foundation Programme Curriculum. The Scottish Foundation School will notify applicants as soon as possible if there are any changes to their posts or programmes.
- 1.7. The timescales set out in this Code of Practice relate to all recruitment rounds for postgraduate medical training.
- 1.8. In the event of future changes to the recruitment process this Code of Practice will be reviewed in partnership and amended as appropriate.

2. Remit

- 2.1. This Code of Practice applies to postgraduate medical training recruitment in Scotland.
- 2.2. It applies to recruitment to Foundation Training ¹, Core, Specialty Training, LAT and GP training.
- 2.3. All Training programmes advertised will be GMC approved.

3. Information required in advance of advertisement.

- 3.1. Prospective applicants will be advised via the UK Foundation Programme website for Foundation Training where advertisements will be placed and for Specialty Training (including Core, GP and LAT) the Scottish Medical Training (SMT) website will provide the details of the lead recruiter's website for adverts. Advertisements will be placed for a minimum of four weeks, and will conform to the requirements of employment law and the UK Borders Agency requirements for the Resident Labour Market Test (RLMT).
- 3.2. **FP only** – During the national and academic recruitment rounds, Scottish programme information must be available for applicants to view on the SMT website ² and via a link from the UK Foundation Programme Application System ³ for a minimum of 8 weeks prior to doctors submitting their programme preferences. This information must include which specialties are covered in each programme. Nationally agreed salary scales for F1 and F2 doctors in Scotland are published on the MSG website ⁴. Eligibility criteria, details on how to apply and matching to a foundation school are included in the Applicant's Handbook published on the UK Foundation Programme website.
- 3.3. Eligibility criteria will be published on the SMT website ⁵ for all posts for a minimum of four weeks before the recruitment round begins.
- 3.4. As much information as possible about programmes and locations will be provided on the SMT website ⁶.
- 3.5. The applicants guide for the different specialties will be made available on the lead recruiter's website.
- 3.6. **FP Only** – In Scotland, the North and East deaneries ask applicants to indicate their preferences for rotations for both years of their programme. The West and South East deaneries match applicants to two year programmes with linked but not fixed rotations in year two. To ensure transparency, information about how applicants are matched to programmes is published on the SMT website ⁷ prior to the start of the recruitment round.

1. This document should be viewed in the context of the FP Reference Guide and the FP Applicant Guide.
2. <http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/disciplines/medicine/postgraduate-training/foundation-training>
3. <http://www.foundationprogramme.nhs.uk/pages/home>
4. <http://www.msg.scot.nhs.uk/index.php/pay/medical/junior-doctors>
5. <http://www.scotmt.scot.nhs.uk>
6. <http://www.scotmt.scot.nhs.uk/specialty/specialty-programmes.aspx>
7. <http://www.nes.scot.uk/disciplines/medicine/postgraduate-training/foundation-training>

4. Information to be available at the time of advertisement of training programmes

4.1. Doctors in training should be provided with information about the grade and specialty of vacancies to be recruited. Indicative numbers of posts will be published when available and updated as required. The published advertisement must include this information or provide a link to the relevant information on the SMT website. The advertisement or SMT website must state or link to:

- Salary scale published on MSG website ⁸
- Programme descriptors which provide information on likely locations for the programme including site(s) of work within a larger employing organisation where applicable
- The qualifications and professional registration required

4.2. The advertisement should include, or link to, relevant information:

- All posts covered, including possible employers and locations of placement.
- Start Date
- Professional registration requirements
- Anticipated duration of programme
- Anticipated outcome subject to satisfactory profession (e.g. completion of CCT, CESR/CP, Core Training, FACD 5.2 – see Glossary)
- Basic pay indicated by reference to relevant national salary scales
- Travel and relocation expenses policy by reference to national terms and conditions, as published on MSG website, relevant circulars, including the national relocation and excess travel expenses agreement published under circular PCS (DD) 2010/8⁹ and local Board relocation policies¹⁰.

5. Training programme information: at time of training programme offer being made.

5.1. Privacy Policy and Data Protection – Scottish medical Training is coordinated by NHS Education for Scotland (NES) in partnership with the lead recruiting body for each specialty and with those NHS Boards which will employ the doctor in training.

