

## Health Assessments

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This fact sheet explains what you can expect if you are invited to attend a health assessment.

### What is a health assessment?

When we receive information that suggests you may be unwell and that this could be affecting your ability to practise safely we may ask you to attend for health assessments.

You will be examined by at least two health examiners, usually consultant psychiatrists. Each health examiner or their secretary will contact you to introduce themselves and arrange an appointment. The two health examinations and reports are independent.

If there are any substance-related health concerns we will arrange for drug and/or alcohol testing to take place using an independent testing company.

### Consent and information provided to the health examiners

We will ask you to sign a consent form allowing the health examiners to:

- contact your GP
- contact any other health care professionals who have examined or treated you
- where they consider necessary, access your medical records
- carry out an assessment and provide the GMC with a report
- consider and interpret any test results.

The examiner will not have consent to contact your employers or any person not specified on the consent form.

Before you meet with the examiners we will have provided them with some information about your case. This will usually include (but is not limited to):

- the referral information we received
- any additional information we have received from your employer, treating doctors or health care professionals
- our letter of instruction

## **What information will be included in the reports?**

The report will normally include:

- the examiner's findings on your current health including a diagnosis, if appropriate
- your relevant personal, medical and psychiatric history
- information from other sources such as treating doctors
- an opinion about whether you are fit to practise generally, fit to practise on a limited basis or not fit to practise at all
- where there have been concerns about your use of alcohol or drugs, copies of any substance use test results and interpretation
- the examiner's recommendations on the future management of your case

## **What happens after the reports are completed?**

We will send you a copy of both reports and you will be provided with an opportunity to comment on them if you want to.

Your case will then be considered by two GMC decision makers known as case examiners (one medical and one non-medical). The case examiners will consider all the evidence that has been gathered during the investigation including the two health assessment reports. There are a number of options available to the case examiners:

- close your case with no further action
- issue a warning. This is not an option if your case solely relates to your health
- invite you to agree undertakings
- refer your case to a medical practitioners tribunal hearing

We may consider asking the health examiners to discuss their reports after they've been submitted if we think there are any points of difference that might be clarified ahead of a case examiner decision or a medical practitioners tribunal hearing. This won't normally be necessary, but we'll let you know if we decide to do this.

## **What if you refuse to have a health assessment?**

If you do not agree to have a health assessment or do not cooperate with the assessment process, your case will be reconsidered by a GMC Case Examiner and may be referred to a medical practitioner tribunal hearing. The tribunal will consider your case and decide whether your fitness to practise is impaired and whether to take any action on your registration.

**For further information please see [www.gmc-uk.org](http://www.gmc-uk.org)**