

Revalidation

Information for patients



Message from Antony Chuter

Chair, Royal College of General Practitioners' Patient Partnership Group

We all need and deserve to have confidence in our doctors. It has taken nearly ten years to design and set up a fair and effective system that will regularly confirm that each and every doctor in the UK continues to be fit to practise. This system is called 'revalidation' and it is about to start. This short leaflet gives you the essential facts.

The Royal College of General Practitioners' Patient Partnership Group is committed to supporting revalidation for GPs. We would like to know what you think about revalidation and what patients or the RCGP Patient Partnership Group can do to help this new system. Our contact details are at the end of this leaflet.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Need more information?

The General Medical Council is responsible for the introduction of revalidation. There are Frequently Asked Questions and other key documents on its website, www.gmc-uk.org.

The Royal College of General Practitioners is committed to keeping the public informed and is continually updating its revalidation website with new information and developments.

Your doctor will soon be regularly revalidated

Starting in 2011 all doctors will need to show that they are up-to-date and fit to practise medicine. It will take 5 years to check all doctors in the UK and then the cycle will start again.

This system is called revalidation. It means your doctor will need to:

- record their continuing professional development and show they are keeping up to date
- take part in a formal appraisal with a senior doctor every year
- review their patient care and show how they have improved it
- seek the views of their patients and colleagues on their performance.

How you can help to make revalidation effective

All of us need to be sure our doctors are safe and fit for the work they do. We can all help by:

- **telling our doctors when their care is good.** Thank you letters and other compliments support our doctors in their pursuit of excellence; they help their appraisers to know what doctors are good at
- **saying when our doctors' care is not as good as we would expect.** You might talk to the doctor or a manager; you might write a letter with suggestions or make a formal complaint. You should receive a courteous hearing and an appropriate response
- **reporting when things go wrong.** All doctors should reflect when things go wrong and see if they can make medical care safer and better for other patients. Sometimes it is not possible to avoid things going wrong, but often mistakes can be avoided in future
- **giving your view when asked.** A sample of patients will be asked their views – if you are one of these, it will be very helpful if you could complete a questionnaire on the care that your doctor has given you.

Visit www.rcgp.org.uk/revalidation for the latest news and to express your views.

You can also give your views or ask for more details by contacting Antony Chuter, Chair of the Patient Partnership Group:

- by email – ppg@rcgp.org.uk
- by post – Antony Chuter, Chair of the RCGP Patient Partnership Group, Royal College of General Practitioners, 14 Princes Gate, London SW7 1PU.