The Lead Recruiting Body will hold and use the information candidates provide in their application for the purposes of administration and quality assurance of the recruitment process.

The information candidates provide in the cover sheet will be used solely for the purposes of recording fairness, equality and diversity and will not be available to the recruitment Board's.

The Lead Recruiting Body will not share candidate's personal data with third parties, except in cases where it is necessary to share data with appropriate authorities for the prevention or detection of fraud or other crime or for patient safety.

The NES Privacy and Data protection Policy is available on the NHS Education for Scotland Website¹¹. Privacy policies of other NHS Board's can be found on the relevant NHS Board website.

Candidates' data will be retained in line with the records retention and disposal policies of NHS Education for Scotland and the relevant NHS Board.

5.2. At the time an offer of a training programme is made, the following information will be provided by NES:

- Confirmation of information included in the advertisement
- Start Date
- Confirmation of training programme details and likely location of placements by reference to the programme descriptor
- Anticipated outcome as per 4.3 above

8. <http://www.msg.scot.nhs.uk>

9. [http://www.sehd.scot.nhs.uk/pcs/PCS2010\(DD\)08.pdf](http://www.sehd.scot.nhs.uk/pcs/PCS2010(DD)08.pdf)

10. <http://www.scotmt.scot.nhs.uk/recruitment/specialty-recruitment/key-documents.aspx>

11. http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/media/3987/210807_nes_data_protection_policy.doc

- 5.3. Information to be provided by the time of NES advising trainees of their initial placement in the programme, subject to organizational changes that may occur:
- The name of whom to contact in the event of any relevant information being missing or requiring clarification
 - Details on NES' management of training programmes, policy on taking time out of programme, study leave arrangements and flexible training by reference to the information available on the NES website¹²
 - Name of first employing Board
 - The qualifications/experience required

6. Employment information: information provision at the time of conditional employment offer

- 6.1. Once NES has made a training programme offer and provided initial placement information, further information must be provided by the employer about the specific post being offered. This will normally be done a minimum of 6 weeks prior to the start of the first post within a rotation, with the aim to deliver this within 8 weeks. Where the offered Programme comprises several posts, the information will cover the first post within a rotation. Information on later posts will be provided as indicated in section 4 and 5.
- Confirmation of employing Board and name of hospital/location, where known
 - Start date and duration of post where known
 - Hours – i.e. full or flexible
 - Basic pay indicated by reference to relevant national salary scales
 - Pension arrangements
 - Notice Period
 - Excess Travel and relocation arrangements
 - Details of any allowances payable to GPStRs
 - Requirements of local pre-employment procedures and checks
 - Professional registration requirements
 - Contact details in relation to accommodation/residence requirements in employing Boards
 - Description of induction arrangements for new staff
 - The name of whom to contact in the event of any relevant information being missing or requiring clarification
- 6.2. The employer will normally provide details of rota commitments/working pattern, banding supplement, name of hospital/location no later than 4 weeks prior to the start of the post. Where it is not possible to provide detailed information due to circumstances beyond the employer's control, (e.g. outstanding vacancies/allocation changes) the employer will inform the trainee of this and provide a named contact who will work to resolve any queries or urgent annual leave requests.
- 6.3. An employment contract will be provided to doctors no later than 8 weeks after starting in post.
- 6.4. As referred in section 1.3, recruitment is now undertaken on a UK basis and the Lead Recruiter may be a College or Postgraduate Deanery in NHS England. It may therefore not be possible to follow the above timeframe if information is not provided timeously. These circumstances are out-with the control of the NHS Board in Scotland but should it not be possible to meet the timeframes outlined above, every effort will be made to communicate with the candidates to advise of the delay.

