

**To members of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine  
From the Director of Professional Development**



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Dear Colleague

**Faculty of Occupational Medicine Responsible Officer Service  
Notification of action required**

Revalidation will begin towards the end of 2012. The General Medical Council (GMC) has already issued guidance on what all doctors should be doing in preparation.

The purpose of this letter is to alert members to the fact that they will have to know who their Responsible Officer (RO) will be, and to help particularly those members for whom it may not be obvious.

**Who will your RO be?**

All 'designated bodies' (as described in the Responsible Officer Regulations, 2010)<sup>1</sup>, such as NHS Trusts and deaneries, have to appoint an RO. It will therefore be straightforward for doctors employed by the NHS or in formal training programmes to identify their RO. However, this information is not readily available for doctors working for other employers or independently. The GMC has started an important strand of work to ensure that every licensed doctor has a confirmed prescribed connection, as an employee or member, to a designated body - and therefore to an RO - in preparation for the introduction of revalidation at the end of this year.

**The Faculty's RO Service**

From the middle of April 2012, the GMC will start writing to doctors who do not have an obvious prescribed connection to a designated body to ask them to identify one. We wish to inform you that the Faculty is a designated body under the Responsible Officer Regulations, and so will be running a Responsible Officer service for its members. Over the last two years, we have been working closely with the Department of Health, General Medical Council, Society of Occupational Medicine and the other colleges and faculties to ensure that we are in a position to support our members<sup>2</sup> who would not otherwise have an obvious designated body to refer to. The scheme has been successfully piloted and we plan to publish further details shortly.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2010/9780111500286/contents>

<sup>2</sup> That includes all classes of membership, including affiliates.

## **Is your organisation a designated body?**

If you work for a non-NHS occupational health provider, it may be the case that they are a designated body and so will appoint an RO, to whom you will relate for revalidation. However, some smaller companies will either not be designated bodies, or will be designated bodies but intend to contract with the Faculty to provide the RO function on their behalf. Several organisations have already registered their intention to do so. Any organisations that are still undecided will need to consult the Responsible Officer Regulations in order to confirm their position<sup>3</sup>. As the GMC will be asking for the information from individual doctors, it is essential that employers communicate their intention in this regard to all their employed doctors.

## **Faculty's RO Service: agreement and fee**

When we provide more detailed information about how the Faculty intends to deliver its responsibilities, we will ask those planning to use the RO service to complete a form of agreement. The GMC intends to cross check the information provided by individual doctors against that held by designated bodies to ensure their data are complete; hence the need to get an early indication.

Finally, we should make you aware that costs will need to be covered in the provision of this service and so there will be a fee payable. The exact fee is currently being agreed and will be published as soon as possible.

## **Key messages**

So the key messages are, firstly, that you will need to respond to the GMC when you receive the anticipated letter about identifying your designated body, and, secondly, that the Faculty will provide a Responsible Officer service for those doctors who do not have one through their employer (and for those employers who contract out the function to the Faculty).

In the meantime the GMC has reminded all doctors what they need to be doing to prepare for revalidation (<http://www.gmc-uk.org/doctors/revalidation/9622.asp>). One essential building block is annual appraisal and it is important that you continue to take part in the appraisal process and CPD as normal during the build-up to the start of revalidation.

We shall continue to keep you informed and provide further information as it becomes available. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please email: [professionaldevelopment@fom.ac.uk](mailto:professionaldevelopment@fom.ac.uk).

Yours sincerely



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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2010/9780111500286/contents>