

**HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTORATE
PAY AND EMPLOYMENT UNIT**



Department of

**Health, Social Service
and Public Safety**

www.dhsspsni.gov.uk

AN ROINN

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

MÄNNYSTRIE O

**Poustie, Resydènter Heisin
an Fowk Siccar**

**Chief Executive of each HSC Trust
HSS Board¹**

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Ref No: **HSS TC8 7/08**

18th December 2008

Dear Colleagues

Approval Process for Specialty Doctor Posts

You will be aware that a new contract for staff and associate specialist doctors was introduced on 1 April 2008. It was considered that the introduction of the new contract was an opportune time to review the current arrangements for approving staff grade posts (now specialty doctors), with the aim of streamlining the process.

The new arrangements are set out in the attached guidance note "Approval Process for Specialty Doctor posts". The new process delegates approval of specialty doctor posts to Trust level, although the criteria as set out in the guidance must be satisfied. The new process has been agreed by both the Department and by the Staff and Associate

¹ Health and Social Services Boards, HSS Trusts, the Central Services Agency (CSA) the Health Promotion Agency, the Northern Ireland Medical Physics Agency, the Northern Ireland Guardian Ad Litem Agency, the Northern Ireland Practice & Education Council for Nursing and Midwifery, Northern Ireland Social Care Council, the Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency and the Northern Ireland Health and Personal Social Services Regulation and Improvement Authority.

Specialist Contract Implementation Working Group (SASCIG), a group set up to oversee implementation of the new contract, and which includes representatives from Trusts, and the BMA. The revised process will take effect from 1 January 2009.

Under the new arrangements an application form (form SD1) and a job description will need to be completed. A copy of the application form and the job description template are attached to the guidance document.

The revised process supercede the arrangements set out in previous circulars (Circular HSS (TC8) 8/2000, and Circular HSS (TC8) 11/89).

Any enquiries on the content of this circular should be addressed to: pay@employment@dhsspsni.gov.uk It would also be helpful if Trusts could identify a contact person to deal with specific enquiries from individual doctors.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Diane Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Diane Taylor
Deputy Director of Human Resources

APPROVAL PROCESS FOR SPECIALTY DOCTOR POSTS

Background

1. This guidance note set out the new arrangements for a revised process for approving specialty doctor posts. The current arrangements for approving staff grade posts are set out in circular HSS (TC8) 8/2000 – “Approval process for staff grade posts”. Circular HSS (TC8) 11/89 is also relevant; it introduced the grade and elements of the approval process. This guidance note supercedes the arrangements set out in those circulars.
2. Under the current arrangements proposals for staff grade posts must be submitted to the Department for approval by the Hospital Services Sub Committee (HSSC). While Chairman’s action can be taken in most cases, the process nevertheless takes some time. The introduction of the new contract for staff grades (now specialty doctors) from 1 April 2008 was seen as an opportune time to review the current arrangements with the aim of significantly streamlining the process.
3. A sub group was set up of the SAS Contract Implementation Group (SASCIG) to review the current approval process. The sub group included representatives from the Department, a Trust and the BMA. The sub group’s recommendations have been agreed by the Department and by the main SASCIG group.

Sub group remit

4. The sub group only considered the approval process for specialty doctors. The approval process for associate specialists was not part of the sub group’s remit. The old associate specialist grade will close to new entrants from 1 April 2008 and no further associate specialist posts should be advertised. There will be a window of opportunity up until 31 March 2009 for personal regrading for doctors wishing to apply to regrade to the new associate specialists contract.

General Changes

5. Approval for new specialty doctor posts has been delegated to Trusts. Approval should be formally signed off by the Medical Director in the Trust. Trusts will need to ensure that the relevant criteria have been satisfied as set out below.
6. The Department's role will be to monitor the number of specialty doctor posts approved by Trusts.
7. The BMA's role will be to comment on the creation of a new specialty doctor post. It will consider whether the creation of the post will have any impact on consultant expansion and whether the post is being offered within the nationally agreed Ts and Cs.
8. The specialty advisor's role will be to comment on the job description for the new specialty doctor post.