12. <http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/education-and-training/by-discipline/medicine/help-and-support.aspx>

7. Employment information: information provision at each subsequent rotation

7.1. Responsibility for providing doctors in training and employers with details of future placements within training programmes lies with NES. This information should normally be provided at least 8 weeks before the doctor in training moves/rotates, and NES should aspire to provide this at least 12 weeks before. Recognising that the future placements of trainees on national programmes may require a move across different deaneries NES will endeavour to provide information about future placements to these trainees as soon as it is available, although all moves are subject to satisfactory progress in training. The minimum information to be provided on the next placement should include:

1. Name and level of training programme placement
2. Name of employing Board
3. Start date
4. Duration of post

Prior to commencing a rotational placement the doctor in training should receive the same employment information that they receive at the time they accepted the initial employment offer (sections 5 and 6 above).

8. Retention of records

8.1. All records of the recruitment process should be kept by the recruiting body for the particular specialty for 1 year in line with current employment regulations in order to deal with any complaints and queries. Contact details of the recruiting body for each specialty are available on the SMT website¹³. For successful applications from doctors in training, records will be retained by NES for the duration of the training programme.

9. Resolving queries/complaints about the provisions of information

- 9.1. If an applicant has a query or complaint about the provision of information during the recruitment phase this will be dealt with by the recruiting body as detailed on the SMT website¹⁴.
- 9.2. If a doctor in training has a query or complaint about the provision of subsequent rotational information they should raise their concerns initially with the relevant Training Programme Director.
- 9.3. If a doctor in training has a query or complaint about the provision of employment information they should raise their concerns initially with the prospective Board's HR contact.

10. Doctor in training responsibilities and actions

10.1. The GMC's *Good Medical Practice* guidance applies to all doctors in training.

10.2. In relation to the pursuit of any application or offer of training programme or any associated contract of employment, a doctor agrees:

- to ensure that accurate up-to-date contact details by e-mail and telephone are available at all times to all relevant parties.
- to respond **within 5 working days** to requests from any party to confirm information e.g. certificates/ immigration, documentation, etc. Failure to produce evidence required may result in an offer being withdrawn.
- if they have previously accepted an offer and then subsequently accept another offer, to inform by email the relevant party making the first offer of their changed intentions immediately and as a minimum to give the required contractual notice.
- to fully complete and promptly return requested pre-employment checking information, if necessary with an explanation of any omissions and when the information will be available, and to provide the rest of the information when required.
- to complete and return any occupational health forms.

13. <http://www.scotmt.scot.nhs.uk/recruitment/specialty-recruitment/where-to-apply.aspx>

14. <http://www.scotmt.scot.nhs.uk/recruitment/specialty-recruitment/complaints.aspx>

- to comply with Protecting Vulnerable Groups legislation – information on the requirements to be provided by the employing Board at the time of pre employment checks ¹⁵.
- to give appropriate notice of any decision to leave a programme for any reason, to both the NES Deanery and employer(s) concerned, and to continue working and training for any notice period within the contract of employment.
- to bring to the attention of NES and the prospective new employer (if known) any material circumstances that might affect their ability to take up particular posts within training programmes as soon as is appropriate and practicable after such circumstances are known.

10.3. Failure to meet these requirements on the part of a doctor may lead to difficulties for them, their employer and for patient care and may ultimately lead to the offer being withdrawn.

15. <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-people/children-families/pvglegislation>

Definitions (in line with the Gold Guide 2010)

CCT Certificate of Completion of Training. Awarded after successful completion of a specialty training programme, all of which has been prospectively approved by the GMC (or its predecessor body, PMETB).

CEGPR Certificate of Eligibility for General Practice Registration. Awarded after an applicant has successfully applied to have their training, qualifications and experience assessed against the requirements for the CCT in General practice.

CESR Certificate of Eligibility for Specialist Registration. Awarded after an applicant has successfully applied to have their training, qualifications, and experience assessed against the requirements for the CCT in which they have undertaken training (as this is a guide for those in UK training, reference has not been made to those applying in a non CCT specialty; for details of this evaluation please refer to the GMC website).

CESR(CP) CEGPR(CP) Certificate of Eligibility for Specialist or General Practice Registration. An application process for the award of the CESR or CEGPR through the Combined Programme route. It is for trainees who have a combination of training in a GMC approved programme to successful completion, and training and/or experience prior to appointment in posts which were not GMC approved. See GMC website for further information.

