

Standards for medical supervisors

Foreword from the Director

Our approach to assessment and monitoring can help doctors under supervision to undertake active clinical work, while still supporting our primary aim of patient protection. We achieve this through the professionalism and dedication of our medical supervisors who currently supervise around 140 doctors.

Medical supervision is central to the approach we take to monitoring doctors with health concerns. We rely on progress reports from a medical supervisor to give us an up to date picture of a doctor's fitness to practise.

Doctors rightly remind us of the need for continuous vigilance to ensure that our arrangements for assessing and managing doctors with health concerns are fit for purpose. We are committed to fairness and transparency in our procedures, which is why we have set out our standards for proficiency for medical supervisors in this booklet. 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 GMC.

These standards help ensure that:

- a. reports are consistent and include everything we need to know to gauge a doctor's progress to safe practice
- b. doctors with health concerns understand what they should expect from supervision
- c. we are fair to doctors in our efforts to protect patients.

I hope you find this booklet helpful.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anthony Omo', written over a faint, light-colored circular stamp or watermark.

Anthony Omo
Director of Fitness to Practise

About this document

This document 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 health examiner. The standards complement the [Handbook for medical supervisors](#) and associated guidance, including the [General Medical Council \(Fitness to Practise\) Rules Order of Council 2004](#). 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 the Associate Appraisal and Training Team.

Email: AATT@gmc-uk.org

Telephone: 0161 240828 2

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 for three weeks or more e.g. 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 other meeting you have been invited to.

Maintain communication with the other examiner

- 5** Arrange appointments with the doctor you are supervising on an ongoing basis as per our instructions and as detailed in the Handbook for medical supervisors.
- 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 Handbook for medical supervisors.

- 12** Explain test results to the doctor, their significance and how you plan to use them when writing your report as detailed in the Chemical testing guidance for associates.
- 13** Produce written reports that:
 - a. are accurate and legible
 - b. are in the required format using the template
 - 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 all the information you have received during the reporting period when you submit your report.
- 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.

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- 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** Adhere to the Associates expenses policy.
 - 24** Identify conflicts of interest and inform us as soon as reasonably possible if any arise.
 - 25** Understand and follow the relevant guidance on maintaining confidentiality, data protection and freedom of information, and know how it applies to your role.
 - 26** Adopt a professional manner at all times when carrying out the responsibilities of a medical supervisor.
 - 27** Understand and apply the definitions of fit to practise generally, fit to practise with restrictions, and not fit to practise at all.

Engage with training and appraisal

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