Detailed Changes

9. The entry criteria for the new specialty doctor post needs to be satisfied. Doctors must have completed at least four years postgraduate training (or its equivalent gained on a part-time or flexible basis) at least two of which will be in a specialty training programme in a relevant specialty or as a fixed term specialty trainee in a relevant specialty; or shall have equivalent experience and competencies.
10. The Trust should ensure that it has sufficient funds available to meet the cost of any new specialty doctor post. The budget holder should indicate that funding is available on form SD1.
11. The key documents in the process are: this guidance note, form SD1, and a job description template (which will include a proposed job plan).
12. Form SD1 and the job description should be completed by either the Clinical Director or the operational manager. The documents should be completed as fully as possible; failure to do so may delay the approval process.
13. Form SD1 (see template attached) should set out in detail the reasons for the need for the post, including the extent of consultant supervision, and why a specialty doctor post is appropriate as opposed to a consultant post or other appointment.

14. The job description (see template attached) should set out the main duties and responsibilities of the post. The job plan element should set out details of all clinical and management activities that need to be undertaken including on call and out of hours. It should include a minimum of 1 PA for supporting professional activities (eg CPD, audit, training and formal teaching, and research; however agreement should be reached on the amount of SPA and is dependent on the individual post, individual requirements, seniority, progression through thresholds etc.).
15. The specialty advisor will be required to comment on the job description, and to indicate approval on form SD1. If approval cannot be given the reasons should be recorded on the form. The Trust is required to take into account any comments made by the specialty advisor before submitting the documents to the BMA. There should normally be no need to refer the documents back to the specialty advisor. The specialty advisor would be expected to return the job description and SD1 form no later than 2 weeks from the date of referral.
16. The BMA will be required to indicate that it supports the creation of the post, and indicate its support on form SD1. If support cannot be given, the reasons should be recorded on form SDI. The Trust is required to take into account any comments made by the BMA before submitting the documents to the Medical Director. The BMA will be expected to return the SD1 form no later than 2 weeks from the date of referral. Comments from the specialty advisor should be sought concurrently.
17. Formal approval for the post should be given by the Medical Director in the Trust, and this approval should be recorded on form SD1. This should be done before the post is advertised.
18. IT should be used to transmit the documents between parties to ensure the process is completed as speedily as possible.
19. The Trust's normal recruitment and selection procedures should be applied. It is expected that the revised process will be much quicker and therefore there should not be a need to appoint Trust Grades posts in the interim period.

Summary of key stages in the approval process

20. The key stages can be summarized as follows:

- Identification of a need for the post by the Trust.
- Recurrent funding for the post identified by the Trust.
- Completion by the Trust of form SD1, and the job description (including proposed job plan).
- Submission of job description to the specialty advisor, along with form SD1, seeking comments on the job description.
- Submission of job description and form SD1 to the BMA seeking comments on the creation of the post.
- Formal approval by the Medical Director in the Trust.
- Begin recruitment process.

December 2008

FORM SD1

PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A NEW SPECIALTY DOCTOR POST
To be completed by Clinical Director/Operational Manager

1. Name of HSC Trust/Board Agency

2. Specialty/sub Specialty

3. Full time/part time

3a. If part time, number of Programmed Activities(PAs)

4. Location/s:
(Please identify ALL Hospital sites/locations in which this SD will carry out his/her commitments)

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

5. Name of Supervising Consultant

5a. Place/s of Work:

a. _____ b.

_____ c.

6. Present Consultant staff in relevant specialty:

Hospital(s)	Name	PAs

6a. Present Non- Consultant staff in relevant specialty:

(This should include all Associate Specialists, Staff Grades, Specialty Doctors, non-standard grades and any other medical practitioner providing a sessional commitment to the relevant department)

Hospital(s)	Name	PAs

7. Junior Medical Staff:

Hospital(s)	Grade	Number

8. Stated Case for Specialty Doctor Post

Please state briefly the reasons for the need for this post to be created: (eg. Service development; increase in outpatient/inpatient/daycase activity; service reorganisation; regional services moving locally)

8a. Please provide details of the extent of Consultant supervision and how this will be provided in practice on a day to day basis: (e.g. consultant available for supervision 9am-5pm daily and on-call after hours; if consultant on separate site, please indicate how supervision will be achieved)

8b. Please indicate why this SD post is appropriate as opposed to a Consultant post or another appointment. Please give details of future plans for the relevant specialty in terms of service development and the contribution of this post in any planned reconfiguration of the service: (eg. unable to obtain educational approval; service post required because of the volume of work which will be consultant supervised)

