

Dear Doctor

There is a great deal of information around on revalidation - not all of it accurate. I therefore wanted to write to you directly to update you on our plans to introduce revalidation for all doctors with a licence from the end of 2012.

This letter sets out where we have got to, what you need to do to prepare, and where you can obtain more information. I hope you find it useful.

Where we are now

As you know, revalidation is built on a regular appraisal, which is based on our core guidance, *Good Medical Practice*. The appraisal is supported by information from your work as a doctor, including feedback from colleagues and patients. The process has been designed to be as simple and straightforward as possible.

To help them with revalidation, most licensed doctors will be connected to a 'designated body'. Within that organisation a doctor with the title 'responsible officer' will make recommendations to the GMC about those doctors.

There is a clear set of rules that determines which designated body you are connected to for revalidation. For most doctors, the connection is straightforward because it is the organisation in which they spend most or all of their practice. We already know most doctors' designated bodies and over the next few months we will be contacting you to confirm your designated body.

We are also working closely with the four UK health departments, the NHS and other healthcare organisations to help them prepare for the introduction of revalidation from December 2012. Considerable progress has already been made by organisations throughout the UK – appointing and training responsible officers, making sure that licensed doctors have an annual appraisal, training appraisers, and ensuring that doctors have access to the supporting information they need. Some organisations are now more or less ready, while others are well on their way.

That said, we are not expecting every doctor to revalidate immediately - we will roll out the process over the next few years.

What happens next

Later this year, we will begin telling doctors when we expect them to revalidate. Although we are not planning a 'big bang' approach, we expect to receive recommendations from responsible officers about the vast majority of licensed doctors by March 2016. Just to be absolutely clear about this, not every doctor needs to be 100% ready to revalidate by the end of this year, but all doctors need to be getting ready.

For most licensed doctors, this means you need to make sure you are having an annual appraisal, with *Good Medical Practice* as its focus, and that you are collecting the required supporting information, as set out in our guidance.

As we launch revalidation, we will ask each responsible officer to make a positive recommendation about their doctors, if he or she is confident that they have had at least one appraisal based on *Good Medical Practice*, that they have brought the relevant supporting information to that appraisal and that there are no outstanding concerns about their fitness to practise.

If you are a trainee, all you need to do is continue in the Annual Review of Competence Progression (ARCP) process as part of your training programme.

Over the next few months we will be contacting you and asking you to confirm your designated body. When and how we will contact you will depend on the nature of your practice:


1. If you work in the NHS, we should hold this information already. We have received data from the NHS, enabling us to connect almost 120,000 doctors with their designated body. If you are one of these doctors, we will write to you and ask you to confirm whether the information we have for you is correct. **You should receive this letter from October of this year.**
2. If you are a postgraduate trainee we will use your response to this year's national training survey to confirm your designated body for you. **The survey has already begun and runs until 15 June 2012.**
3. If you are not a postgraduate trainee and we have not yet identified a connection for you using NHS data, we will be writing to you separately to ask you to confirm your designated body using an online system on our website. **You may have already received a letter from us about this. If not, you should receive it by the end of June 2012.**

After many years of debate and planning we are on the verge of introducing revalidation. For the vast majority of doctors we believe it will be straightforward and it is certainly what patients expect. We have been encouraged by the progress being made across the UK to get ready and are confident that with your support, we will establish a system of assurance that supports doctors in their practice and is not burdensome.

We will try not to bombard you with information, but we do want you to feel comfortable about the process. We will therefore keep you updated and tell you exactly what you need to do and by when, in order that you will be ready to revalidate.

We have included information about all of this on our website. If you would like more information and guidance to help you get ready please visit www.gmc-uk.org/revalidation.

With best wishes



Niall Dickson
Chief Executive and Registrar