



PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

MAY 2013



Health Education South West

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1. INTRODUCTION

The following policy has been developed by Severn Deanery Professional Support and Development (PSD) service and should be referred to in combination with the PSD Guide.

The PSD is dedicated to helping established practitioners across the Severn Deanery to fulfil their career potential. The PSD provides practitioners with access to support and development resources across a spectrum of performance challenges and the provision to develop leadership skills. The PSD service has, therefore, been developed with two distinct streams:

- A professional support service aimed at helping practitioners to develop the skills to address and overcome specific challenges, concerns or difficulties they may be facing in their professional or personal life. Specific support resources are available to achieve this.
- A professional development service which helps practitioners to develop skills to become more proficient in their roles. Practitioners taking on new roles, such as new Clinical Leads, may benefit from accessing specific development resources to help them bring together the very different cultures of medicine and management.

For further information on how to access the specific support and development resources, please refer to the PSD Guide.



2. SCOPE AND RESEARCH

This policy applies to all established practitioners in any grade or specialty.

This policy is designed to provide guidance and information for those who are involved in supporting practitioners at various levels, including:

- **Clinical Directors**
- **Medical Directors**
- **Directors of Medical Education**
- **Specialty Advisors(Royal College)**
- **Senior GPs and GP Leads**
- **Appraisal Leads (Hospital and GP)**

Many factors can affect the performance of a practitioner (Cox, J., King, J., Hutchinson, A., and. McAvoy, P (2006). “*Understanding Practitioners Performance*”. Oxford: Radcliffe Publishing (published in association with the National Clinical Assessment Service of the National Patient Safety Agency) such as the work environment, individual workload, health, psychological factors and career difficulties.

Research has also shown that healthcare employers need to release the discretionary effort and the creativity of their practitioners for them to be a productive in their roles as possible. Indeed, Dorgan et al (2010) in their publication “*Management in Healthcare: Why Good Practice Really Matters*” confirm that the clinical leadership skills demonstrated by doctors may well contribute to meeting efficiency targets, especially in contexts where there has been investment in training and support resources.



Conclusions from the research, therefore demonstrate that there is a clear need for greater investment in supporting and developing practitioners and an innovative and cost effective service such as the PSD will ultimately be beneficial not only for practitioners and healthcare employers but also for patients.

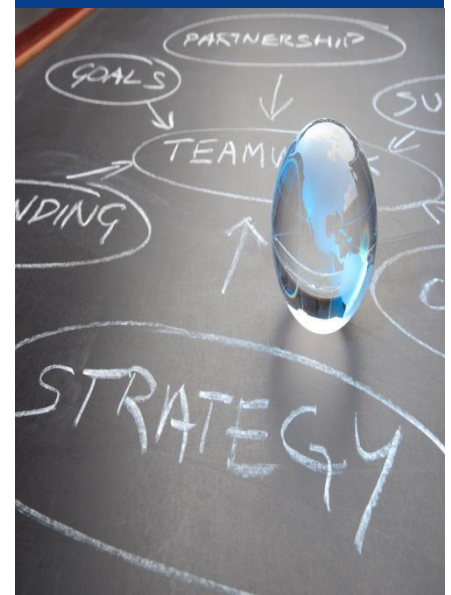
3. PRINCIPLES

The Severn Deanery is extending the support and development services which are currently provided to trainee practitioners to Post-CCT GPs, Consultants and SAS Practitioners.

PSD aims to support and encourage the development of established practitioners within the Severn Region who have been referred or have self-referred to the service.

There are a number of key principles which underline the service offered:

- Patient safety and the safety of the practitioner is considered at all times
- The PSD service is advisory. This approach supports but does not supersede the assessment role of the Annual Appraisal Review, Revalidation or Human Resource (HR) policies at the employer level.
- PSD relies on the engagement of the practitioner in the process in order to be successful. If the practitioner does not wish to engage with supportive or developmental plans, future assistance may not be provided.
- The PSD process will be as transparent as possible to reduce ambiguity.
- PSD strives to operate with a clear evidence base.
- PSD takes a responsible approach to the use of funding and resources.
- PSD will refer to national guidelines as appropriate.
- PSD will apply the operational guidelines laid out in the PSD Guide.



