Have you been revalidated?
Revalidation and appraisal should be seen as an opportunity for SAS doctors. Although it is a contractual obligation appraisal is not a performance management tool. We have been informed that as of January 1,336 SAS doctors had revalidated in England. This rate is in line with UK rate for all doctors; no particular issues have been reported and very few not engaging with the process. Contact your Responsible Officer if you have not had an appraisal.

NHS Employers produced guidance on SAS appraisal which SASC helped draft.

Let us know if you have had any problems with appraisal or revalidation – email us at info.sasc@bma.org.uk or comment on our online forum.

Professional Development for SAS doctors
SASC UK is currently looking into the distribution of development funding for SAS doctors, amid concerns that this is being cut, or used for other causes. The Committee has written to MPs in the regions that have reported reductions to raise their concerns regarding this, and will continue to pursue this further on a national level. If this is a matter that has affected you, we would welcome your feedback either via the SASC forum or by email to: info.sasc@bma.org.uk

SAS Charter
The SASC UK is in the process of updating the SAS Charter. The Charter was originally published in 2004 and has been updated to recognise changes to national contracts. LNCs will be asked to agree to the SAS Charter with employers in order to provide an optimum working environment for SAS doctors. This document will be produced jointly with NHS Employers.

Get involved at a local level
SASC UK is attended by the Chairs of the regional SAS Committees, who represent their local constituents at a national level. SAS doctors are able to attend most regional SAS committee meetings – the dates of the meetings are available on the BMA website, along with the contact details of the Committee Chairs. This is an excellent opportunity to ensure your voice is heard, so if you are interested in making a difference locally then get in touch with the Chair, and go along to your regional meeting.

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For further advice and support contact our advisers on 0300 123 1233 or via support@bma.org.uk
**Shape of Training Review**

The BMA has published its response to the Shape of Training review, which can be found [here](#). The Committee particularly welcomes the proposed review into the barriers of development for SAS doctors and shares concerns about the review outcomes, if you have any feedback regarding the review or the BMAs response, we would welcome your views on the SASC forum, or by email: info.sasc@bma.org.uk

**BMA contract checking service**

Do you know that you can get your contract checked by our employment law experts before you sign it? Our dedicated team of employment law experts will personally review your contract against the national models and return it back to you within 5 working days. We will advise you of any issues you need to be aware of and we can provide additional support to get these resolved. Further information on this service can be found on our website.

**SAS Autonomous working**

Q&A’s regarding SAS Autonomous working have been published on our website. If you believe that you have demonstrated the ability to take decisions and carry responsibility without direct supervision, you can raise the prospect of autonomous working with your employer during job planning. We have asked LNCs to raise this issue locally.

**Patient coding**

As part of our drive to improve recognition for SAS doctors the BMA has been raising the issue of patient coding.

We hope to ensure greater accuracy and transparency in local and national patient coding. At a local level, it is important that the reporting and recording of the name of the senior doctor responsible for the care of a patient is accurate. In some hospitals, where an Associate Specialist or Specialty Doctor is the senior doctor in charge of a patient, the local record accurately reflects this. However, we are aware that this is not always the case. In some hospitals, it is the practice always to record the name of the responsible doctor as a consultant, even when local practice is to designate an Associate Specialist/Specialty Doctor as the senior doctor responsible for a patient’s care.

The BMA believes that, for a number of reasons, the coding practice should support the appropriate designation of the senior doctor responsible. It is important for patients and their families that the name of the senior doctor in charge of caring for a patient should be accurately recorded in all cases, but particularly if things go wrong.

It is also important for revalidation that a reliable record of activity is maintained. This is good practice for appraisal and pay progression, as well as being important for staff morale and job satisfaction.

England this has been raised with Sir Bruce Keogh (NHS MD) through a joint letter from the SASC Co-Chairs and Chair of Council. He has agreed that further work is necessary on collection of hospital data and has suggested an NHS England and HSCIC <link> appraisal of the current situation. This will include options for change and a plan to incorporate any changes both into new datasets and to existing ones. The BMA responded to the initial consultation (held over the summer last year) and will be involved in further work which is due to commence shortly. We welcome the response. NHS Employers support the principle of this and have advised us that work is underway at several Trusts on a local basis. They will be happy to support NHS England work on this at a national level.

In Wales the issue has been raised with the CMO (joint letter from WSASC Chair and Director of Workforce & OD). A response has now been received stating that (AoMRC) guidance including generic standards on clinical records will be issued to Medical Directors. This is helpful but WSASC would like to achieve more clarity. WSASC members have raised coding of SAS doctors’ work at LNC meetings. This will require a culture shift in Health Boards and the sooner this begins the better. In Scotland the issue has been raised with the MSG (a joint NHS employers/ Scottish Government Health Directorate group) by SSASC. At the meeting with MSG in October 2014, SSASC representative presented a Scottish briefing paper on Greater Accuracy and Transparency in Patient Coding to discuss the issue formally. MSG has now taken this forward with Professor Marion Bain, Medical Director at NHS National Services Scotland who has asked ISD (Information Services Division) Scotland to consider this and they are currently looking into options. We will look for a progress update at the next scheduled meeting with MSG on Wednesday 14 May 2014.

NISASC has discussed the issue but do not believe there is an issue in Northern Ireland and have no plans to take this forward at present.

For further advice and support contact our advisers on 0300 123 1233 or via support@bma.org.uk
Consultant and Junior Doctor Contract negotiations
As you will be aware the Consultants Committee and the Junior Doctors Committee are undertaking negotiations regarding their respective contracts. An update on the negotiations can be found here. As always the SASC will be closely monitoring the negotiations to ensure that the needs of SAS doctors are considered.

College Exams
As part of the BMAs holistic response to the concerns over postgraduate examinations the Equality and Diversity Committee have undertaken a review of the equality and diversity monitoring of specialty exams. As a result of this review they have updated the 2006 report ‘Examining equality: a survey of royal college examinations.’ The progress review can be found here.

Women in leadership
The BMA wide Women and Leadership Project was established in 2013 to identify barriers to participation in BMA Committees for female doctors, and to develop policies to address these barriers. The SASC have welcomed this project, with members of the Committee joining the project reference group. If you would like more information on this information see the BMA website.

Using the BMA website
The BMA website is continually redesigned to make it more user-friendly and ensure all the information you need is available to you. There is a large amount of SAS specific information available on the website. This is most easily available via the homepage. Having logged in, enter your branch of practice and nation into the ‘your BMA’ box and the information will be tailored to you as a SAS doctor, relevant to the nation in which you work.

You will be able to access the information previously contained in the online SAS handbook here.

SASC Conference – 3 June 2014
The date of the Annual SAS Conference has been confirmed as Tuesday 3 June 2014. This year’s theme will be ‘Resilient SAS, Changing NHS’. Further information on the Conference is available on our website, the conference programme will be published soon.

For further advice and support contact our advisers on 0300 123 1233 or via support@bma.org.uk