Will the creation of this post impact on the expansion of Consultant posts in the future? YES NO

8c. Please provide your assessment of the possible impact the creation of this post may have for the provision of suitable experience for practitioners in the training grades in the future:

9. Finance (To be completed by budget holder)

Please confirm that funding is available for this post

YES

NO

Please provide details of source of funding

Signature: _____

10. Approval

Specialty Adviser

I agree the Job Description of this SD post in _____

Name:

Date:

I have the following comments to make on this Job Description:

Name:	<input type="text"/>	Date:	<input type="text"/>
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11. BMA Support

I support the creation of this SD post:

NICC Name:	<input type="text"/>	Date:	<input type="text"/>
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SASC Name:	<input type="text"/>	Date:	<input type="text"/>
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We support the creation of this post subject to the following recommendations:

NICC Name:	<input type="text"/>	Date:	<input type="text"/>
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SASC Name:	<input type="text"/>	Date:	<input type="text"/>
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11. Medical Director Authorisation

I approve this post to proceed to recruitment:

Signature:

Date:



Template Document

Specialty Doctor Job Description

TITLE: Specialty Doctor

SPECIALTY:

BASE:

RESPONSIBLE TO:

JOB SUMMARY

<Please insert a few sentences describing the key focus of the job>

PROFILE OF HOSPITAL

<Brief Summary of Hospital Profile>

WORK OF DEPARTMENT

< Please insert a summary of the work of the department including support services available >

KEY DUTIES / RESPONSIBILITIES

<Please insert the main duties and responsibilities of the job

SUPERVISION ARRANGEMENTS

<There should be an indication of the level of seniority at which the post will be expected to function and a clear indication of the extent of Consultant supervision and how this will be provided on a day to day basis.>

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

<Please insert details of how the doctor will be able to fulfil the needs for CPD and to participate in relevant clinical and medical audit on a regular basis. For doctors working in relatively isolated situations, please provide details of how some activities could be at least partly at an associated “hub” hospital, or

arrangements for rotation of doctors between sites. Please also include details of library and teaching facilities available.>

PROPOSED JOB PLAN

<The Job Plan must include and clearly identify time for CPD/Audit (minimum 1 PA, however agreement should be reached on the amount of SPA and is dependent on the individual post, individual requirements, seniority, progression through thresholds etc.) There must be explicit details of any out of hours / on-call commitments. The Job Plan should also set out any management responsibilities as appropriate. Any work outside 7am to 7pm should be identified as premium time i.e. 3 hours equates to 1 PA.>

The following indicates all your proposed **regular weekly** commitments. It does not include activities that occur on an ad hoc basis as these are included in Programmed Activities.

	Time	Activity	Hours	
			DCC	SPA
MONDAY				
TUESDAY				
WEDNESDAY				
THURSDAY				
FRIDAY				
SATURDAY				
SUNDAY				
Total				

		PA's
ON-CALL DETAILS		
Predictable Emergency On-Call Work		
Unpredictable Emergency On-Call Work		
Agreed On-call Rota Frequency		
On-call supplement	<i>>1 in 4 = 6% of basic salary</i> <i>1 in 4 to 1 in 8 = 4% of basic salary</i> <i><1 in 8 = 2% of basic salary</i>	

JOB PLAN REVIEW

The Job Plan should be reviewed annually, but can be reviewed earlier at the request of either the doctor or the Clinical Manager. If it is not possible to agree a Job Plan, either initially or at an annual review, there are agreed procedures for facilitation and appeal with the final decision being binding on both the doctor and the Trust.

EMPLOYING AUTHORITY

Southern Health and Social Care Trust.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- The National Terms and Conditions of Service for Specialty Doctors will apply.
- As per the current salary scale under National Terms and Conditions of Service for Hospital staff as updated via DHSSPS circular on rates of pay, the most recent HSS (TC8) 3/2008, with effect from 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009 and all uplifts thereafter.
- The full-time appointment will be for 10 PAs per week.
- The successful applicant will normally be appointed to the grade for a one year probationary period which, if confirmed, will be extended without term and held until retirement under the terms and conditions of service.
- The appointee will maintain registration with the General Medical Council (London).
- Annual leave entitlement is 5 weeks (25 days) per year until 2 years service have been completed in the grade and 6 weeks (30 days) thereafter for practitioners remaining in the grade. Where the appointee in his/her immediately previous regular appointment attracted the 6 weeks annual leave per annum, this entitlement would remain.