4. OBJECTIVES

Clear objectives have been devised to give PSD focus and to provide a clear understanding of the service for users:

- To provide an all- encompassing support and development service for practitioners which seeks to identify and address a broad range of factors from career development to performance matters
- To agree a joint set of objectives and action plans in conjunction with the practitioner and these will be notified to the healthcare employer to support achievement of specific outcomes
- To co-ordinate sign posting to the appropriate support and developmental resources for the benefit of the practitioner
- To offer, support and advice to coaches and support resource providers involved in the support and development of practitioners
- To support organisational development programmes which aim to enhance clinical leadership amongst practitioners
- To support early resolution of complex issues which can prevent substantial costs incurred by both the practitioner and healthcare employer
- To take regulator advice (GMC and Royal College) should a concern raise questions practitioner's fitness to practice
- To continually develop the PSD in accordance with best practice following on-going evaluation of quantitative and qualitative data provided by service users. All information provided during the evaluation process will remain confidential.
- To take regulator (GMC) advice should a concern call into question the practitioner's fitness to practice.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

PSD has developed a two stream model of co-ordinated support and development resources for practitioners. This is described in detail, along with the roles and responsibilities of those involved within the process in the PSD Guide.

PSD will jointly agree a set of objectives and an action plan with the practitioner and notify the healthcare employer. The PSD will monitor the achievement of these objectives against the core principles identified in the *GMC's Good Medical Practice Guide*.



6. CONFIDENTIALITY

Data regarding referrals and self-referrals to PSD will be stored confidentially in line with the Data Protection Act and local Information Governance Policies.

PSD information will be stored securely and separate to the practitioner's main employment file

With prior agreement, information may be shared with parties such as external specialist resources and agencies providing professional support or development services.

Data may be anonymised and used for research purposes to identify learning and development opportunities for PSD.

Circumstances when information can be disclosed without consent include

- If it is required by law
- If it is unequivocally in the public interest



7. ETHICS AND VALUING

DIVERSITY

In undertaking our work, PSD and the Deanery are committed to working within the framework described in the Equality Act 2010 and fully recognise the protected characteristics described within the legislation.

Where a situation arises where there is a conflict of interest – ex. A member of PSD knowing a practitioner on a personal level – appropriate steps will be taken to address this so that this conflict of interest does not impact on the support provided.



8. MONITORING AND REVIEW

Each new referral to PSD will be allocated a sequential case number and details of the referral logged in a confidential and secure database accessed only by members of PSD.

For on-going quality assurance and evaluation, cases will be reviewed by an expert panel on a quarterly basis to provide feedback and guidance, referred to as the PSD Reference Group. This group adheres to the previously stated rules of confidentiality.

An annual Strategy Group will also be held to ensure on-going evaluation and service development for PSD involving key stakeholders such as Severn Deanery Staff, Medical Directors, GP Leads and Directors of Medical Education

Staff within PSD will undergo appropriate training and development.

A rolling programme of supervision is in place to inform and develop knowledge and skills of coaches who are required to support a practitioner in difficulty or for career development purposes. This takes the form of a quarterly meeting with coaching supervisors.



9. PROCEDURES AND OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

For full details on procedures, please see the PSD Guide and the PSD website: www.severndeanery.nhs.uk/deanery/support-and-development/

- National frameworks and guidelines that may be referred to by PSD include, but is not limited to GMC Good Medical Practice
- GMC Leadership and Management for all Practitioners
- GMC Leadership and Management for all Practitioners
- GMC Framework for Appraisal and Revalidation
- DOH Guidance on the appointment of Consultants and Specialty Practitioners
- NCAS Guidance Documents
- DoH Maintaining High Professional Standards

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