



NHS Management Executive
St. Andrew's House
Edinburgh EH1 3DG

15th May 1998

Dear Colleague

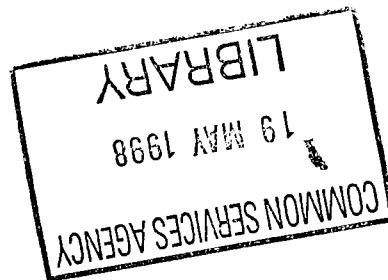
**IMPLEMENTING THE REFORMS OF SPECIALIST
MEDICAL AND DENTAL TRAINING: A GUIDE TO
SPECIALIST REGISTRAR TRAINING**

Summary

1. This letter launches a new 'steady state' version of *A Guide to Specialist Registrar Training*. This new version of the UK Guide replaces the edition published in March 1996 (issued with MEL(1996)26) which was intended to aid the smooth introduction of the specialist registrar (SpR) grade in the 53 different medical specialties. The new Guide reflects experience gained from operating the SpR grade over the last 2 years and has been informed by a wide consultation exercise conducted by the Health Departments last year.

2. The aim of the Guide is to explain in a detailed but straightforward way exactly what higher specialist trainees can expect at various stages of their SpR training programmes, from entering the grade, through the assessment process to the conclusion of training and then leaving the SpR grade. As well as current SpRs and future trainees, the Guide will be of interest to postgraduate deans, Trust managers and all others responsible for arranging and managing specialist medical training.

3. The arrangements set out in the new version of the Guide apply from the date of this letter.



Addressees

For action:

Chief Executives, NHS Trusts

General Managers, Health Boards

Executive Director, Scottish Council
for Postgraduate Medical and Dental
Education

General Manager, Common Services
Agency

General Manager, State Hospitals
Board for Scotland

Postgraduate Deans (Medical and
Dental) and Director

For information:

Deans of Faculties of Medicine

General manager, Health Education
Board for Scotland

The Scottish Royal Colleges

Scottish Joint Consultants Committee

BMA (Scotland)

BDA (Scotland)

Enquiries to:

Dr W B McQueen
Directorate of Human Resources
Room 62
St Andrew's House
EDINBURGH EH1 3DG

Tel: 0131-244 2515

Fax: 0131-244 2837

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| SCOTTISH HEALTH SERVICES COMMON SERVICES AGENCY TRINITY PARK, EDINBURGH | |
| CLASS | Ref. |
| ACC. | IP-1A: 102586 |
| Date | 19.5.98 |
| Price | ✓ |

Key Changes

4. The general format of the Guide and the areas covered are largely unchanged in the new version. However, the Guide does include a new Dental Supplement as well as an expanded section on the arrangements for academic and research medicine. There are also a number of areas which have been significantly modified or improved. These include:

- ***Appointments to the SpR Grade.*** The existing shortlisting process can be time consuming where large numbers of candidates compete for individual places on SpR training programmes. The new Guide introduces greater flexibility by allowing shortlisting to be conducted by a smaller shortlisting committee and also by correspondence where it is impractical for a shortlisting panel to meet to discuss candidates.
- ***Fixed-Term Training Appointments (FTTAs).*** These appointments, which are also known as Type II appointments, are designed for doctors who want to undertake some elements of SpR training to acquire specific experience or to achieve a particular qualification. Previously, only doctors who did not have a right of indefinite residence or settled status in the UK (ie overseas doctors) were eligible for FTTAs. The new Guide now allows doctors with EEA rights of residence, other than UK nationals, to be appointed to FTTAs. However, FTTAs cannot lead to the award of a Certificate of Completion of Specialist Training (CCST).
- ***Training Numbers.*** The arrangements for numbering trainees in the SpR grade have been considerably strengthened in the new Guide to make it clear exactly which type of the programme a trainee is pursuing. The different training numbers are as follows:

Scottish Training Number (STN) for doctors benefiting from EEA rights of residence on Type I programmes leading to the award of a CCST;

Visiting Training Number (VTN) for doctors who do not have a right of indefinite residence or settled status in the UK on Type I programmes leading to the award of a CCST;

Fixed-Term Training Number (FTN) for all other doctors in substantive appointments on prescribed training programmes which do not lead to the award of a CCST.

- ***Overseas Doctors.*** The Home Office Immigration Rules were changed in April 1997. The training arrangements for overseas doctors, that is doctors who do not have a right of indefinite residence or settled status in the UK, in the new guide reflect these changes. Before the changes to the Immigration rules, training opportunities available to overseas doctors in the UK were limited by the amount of permit free training time an individual doctor had. That is no longer the case, and an overseas doctor who now competes successfully to enter the SpR grade (either directly or following a period of

basic specialist training in the UK) in either a Type I or Type II programme will, providing satisfactory progress is assured, be entitled to stay in the UK for the duration of that programme before returning to their country of origin. A limit of 4 years permit free training time remains for all overseas doctors in the SHO or equivalent grades.

- ***Eligibility for a Consultant Appointment.*** The new Guide clarifies when an SpR is eligible to be considered for a consultant appointment. The Guide requires that a trainee must not be interviewed for a consultant post more than 3 months before the date when the trainee expects to be awarded a CCST. Exceptionally, particularly in the smaller specialties, employers may have good reason to want to interview SpR candidates who are more than 3 months away from their CCST. In these circumstances, approval should be sought beforehand from the appropriate UK Health Department.

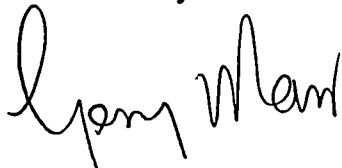
Additional Copies

5. You will note that we are sending copies of the Guide to a broad range of organisations in Scotland. The Department of Health NHS Executive has also placed advertisements in the medical press to announce publication of the new Guide. I should be grateful, in particular, if employers and clinical tutors would promote awareness of the new Guide amongst trainees and ensure that copies are available in Trust libraries. Additional copies of the Guide can be obtained from:

Department of Health
PO Box 410
Wetherby
West Yorkshire
LS23 7LN

(Orders by fax on 01937-845 381)

Yours sincerely



GERRY MARR
Director of Human Resources