



Standards for medical supervisors

Working with doctors Working for patients

General
Medical
Council

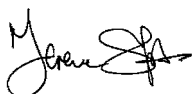
Foreword from the Chair

While the primary aim of our fitness to practise procedures is to protect patients, our measures for assessing and monitoring doctors who are ill have helped a great many back into, or to remain in, active clinical work. This is in large part due to the professionalism and dedication of our medical supervisors.

The role of the medical supervisor is at the heart of how we monitor doctors with health concerns. At the time of writing, around 300 doctors have a medical supervisor and the progress reports received are crucial in helping ensure we are fair to doctors and protect patients.

Our arrangements for managing doctors with health concerns have become well established over time. However, there is quite rightly an ever greater demand on us to be consistent, fair, open and transparent in what we do. With this in mind, this booklet sets out for the first time standards of proficiency for medical supervisors. These standards are intended to support supervisors by defining what someone in this role should know, understand and be able to do when they supervise doctors and complete reports for the General Medical Council (GMC). This will also help doctors with health concerns understand what they should expect from this supervision.

I hope you find this booklet helpful, and I look forward to us continuing to work with you, ensuring we are fair to ill doctors while ensuring patients remain protected.



Professor Terence Stephenson

About this booklet

This booklet sets out the standards that we expect medical supervisors to meet.

The standards are not hierarchical and are all equally important to the role. You need to meet all the standards to carry out the role of medical supervisor. The standards complement the *Medical supervisor handbook* and associated guidance, including the *General Medical Council (Fitness to Practise) Rules Order of Council 2014*. It is important that you read and understand all of these documents.

Who to contact

If you have any questions about the standards, please contact Kate Harrison, Associate Appraisal and Training Manager.

Email: kharrison@gmc-uk.org

All other enquires should be directed to the Associate Appraisal and Training team.

Telephone: 0161 240 8282

Write: General Medical Council,
3 Hardman Street, Manchester M3 3AW

Maintain communication

Maintain communication with us

- 1 Respond promptly to requests from us to:
 - a take on a new case of medical supervision
 - b provide information.
- 2 Inform us as soon as possible if:
 - a the doctor's risk of suicide, self-harm or risk to others has changed since the previous assessment
 - b you have any concerns that the doctor poses a risk to patient safety and the current restrictions do not protect against this
 - c a doctor misses a medical supervision appointment
 - d you become aware of any significant changes in the doctor's circumstance, including in their employment or treatment
 - e the doctor who you are supervising has a deterioration in their health or they have breached their restrictions
 - f there will be an interruption with your ability to carry out medical supervision, such as extended annual leave.
- 3 Urgently report your opinion on the doctor's fitness to practise to us if their health deteriorates.
- 4 Take all reasonable steps to give advance warning to us if you are unable to:
 - a continue to medically supervise a doctor
 - b attend a training session or another mandatory meeting.

Maintain communication with the doctor

- 5 Arrange appointments with the doctor you are supervising on an ongoing basis as per our instructions and as detailed in the *Medical supervisor handbook*.
- 6 Take reasonable measures to be available either on the telephone, by email or in person when the doctor you are supervising needs to seek approval for a new post of employment.
- 7 Meet with and reassess the doctor under supervision as quickly as possible if:
 - a their health significantly deteriorates
 - b they breach their restrictions.

Maintain communication with interested parties

- 8 Take reasonable measures to be available either on the telephone or by email if an interested party needs to contact you about the doctor you are supervising.
- 9 Engage in regular contact with relevant interested parties about the progress of the doctor you are supervising.

Prepare, provide and submit reports to us

- 10 Take reasonable measures to make sure you have adequate time to:
 - a review all material that we have given you
 - b obtain any additional material that may reasonably influence or support your opinion and recommendations.
- 11 Include in your report evidence from health professionals involved in the doctor's care and in the doctor's employment or remediation, as set out in our instruction letter and in the *Medical supervisor handbook*.
- 12 Carry out laboratory testing on an ongoing basis as per our instructions, if needed.
- 13 Produce written reports that:
 - a are accurate and legible
 - b are in the required format
 - c are to the required timescales
 - d include all the information required in the instruction letter.
- 14 Comment on only those matters that fall within your expertise as a medical supervisor.
- 15 Provide reasoning to support your opinion and diagnosis and, where relevant, quote from other sources to support this.
- 16 Provide copies of the all information you have received during the reporting period when you submit your report.

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- 17** Give your opinion and detailed reasoning in relation to the doctor's:
- a** level of insight into their condition
 - b** risk of relapse
 - c** risk of self-harm or suicide
 - d** risk to others.
- 18** Identify and explain where further information is required, confirming why it is required and what it will be used for.
- 19** Provide additional information to support and update written reports, as and when required.

Comply with legislative, organisational and regulatory requirements

- 20** Keep up to date with:
 - a** relevant trends and developments in your field of expertise, and know how to do so
 - b** rules and guidance relating to being a medical supervisor, including the *GMC Fitness to Practise glossary of terms*.
- 21** Understand and comply with the current legislation covering equality, diversity and human rights.
- 22** Secure data in line with our information security requirements and your personal obligations under any relevant data protection legislation.
- 23** Identify conflicts of interest and inform us as soon as reasonably possible if any arise.
- 24** Understand and follow the relevant guidance on maintaining confidentiality, data protection and freedom of information, and know how it applies to your role.
- 25** Adopt a professional manner at all times when carrying out the responsibilities of a medical supervisor.
- 26** Understand and apply the definitions of fit to practise, fit to practise on a limited basis, and not fit to practise at all.

Engage with training and appraisal

- 27** Attend mandatory training sessions or other mandatory meetings.
- 28** Reflect and act, where appropriate, on feedback provided.
- 29** Participate fully in:
 - a** your own GMC appraisal
 - b** the mentoring of other medical supervisors if you are requested to.

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Textphone: **please dial the prefix 18001** then
0161 923 6602 to use the Text Relay service

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