

Joint Negotiating Committee (SAS) Joint statement on SAS doctors moving to new contracts – September 2021

On 1 April 2021, new specialty doctor and specialist contracts were introduced, and this marked the beginning of the choice window for existing SAS doctors to decide whether they want to stay on their existing terms and conditions or move to the new contract.

In July 2021, government announced a 3 per cent pay uplift for NHS staff who weren't already part of multi-year pay deals. The 2021 SAS contracts are part of such a multi-year pay deal and therefore their pay scales were outside the scope of these arrangements. The Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) (SAS) recognises that the pay uplift for doctors on the 2008 specialty doctor contract has had an impact on the perceived desirability of the 2021 contract, from a salary perspective. This may result in fewer doctors expressing an interest in transferring to the new contract by the end of the choice window on 30 September 2021.

There have also been a number of unforeseen challenges for employers to work through locally. We have updated NHS Employers' [guidance](#) to support employers to work through challenges that may arise, and the BMA has produced revised pay explainers for [specialty doctors](#) and [associate specialists](#) in England to set out the implications of the pay award.

It remains the case for most SAS doctors that transferring to the new contract represents a benefit in terms of their basic pay over time. This is due to agreed pay uplifts in years two and three as well as the new flatter pay scale, which reduces the time taken to reach the top of the pay scale. The new contract also introduces additional benefits such as increased on-call availability supplements and new safeguards to protect against the most onerous unsocial hours working patterns.

Parties are committed to working together to find appropriate solutions to these challenges so both SAS doctors and employers can benefit from the contracts as intended. We hope to update on this as soon as possible.

After the choice window closes on 30 September, it is up to employer discretion to allow doctors to move to the new contract.

It is JNC(SAS)'s intention that doctors and employers are able to benefit from the new contracts and so the committee encourages employers to allow doctors to express an interest after the choice window closes, taking into consideration wider benefits and local affordability. We would encourage individual employers to take a consistent approach for all SAS doctors working across their organisation. Doctors do not have a contractual right to transfer, but facilitating transfer wherever possible will ensure that both doctors and employers are able to benefit from the new contractual provisions.



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