

Dear Colleague

## APPRAISALS DURING PERIOD OF WINTER PRESSURE

1. Given the emerging challenges arising from the Omicron variant, I am writing in my capacity as the higher level Responsible Officer in Scotland to provide further clarity regarding the arrangements for medical appraisal over the next few months.
2. As you are aware from previous correspondence (23 July 2020 and 10 September 2020), a more flexible approach to appraisal has been recommended. This included flexibility regarding the need for supporting information and the option of deferring revalidation recommendations.
3. It was also recommended that appraisals should have a focus on the doctors well-being. Since then it has become apparent that doctors value the opportunity to discuss wellbeing at appraisal. It is of note that it is often the only regular forum where they have the opportunity to raise and discuss matters of concern. For this reason it is important that appraisals continue to take place. I am writing however to remind Responsible Officers that given the current pressures, they have a range of options to ensure that the appraisal process is proportionate and not overly burdensome for medical staff.
4. Although Revalidation has not been paused and the GMC has not changed their core requirement for Revalidation, they have indicated that Responsible Officers can defer a recommendation with no detriment to the doctor. The GMC has also indicated that in the case of doctors who have already fulfilled the core requirements for Revalidation, they will accept a recommendation without the need for 5 appraisals.

From the Chief Medical Officer  
Dr Gregor Smith

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### Addresses

For action  
Responsible Officers

For information  
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### Further Enquiries to:

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Finally given that appraisals take place over a 12 month period Responsible Officers also have the flexibility to defer appraisals for a number of months if necessary.

5. I would therefore encourage you to work with your appraisers to ensure that all appraisals have a wellbeing focus and that there is flexibility regarding the need for supporting information.

## **ACTION**

6. I ask that you cascade this information to doctors, appraisal leads, appraisers and managers and that Boards provide support as required.

Yours sincerely

*Gregor Smith*

Professor Gregor Smith  
**Chief Medical Officer**