- You are required to live within a distance of 30 minutes or 10 miles by road from your base place of work unless the employing organisation agrees that they may reside at a greater distance.
- Your private residence shall be maintained in contact with the public telephone service
- He/she will be expected to be flexible and to co-operate with reasonable requests to cover for their colleagues' absences where they are safe and competent and where it is practicable to do so. Where doctors undertake duties in accordance with this paragraph and such duties take place outside of their contracted hours, they will receive either an equivalent off duty period or remuneration.
- The post will be subject to termination at any time, by three months notice in writing given on either side.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

The post holder must:

- Carry out his/her duties with full regard to the Trust's Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Co-operate fully with the implementation of the Trust's Health and Safety arrangements and report any accidents/incidents, defects with work equipment or inadequate safety arrangements.
- Co-operate fully with all policies and procedures relating to Infection Control.
- Accept individual responsibility for ensuring a suitable, clean, uncluttered and safe environment for members of the public, staff, patients/clients and their relatives.
- Comply with the Trust's Smoke Free Policy.
- Treat those whom he/she comes into contact with in the course of work, in a courteous manner.
- Accept that this job description will be subject to review in the light of changing circumstances and should be regarded as providing guidance within which the individual works rather than something which is rigid and inflexible.

ADDITIONAL POINTS

- From 1 January 1990, medical staff have not been required to subscribe to a Medical Defence organisation. It should be noted, however, that the Trust's indemnity only covers the Trust's responsibilities and therefore, the appointee is advised to maintain a membership of a recognised professional defence organisation for any work which does not fall within the scope of the Indemnity Scheme.
- Canvassing will disqualify.

- Application forms can be obtained by.....
- Candidates wishing to apply online can do so at www.hpssjobs.com, alternatively application forms for the post may be downloaded and forwarded to the Human Resources Department.
- Applications must be made on the prescribed form, and must be returned to the Human Resources Department, **no later than....**
- A shortlist of candidates for interview will be prepared on the basis of the information contained in the application form. It is therefore essential that all applicants demonstrate through their application how and to what extent their experience and qualities are relevant to this post and the extent to which they satisfy each criterion specified, including clarification around equivalent qualifications.

The Trust is committed to Equal Opportunities

EMPLOYEE PROFILE

POST: SPECIALTY DOCTOR -	
FACTOR	MINIMUM CRITERIA
QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE	<p><u>ESSENTIAL</u></p> <p>Candidates must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hold Full Registration with the GMC (London). ▪ Have at least 4 years' full-time postgraduate training (or its equivalent gained on a part-time or flexible basis) at least 2 of which will be in a specialty training programme or as a Fixed Term Specialty Trainee in a relevant specialty; <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have equivalent experience and competencies. <p><u>DESIRABLE (Examples given)</u></p> <p>It is desirable that candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hold a higher diploma e.g. MRCP, DGM. ▪ Hold ALS certification. ▪ Have some training in teaching methods. <p>Experience in ...</p>
ELIGIBILITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Eligibility to work in the UK.
FITNESS TO PRACTICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is up to date and fit to practice safely.
LANGUAGE SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All applicants to have demonstrable skills in written and spoken English that are adequate to enable effective communication about medical topics with patients and colleagues which could be demonstrated by one of the following: <i>That applicants have undertaken undergraduate medical training in English;</i> <i>OR</i> <i>Have the following scores in the academic International English Language Testing System (IELTS) – Overall 7, Speaking 7, Listening 6, Reading 6, Writing 6.</i> ▪ However, if applicants believe that they have adequate communication skills but do not fit into one of the examples they need to provide evidence.
HEALTH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meets professional health requirements (in line with GMC Standards/Good Medical Practice).
CLINICAL SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Appropriate knowledge base and ability to apply sound clinical judgement to problems.
ACADEMIC / RESEARCH SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demonstrate understanding of the importance of audit and research.

**OTHER WORK
RELATED
REQUIREMENTS**

- Either a full current driving licence and access to a car or access to a form of transport which will permit the full requirements of the post to be met.