

2024-10-28 - Preparing for the regulation of PAs and AAs - an update for employers

From: GMC Wales

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To: Redacted s40(2)(HSCEY - NHS Workforce & Operations - Workforce & Corp. Business Directorate)

Cc: Redacted s40(2) (HSCEY - NHS Workforce & Operations - Workforce & Corp. Business Directorate); Redacted s40(2) (HSCEY - NHS Workforce & Operations - Workforce & Corp. Business Directorate); Redacted s40(2) (HSCEY - Communities & Tackling Poverty - Early Years, Childcare & Play)

Subject: Preparing for the regulation of PAs and AAs – an update for employers

Dear Redacted s40(2)

We're now less than two months away from the start of regulation for physician associates (PAs) and anaesthesia associates (AAs). Further to our [recent update to system leaders on our progress](#), we're now contacting employers to explain how they can support their PAs and AAs to apply when regulation starts and registration opens. I hope it's helpful for you to have sight of this information and our ongoing preparations.

This update is embargoed until 10am tomorrow (Tuesday 29 October 2024). It will then be [publicly available on our website](#). After that time, you're welcome to share this information with your relevant networks and contacts.

How PAs and AAs should apply for registration

We're legally required to start regulating PAs and AAs on 13 December 2024 – we look forward to welcoming these professions into regulation. Registration will then officially open on the 16 December 2024. To ensure we're able to efficiently process applications from existing PAs and AAs, we'll take a staged approach to the start of registration.

For those on a managed voluntary register (MVR): We'll invite all PAs and AAs on their respective MVR to apply for registration by the end of January 2025. It's important that they wait to receive their invitation, rather than seeking to apply directly via our website. Their personal invite will connect them to their GMC Online account, which will already contain their verified qualification and assessment details, making the process quicker and more efficient. We'd be grateful if you could inform your PAs and AAs on an MVR to apply once they receive their invite, and not before.

For those not on an MVR: PAs and AAs who aren't on an MVR will need to apply to us directly from 16 December 2024. This will involve completing an eligibility checker on our website and setting up a GMC Online account before submitting their application. If you employ any PAs or AAs not on an MVR, please encourage them to apply directly on our website as soon as possible, after registration opens.

Supporting your PAs and AAs to apply

When PAs and AAs apply for registration, they will need to provide a range of evidence to demonstrate that they have the knowledge, skills and behaviour needed to provide safe patient care. This includes an employer reference and an insurance and indemnity declaration. We'd be grateful if you could support this process by making sure PAs, AAs and their supervisors are aware of and prepared for this requirement and requests that they may receive.

Employer reference: PAs and AAs who are currently employed, or have practised within the last five years, will need to submit an employer reference covering their most recent three months of employment. We'll provide a specific form for their supervisor to complete, sign and date. A completed employer reference form will only be valid for three months so this will need to be done close to when the PA or AA submits their application.

Insurance and indemnity declaration: All PAs and AAs will have to sign a declaration that they have adequate and appropriate insurance or indemnity arrangements in place, covering all the areas of their practice – the same as our expectation for doctors. This must be in place by the time they apply for registration. We'll provide guidance on our website to support PAs and AAs in understanding what cover they need for their situation. Most will have indemnity cover for negligence under their employer's scheme, but additional personal cover may be either necessary or advisable, depending on their duties.

GMC registration requirements for your employees

We understand that many employers currently require PAs and AAs to be on the relevant MVR as a condition of employment. Once regulation begins, employers may also require them to be registered with us. The Faculty of Physician Associates and Royal College of Anaesthetists have confirmed they will each maintain a static, searchable version of their MVR until 31 March 2025. We'll be processing registration applications as quickly as possible but please note that initial GMC registration may take some weeks to complete.

We're strongly encouraging all PAs and AAs to apply to join our register at the earliest opportunity, and we welcome your support in reinforcing the benefits of doing this. However, when regulation starts there will be a two year transition period, as set out in the legislation, before it becomes an offence to practise as a PA or AA without GMC registration. This is designed to allow PAs and AAs to complete the necessary steps for registration while continuing to work.

Working together to prepare for regulation

Regulation is a vital step towards strengthening both patient safety and public trust in these professions. It will help provide assurance that PAs and AAs have the right level of education and training, meet the standards that we expect of the professions we regulate, and that they can be held to account if serious concerns are raised.

Over the coming weeks and months, we'll continue to share information with you about key milestones and the model of regulation for PAs and AAs, including our

fitness to practise and revalidation processes, and your responsibilities as employers for effective clinical governance.

I hope this update has been helpful but if you have any questions, please contact MAPs@gmc-uk.org and we'll be happy to help. We will also share this information with responsible officers via our bulletin.

Thank you for your support as we work towards this important milestone.

Best wishes

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