

Local Clinical Excellence Awards halted in light of COVID-19

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, Local Clinical Excellence Awards (LCEA) will not be run this year, and the award money will instead be distributed equally among eligible consultants.

NHS Employers, the British Medical Association (BMA) and HCSA, the tripartite negotiating group representing senior doctors and their employers, has sought and received ministerial acknowledgement of the current exceptional circumstances, and the significant operational pressures that services are under as they respond to the health crisis. An agreement has been made to halt the forthcoming LCEA round and related work to enable clinicians and managers to focus on immediate priorities. The arrangements for how the allocated funds for LCEAs are to be used have also been agreed.

The following has been agreed with NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE/I) and the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC):

1. The LCEA round due to start in April 2020 will not run for the year 2020-21.
2. The existing funding for this awards round will be redistributed equally among eligible consultants as a one-off, non-consolidated payment in place of normal LCEA rounds, due to exceptional circumstances. The existing funding includes any money rolled over from the last two years, including money from award rounds that may not yet have been run or completed.
3. Details will need to be worked out locally, and amounts will vary among trusts, but the **negotiating group's** advice is as follows:
 - The eligibility criteria set out in Schedule 30 of the [2003 Terms and Conditions of Service \(TCS\) for consultants](#) should still apply. For avoidance of doubt, this also includes consultants who are not at work due to sickness or self-isolation relating to the COVID-19 pandemic, and consultants who are absent on maternity, paternity, adoption or parental leave.
 - Consultant clinical academics holding honorary contracts with NHS employers are appropriately included in the distribution group.
 - The funding is issued with sensitivity around other staff groups. It should come with the clear message that it is from the national consultant pay packet, and is a one-off, non-consolidated payment in place of normal LCEA rounds, due to the exceptional circumstances arising from the COVID-19 outbreak leaving both doctors and employers with very little capacity to run an awards round in the usual manner.
 - The terms and provisions set out in Schedule 30 of the 2003 TCS for consultants will be extended to apply until 31 March 2022, to allow for the focus to be kept on the current crisis.
 - The details of the arrangements, including investment, for the additional year, are subject to agreement between DHSC, NHSE/I and the negotiating parties. Joint negotiations for LCEA, and exploration of the potential for wider contract reform, are delayed until such a time as they can be prioritised again.

DHSC will shortly be in a position to confirm the investment ratio for 2020/21. When this is agreed between the parties, it will be communicated to allow employing trusts to correctly allocate funding for the award round.