

SAS professional development funding

Application guidance

Over the period 2021/22 to 2023/24, as part of implementing the new 2021 specialty doctor and specialist¹ contracts, NHS England and NHS Improvement will allocate a small funding allowance to organisations to support the professional development of SAS doctors. This allocation of funding will be based on the number of SAS doctors in each organisation.

Who this funding will cover

This funding is being made available to all doctors employed under SAS terms and conditions. These doctors will be eligible to apply for this funding to support their professional development.

¹ Where the term ‘specialist’ is used in this document, it is used to denote doctors and dentists employed on the [specialist grade](#) (England) 2021 contract.

Scope and principles of funding

- The funding will be allocated by NHS England and NHS Improvement to organisations in years one and three of the multi-year contract deal.
- The specific purpose of the funding is to invest in professional development activities for doctors under SAS terms and conditions, as specified below.
- This funding represents discrete new investment, separate and in addition to other funding already available to SAS doctors, such as Health Education England's SAS development fund (which is recurrent).
- The funding will be used to support specialty doctors and specialists, to enable them to deliver high-quality care for patients, to promote improvements in services, and to help create a collaborative, inclusive and learning-focused culture and work environment.
- The funding can be used to supplement existing development funding available to specialty doctors and specialists (where this is deemed appropriate by the employer); or to fund activities that may not be covered by existing funding, but which represent likely benefits to SAS doctors and the organisation.
- The funding can be used to support both individual, and collective professional development activities, across a greater proportion of the SAS workforce including (but not limited to):
 - Supporting individuals undertaking a Certificate of Eligibility for Specialist Registration (CESR) or meeting portfolio development needs, such as undertaking a credential.
 - Leadership and management development (training and other learning opportunities).
 - Training in coaching, mentoring and mental health support, to support other members of the workforce.

- Creating and funding specific roles, such as for mentoring locally employed doctors.
- Funding SAS-specific bodies or events, such as establishing a regular SAS Forum or organising teambuilding events.
- The funding cannot be used to support the following activities:
 - Mandatory and statutory training courses that SAS doctors are already expected to complete.
 - Books, journals, library services, computer equipment and software.
 - Examination fees.
 - To meet the reasonable expenses associated with the period of approved study leave.
- This guidance should help inform how the allocation of funding should be used locally. Decisions should be made in discussions with SAS doctors locally, such as through local negotiating committee representatives or a SAS forum, and in consultation with the SAS tutor and SAS advocate (where these exist) and informed by individual needs and organisational priorities.

Allocation of funding

Funding of £3.0m in 2021/22 and £3.5m in 2023/24 was agreed. Funding uplifts in 21/22 included provision for implementing all aspects of the reformed specialty doctor contract including the Development Fund, and is embedded in system funding flows, passing from CCG to trusts through regular service provision contracts. Each organisation is expected to set out how the funding has been used, for example as part of existing governance and reporting processes and shared with SAS doctors and staff side representatives.

For 2021/22, employers should calculate the value of their fund (£3.0m in 2021/22) using the April 2021 SAS doctor Full Time Equivalent (FTE) included in the monthly workforce statistics published by NHS Digital. The April 2021 version of which can be found [here](#).

The total FTE number of SAS doctors in scope in an organisation (across Associate Specialist, Specialty Doctor, Staff Grade Hospital Practitioner / Clinical Assistant) can be found in *Table 3: NHS Hospital & Community Health Service (HCHS) monthly workforce statistics: HCHS Staff by NHS England region, Organisation and main staff group - Full Time Equivalent* (NHS Digital workforce statistics). This can then be divided by the total FTE number of relevant doctors for England to calculate an organisation's indicative share of the total available (£3.0m in 2021/22).

For example, in April 2021 there were 10,605 SAS doctors (FTE) in total in England. If Organisation A has 100 SAS doctors (FTE), the calculation would be:

- £3.0m divided by 10,605 = £282.88²
- Multiplied by 100 = £28,288

How SAS doctors can access the funding

Each organisation will ensure there is a transparent process for eligible specialty doctors and specialists to access this funding and for the funding to be allocated as per the principles highlighted above.

² This is the result of dividing £3.0m by the precise FTE value derived from summing the precise FTE values in the NHS Digital publication.