

Medical Appraisal and Revalidation – Briefing for the Trust Board

Background

The care delivered by the majority of doctors registered with the GMC is generally of a high quality. However, after a series of high profile failings, proposals were made for a system of revalidation for every doctor. Revalidation is a new way of regulating the medical profession that provides a focus for doctors' efforts to maintain and improve their practice. The purpose of revalidation is to assure patients and the public, employers and other healthcare professionals that licensed doctors are up to date and are practising to the appropriate professional standards.

The processes underpinning revalidation are still being finalised, but when introduced doctors will have to demonstrate to the GMC every five years that they are up to date and fit to practise, and complying with the relevant professional standards.

Every doctor will be appraised annually by a trained appraiser. The appraisal process will include information from multi-source feedback, continuing professional development portfolios, and verified clinical performance information, along with the outcomes of any investigation of complaints, concerns, patient safety incidents and other available indicators that can be reliably related to the performance of the individual doctor. At this point, an objective and confident judgement can be made about the quality of the doctor's practice. In the vast majority of cases this judgement will be affirmative, but, in the small number of instances where there is cause for concern, robust processes must be in place to ensure early identification and rapid remedial action.

Responsible Officer

The Medical Profession (Responsible Officers) Regulations 2010 came into force on 1st January 2011. Designated bodies, which include National Health Service Trusts, NHS Foundation Trusts and Postgraduate Medical Deaneries, are required to nominate or appoint a Responsible Officer. Medical practitioners are required to be linked to a Responsible Officer. For doctors in employment the Responsible Officer will be that of the employer where the majority of practice is carried out; for doctors in training the Responsible Officer will be the Deanery.

The Responsible Officer role is still under development; however designated bodies are required, by the regulations, to provide sufficient funds and other resources to enable Responsible Officers to discharge their duties. Initially, it is anticipated that organisations will want to nominate an existing senior doctor, such as the Medical Director, and that is the case in this Trust.

Local situation

The current Medical Director's job description includes a statement that he will be the Responsible Officer. This needs to be expanded and a much clearer job description developed as the role becomes clear. The Deputy Medical Director (Performance) is playing a critical part in developing the enhanced appraisal system necessary for revalidation purposes. The process of revalidation is expected to commence in late 2012. It is anticipated that one-fifth of our doctors will go through the revalidation process every year. The Trust will have to ensure that information systems underpinning the clinical elements of corporate governance and any other relevant processes (for example, multi-source feedback) are properly resourced and functioning.

The NHS Revalidation Support Team required us to complete an "Organisational Readiness Self-Assessment Tool" which showed there are still aspects of the processes which need to be put in place. These mainly relate to the appraisal process and job descriptions.

Resources and timeline

Nationally, the cost of implementing this policy is estimated to be approximately £27m. The table below identifies likely capital and revenue costs for this Trust in this and the next financial year. Also attached (appendix 1) is a timeline on "Medical Appraisal & Revalidation – Next Steps" pertinent to this organisation.

		2011-12	2012-13
Capital	Training appraisers & appraisees	£10k	
	Equiniti 360 Clinical - Set Up Fee	£5k	
	Data Analyst Office Equipment	£5k	
Revenue	Equiniti 360 Clinical Annual Licence (Discount for 'Early Adopters')	£54k	£54k
	Doctor Foster Clinical Benchmarking Tool	£14k	£14k
	Data Analyst Band 5/6	£30k	£30k

The Trust Board is asked to note the details and the potential resource implications.

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