

Agenda item:	8
Report title:	Expanding GMC Clinical Assessment facilities
Report by:	<p>Richard Hankins, Head of Assessment richard.hankins@gmc-uk.org; 0161 250 6967</p> <p>Steve Jones, Head of Facilities steve.jones@gmc-uk.org; 0161 923 6287</p> <p>David Donnelly, Head of Management Accounting david.donnelly@gmc-uk.org; 0161 923 6296</p>
Action:	To note

Executive summary

The project to expand the GMC's clinical assessment facilities is proceeding in line with expectations. The 8th floor of 3 Hardman Square, Manchester has been secured and the main tenders have been awarded. Communications activities have been completed with a number of property journals running related stories.

Demand for PLAB continues to increase and underlines the importance of this project for meeting the needs of our customers and stakeholders.

A defined governance structure for the programme has been implemented under the sponsorship of Jane Durkin, Assistant Director – Registration. This includes an Implementation Board to oversee the programme, with three individual projects; operations and resources, information systems and facilities.

Although early in the programme timetable, it is currently on-time and on-budget. Project financials are set out in Annex A. There are no critical risks to the programme at this time.

Recommendation

Executive Board are invited to note the progress of the CAC Expansion Project.

Demand for PLAB 1 and 2

- 1** We continue to see an increase in demand for both PLAB 1 and 2 exams. We have over 4,300 candidates entered into the March 2019 PLAB 1 exam representing an increase of over 31% above the same sitting in 2018.
- 2** Accordingly demand for PLAB 2 continues to increase and despite maximising capacity in the current clinical assessment centre (CAC) places are booked up until July 2019. We expect to release places for the new CAC in March for exams taking place from late July.

Property acquisition and fit out

- 3** Following an extensive search and selection process a lease was signed for the 8th floor of 3 Hardman Square on 3 January 2019. The lease is for 10 years with a break option at 5 years. The lease commencement date was 28 January 2019. This building is located across the square from our Hardman Street office.
- 4** The floor comprises 22,000 sq. ft. of space and will house two circuits of twenty stations, facilities for ID checks, storage areas and an open plan office area with 40 desks.
- 5** The tender for the main fit out contractor was issued on 14 December and resulted in four high quality submissions by the close date of 25 January. The contract was awarded on 8 February 2019 to Overbury Ltd.
- 6** The tender for the provision of cameras, sound, and recording equipment went live on 3 December 2018 and resulted in a shortlist of three suppliers. Following a proof of concept demonstration on 4 February 2019, the contract was awarded to Reliance on 11 February 2019.

Programme schedule

- 7** The fit out is a 12-14 week programme of work. This includes all internal construction, mechanical and electrical work, fit out of circuits and office areas and the installation of the camera system. On completion of the fit out, the space will be handed over for work to operationalise the centre. This will take around eight weeks and includes installing technical equipment and a full test run of a PLAB 2 day.
- 8** Key milestones for the programme are:
 - 25 February 2019 - Fit out begins on site
 - 17 May 2019 – Fit out complete
 - Early June 2019 – Handover of centre to operational team

- Mid to end of July 2019 - Final moving week and open day
 - End of July to early August - First exam
- 9** These milestones will be reviewed and confirmed at a design meeting with Overburys on 15 February 2019. We will confirm the date of the first assessment at the end of February once the contractor and operationalisation plans are finalised.

Examiner recruitment

- 10** Doubling our assessment space and increasing the number of days we are offering requires us to vastly increase the number of examiners we contract. A recruitment campaign in autumn 2018 resulted in 765 applications from which 570 passed shortlisting. Because of the nature of the role, there is no interview. These candidates have now started training, and whilst there are usually a small number of rejections and drop-outs at this stage, these are expected to be minimal.
- 11** Whilst the examiner recruitment fell short of the target of 650 examiners it is a sufficiently large number to ensure that we have enough examiners for 2019. We plan a further small round of examiner recruitment in late 2019 to make up the shortfall and ensure that we are able to operate the centre effectively throughout 2020. Accordingly, we have reduced the risk related to inadequate examiner recruitment from 'Critical' to 'Significant'.

Risk Management

- 12** Lindsey Mallors, Assistant Director – Audit and Risk Assurance, led a risk 'deep dive' meeting in December. Programme and project risk registers have been created and are regularly reviewed, with critical programme risks escalated to the Directorate risk register.