**Doctor supporter – role profile**

The BMA is commissioned by the GMC to provide the Doctor support service, a dedicated emotional support service for any doctor currently subject to a fitness to practise process, or at risk of losing their licence due to non-engagement with revalidation (whether or not they are a BMA member). This is in recognition of the fact that having your fitness to practise investigated, or learning that your licence is at risk, can be a very stressful experience. The service is completely independent of the GMC.

Through the Doctor support service, free, confidential emotional help is provided from fellow doctors, independently of the GMC. The role of the Doctor supporter is purely to give emotional support and ‘buddying’.

**You will not provide any medical diagnosis, treatment, legal advice or counselling. Nor will you act as an advocate in any way for the doctors you support.** You will signpost, if appropriate, to other sources of support here.

As a Doctor supporter you will be expected to provide up to six hours of emotional support, over the phone or by video-call, to a doctor notified by the GMC that a provisional enquiry or fitness to practise investigation is taking place, or that their licence to practise is at risk. The service also offers the doctor a maximum of two days support in person during a hearing (or attendance at a virtual hearing), should the doctor have one, and providing they can supply enough notice for your attendance to be possible.

The work is in response to need, but we anticipate you will deal with approximately one new case per month.

Doctor supporters are remunerated on an hourly basis of time spent supporting the doctor in difficulty, plus appropriate expenses incurred.

You will not be an employee or agent of the BMA; however, you will have the benefit of BMA insurance whilst providing the Doctor support service for and on behalf of the BMA.

**Key responsibilities**

1. Attend training days (three per year) – a mixture of virtual and face-to-face at BMA House.
2. Attend an annual 1:1 check-in meeting with a member of the Wellbeing Support team.
3. Contribute to confidential case discussion at training days.
4. Provide confidential peer support to colleagues in difficulty, with an emotional focus.
5. Maintain individual doctors’ confidentiality.
6. Ensure that any record-keeping associated with cases is timely and accurate.
7. Guarantee to destroy any paper records held about individual doctors once cases have been closed. When records are held in their own home, guarantee to store these securely (lock away).
8. Ensure communication is made with colleagues on days/times that it has been promised.
9. Liaise with the Wellbeing Support team if personal circumstances or details change, or if availability to provide support to colleagues changes.
10. Alert the Service Manager immediately if there are any serious concerns about any cases under your management.
11. Help to promote the Doctor support service, wherever possible.
12. Assist in writing clear, written materials as necessary.
Requirements:

- GMC registered doctor, with or without licence to practise
- No adverse fitness to practise history
- A good knowledge of the National Health Service
- An empathetic approach whilst maintaining professional distance
- The ability to quickly analyse complex situations
- A constructive and thoughtful approach to problem solving and seeking solutions
- Excellent communication skills
- Good time management and organisational skills
- The ability to maintain confidentiality
- The ability to focus on detail and the ‘bigger picture’

Desirable:

- Experience supporting colleagues in difficulty
- Interest in doctors’ health issues
- Experience of appraising colleagues
- Experience of providing counselling and/or mentoring
- Understanding of GMC processes