

Monday 26 November 2018

Chief Executives
Chairs of the Local Negotiating Committee
Medical Directors
Human Resource Directors
Finance Directors

Dear Colleague,

RE: SAS Charter evaluation and monitoring

We are writing to you in relation to specialty and associate specialist doctors and dentists (SAS) within your organisation.

SAS doctors and dentists are a diverse group with a wide range of backgrounds, skills and experience. They work as staff grade doctors, associate specialists, specialty doctors, hospital practitioners, clinical assistants, senior clinical medical officers and clinical medical officers.

The [2018 Doctors and Dentists Review Body \(DDRB\) report](#) highlighted several challenges facing SAS doctors and dentists around career progression, development, supervision, recognition and health and wellbeing.

The [SAS Charter](#) was published in December 2014. It sets out what SAS doctors can expect from their employers and what employers can expect of them. This includes recommendations around contracts, job planning, support, development, involvement in organisational structures and recruitment.

[Evidence from the British Medical Association](#) suggests that there is better retention of SAS doctors in trusts who have successfully implemented the charter. However, we were not encouraged to hear that only 47 per cent of SAS doctors are aware of the charter and implementation across the regions is variable. In the interests of addressing these challenges, we urge you to strongly consider implementing the charter to demonstrate a commitment to your SAS doctors and dentists.

We have undertaken several engagement sessions with employers, SAS doctors, and system partners to gain a greater understanding of the barriers which may affect implementation of the charter.

The joint negotiating committee SAS has produced several resources to help you assess current progress and develop an action plan to support the implementation and embedding of the Charter as follows:

- [SAS Charter monitoring tool](#)
- [SAS Charter evaluation toolkit](#)
- [SAS Charter implementation checklist](#)
- [SAS case studies and resources](#)

We do not expect that organisations will achieve all the principles immediately, but we recommend that you consider these as future actions in your plans. It is a stage in the continuous improvement cycle which should be repeated regularly to track improvements and celebrate success.

It is recommended that the medical director or nominated lead/ SAS tutor takes overall responsibility for this piece of work. We also recommend that representatives of your local negotiating committee (LNC) are involved throughout the process and that the findings of the evaluation are shared at LNC meetings. This will be in keeping with the partnership ethos of the joint negotiating committee SAS and ensure that actions have the support of the workforce.

We advise that you communicate your plans to SAS doctors to ensure that they thoroughly understand which of these are achievable in the short, medium and long term, and engage with them throughout each of the implementation stages.

Lack of any substantial progress in this area may reinforce the impression that the needs of SAS doctors and dentists are not being treated with the appropriate level of priority in the same way as other staff groups.

We appreciate your continued support.

Yours sincerely



Dr Pete Miller
Chair of JNC (SAS) Committee



Dr Amit Kochhar
Chair of JNC (SAS) Committee