Clinical Supervisor. A trainer who is selected and appropriately trained to be responsible for overseeing a specified trainee's clinical work and for providing constructive feedback during a training placement. Some training schemes appoint an Educational Supervisor for each placement. The roles of Clinical and Educational Supervisor may then be merged.

Competences. The skills that doctors need (after *The New Doctor, transitional edition, 2005*).

COPMeD Conference of Postgraduate Medical Deans in the UK. COPMeD provides a forum in which Deanery members can meet to discuss current issues, share best practice and agree a consistent and equitable approach to training in all deaneries. It acts as a focal point for contact between the Postgraduate Medical Deans and other organisations, e.g. Medical Royal Colleges, GMC, BMA, MRC, AoMRC and the Department of Health.

Core Training. Core training is the first stage of uncoupled specialty training.

Doctors in training – this term will be applied throughout the Code to all applicants applying for Postgraduate medical training posts/programmes as referred to in this Code of Practice.

FACD 5.2. Foundation Achievement of Competence Document.

Foundation Programme. The first two years of Postgraduate training following graduation from medical school in the UK. The first year (F1) leads to full registration with the GMC whilst the successful completion of the two year programme enables the trainee to apply for specialty training programmes.

GMC General Medical Council. The purpose of the General medical Council (GMC) is to protect, promote and maintain the health and safety of the public by ensuring proper standards in the practice of medicine. The law gives the GMC four main functions under the Medical Act 2003:

- keeping up-to-date registers of qualified doctors
- fostering good medical practice
- promoting high standards of medical education
- dealing firmly and fairly with doctors whose fitness to practice is in doubt

Programme. A managed educational experience. As defined by the GMC. “A programme is a formal alignment or rotation of posts which together comprise a programme of training in a given specialty or subspecialty. A programme may either deliver the totality of the curriculum through linked stages in an entirety to CCT, or the programme may deliver different components elements of the approved curriculum”. The GMC approves programmes of training in all specialties, including general practice, which are based on a particular geographical area (which could cover one or more recruiting organisations). They are managed by a training

programme director (TPD) or their equivalent. A programme is not a personal programme undertaken by a particular trainee.

Run-through training. The term used to describe the structure of specialty training introduced in August 2007 in which trainees are competitively selected into specialty training curricula which cover both the early and more advanced years of specialty training. Once selected into a run-through specialty training programme, a trainee will be able to complete specialty training in the broad specialty group or specialty, subject to progress. From 6 August 2008, some specialties have moved away from this model (see uncoupled training), whilst others have continued with it.

Specialty training. The designation of training after completion of the Foundation Programme, applying to trainees who have entered this training from August 2007 to undertake a specialty training programme formerly approved by PMETB and, from April 2010, by the GMC. As distinct from specialist training, which applies to trainees appointed before August 2007.

Training Programme Directors (TPDs). The GMC requires that training programmes are led by TPDs (or their equivalent). TPDs have responsibility for managing specialty training programmes. Please refer to Section 4 for further information.

Uncoupled training. Uncoupling means building in a formal opportunity after ST2/CT2 (or ST3/CT3 in the case of specialties where core training is three years) to change direction or make a more focused career choice in the light of greater experience. It means adding a competitive selection process between ST2/CT2 and ST3 (or between ST3/CT3 and ST4 in the case of specialties where core training is three years).

NES. The medical Directorate of NHS Education for Scotland (NES) is responsible for the commissioning and delivery of postgraduate medical education. It's four Scottish deaneries are an integral part and have operational responsibility for ensuring that all aspects of postgraduate medical education, from Foundation to Specialty Training, are delivered to the highest standards.

SMT. Scottish Medical Training (SMT) became the new name for Modernising Medical Careers (MMC) in Scotland from 2009. SMT is coordinated by NES in partnership with the lead recruiting boards for each specialty and with those NHS Boards which will employ the doctor in training.

Lead Recruiting Body. The Lead Recruiting Body may be an NHS Board, College, Local Education Training Board or Deanery.

More information of who's who in Scottish Medical Training can be found at:

<http://www.scotmt.scot.nhs.uk/about-smt/who%27s-who-in-scottish-medical-training.aspx>