



Elected member quick starter guide

Welcome, and congratulations on being elected or re-elected as a BMA elected member.

This is a summary of essential information to get you started. Please read the full guide for further details.





What is the BMA?

- A professional association and trade union representing and negotiating on behalf of all doctors and medical students in the UK
- A leading voice advocating for outstanding healthcare and a healthy population
- A provider of excellent individual services and support for doctors throughout their lives.

What are the responsibilities of an elected member?

- Ensure that members' voices are heard – nationally, locally and in the workplace
- Contribute to the work of the committee. Prepare for meetings to ensure you can participate fully in debates, take into account both your own views and the views of those you represent, and help with projects in your area of expertise
- Provide a steer to the work of the secretariat, which supports the committee and feeds its views into policy development
- Respect the [values](#) and policies of the BMA, follow our [code of conduct](#) and work in accordance with the [BMA's behaviour principles](#)
- Declare [conflicts of interest](#) to your committee chair/head of committee secretariat
- Uphold the [confidentiality](#) of your committee; if in doubt, ask the committee chair
- Represent the views of the BMA when speaking to the media as an elected BMA representative, or explicitly ask not to be identified as such when speaking in a personal capacity
- Observe guidance for the use of electronic communications set out in the [email guidelines](#), [technology T&Cs and GDPR guidelines](#), and [social media policy](#)
- In BMA elections, abide by [elections guidance](#), respect other candidates, and don't put pressure on other members or staff to favour a particular candidate.



How is policy made?

The BMA's main policy-making meeting is the [ARM \(annual representative meeting\)](#)

- Motions for debate at the ARM come largely from our divisions, regional councils, branch of practice conferences, and national councils
- The [RB \(representative body\)](#) consists of 600 members who attend the ARM and are elected geographically and by branch of practice
- When a motion is passed by the RB, it becomes BMA policy.
- BMA council is responsible for the formulation and implementation of policy throughout the year between annual representative meetings.

What training and support is available?

- As a new committee member, you have the opportunity to be paired with a 'buddy' and/or a [mentor](#)
- A comprehensive bespoke training programme includes courses on [inclusive culture, and active bystander leadership programmes part 1 and 2](#) , and [effective influencing at the BMA](#). An online training with an external facilitator is also available for chairs and deputy chairs. For more information, contact corporate.edi@bma.org.uk
- Each BMA committee is supported by an email discussion list known as a listserv. These are used for the circulation of information and consultations, and as a discussion forum
- [Support for carers](#) is available to allow committee and board members to participate fully in BMA activities
- Our wellbeing services include a 24/7 counselling line and peer support service, available free for all doctors and medical students. Call 0330 123 1245 or [find out more](#)
- The BMA media office arranges media training for committee members, and you must attend a training session if you anticipate communicating with the media. Email mediaoffice@bma.org.uk
- Should you experience or witness any poor behaviour from BMA members, you can consult [the quick guide to raising concerns about member behaviour](#) to explore the options available to you for addressing or escalating these concerns.



- The Code of Conduct support line is a free, independent, and external service that provides support and guidance to BMA members and staff. This is the first point of contact to help them deal with their concerns and the impact of behaviours exhibited by BMA members, and to discuss possible resolutions. Accredited counsellors are contactable on 0800 028 2092 from 9am to 8pm on Monday to Friday, and from 10am to 6pm on Saturday.
- Alternatively, our [speak up guardian service](#) is an independent and objective person to whom committee members can raise concerns that they may feel unable to raise by other routes
- An equality champion works across committees as a point of contact for equality issues, and feeds [equality, diversity and inclusion](#) considerations into discussions and decisions
- The [network of elected women](#) is a BMA-wide group that supports elected women members and champions female leadership
- The [forum for racial and ethnic equality](#) aims to unify and empower the voices of our Black, Asian, and minority ethnic members and influence positive change in the pursuit of race equality, in our association and across the NHS
- Our [services for international doctors](#) include immigration advice, learning and career development resources
- The [BMA DLN network](#) is a network for elected members with disabilities, long term conditions, neurodiversity with the aim to champion and advance diversity across our association.

How do I claim expenses?

- Committee members can claim expenses incurred when attending meetings, such as the costs of travel, subsistence, and accommodation. Locum costs incurred while on BMA business can also be reimbursed, subject to a maximum limit. See the [rates and limits](#), and [expenses policy](#)
- The BMA uses a web-based system called [Concur](#). You will need to [apply for an account](#) if you don't have one. If you have any queries about Concur, contact John O'Connor on 020 7383 6458
- Members can claim honoraria for attendance at committee meetings or on business on behalf of the committee (including participation by video or teleconference), after 24 meeting days without payment; you will be eligible to claim an honorarium from your 25th attendance. See the [BMA honoraria policy](#)
- Honoraria payments only apply to members of national committees and regional councils

For information on all guidelines and expenses, please [refer to the committee policies](#).