

## **Patient organisations call on UK Government to give revalidation the go ahead**

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Nine patient organisations have called on the UK Government to give the go ahead for a new system of regular checks for doctors in the UK, arguing that patients need to know that the doctor treating them is competent and safe to practise.

In a statement sent to Andrew Lansley, the Secretary of State for Health, all of the organisations agree that patients and the public need to be sure that the doctor who is treating them is up to date and fit to practise and they hope he will confirm in the autumn that revalidation will go ahead at the end of this year.

Covering six themes - including the expectations of patients, the role of the GMC, the future development of revalidation and the role of patients in providing feedback - the statement says: 'We support the revalidation of doctors and the additional assurance it will provide patients about the doctors who treat them. Many patients believe this happens already and are surprised to learn that this is not yet the case across the UK.

'Revalidation will be an important statement that a doctor is competent in their area of practice. We recognise the contribution that revalidation can make over time to the quality and safety of care that patients receive.

'We trust that the Secretary of State for Health will make this decision with the views and interests of patients paramount by ensuring there is no further delay in revalidating doctors' licences.'

The statement follows letters sent to Andrew Lansley by Katherine Murphy, Chief Executive of the Patients Association, and Malcolm Alexander, Chair of the National Association of LINKs Members (NALM), outlining their support for revalidation.

In her letter, Katherine Murphy stated that patients and the wider public agree that doctors should always be able to show that they are fully up to date and fit to practise and revalidation must remain a priority.

Malcolm Alexander echoed this view in his letter, adding that NALM recognises the valuable contribution revalidation will make to the quality and safety of care that patients receive.

They have both have also signed the joint support statement on behalf of their organisations.

The statement was welcomed by the General Medical Council which is responsible for introducing Revalidation.

**Niall Dickson, Chief Executive of the GMC, said:**

'We welcome the support of the nine patient organisations as it shows the importance of revalidation to patients across the UK. This is what patients expect to happen and these organisations are rightly calling for no further delay.

'The new system will make sure that every doctor in the UK can demonstrate that they are a good doctor and up to date - it will also mean that their employers have to provide them with the support and information they need to practise safely.

'The good news is that health organisations across the UK are tightening up their arrangements for overseeing and supporting doctors. This should improve patient safety and provide more assurance to patients that the doctor treating them is a good doctor. We have been talking about this reform for more than ten years - now we need to get on with it.'

**Ends**

**Notes to Editor:**

The nine patient organisations that signed the statement of support are:

- National Voices
- Patients Association
- National Association of LINKs Members
- National Association for Patient Participation
- Academy of Medical Royal Colleges Patient/Lay Group
- Action against Medical Accidents
- Scotland Patients Association
- Board of Community Health Councils in Wales
- Patient and Client Council (Northern Ireland)

The statement of support from patient organisations can be found here:

[http://www.gmc-uk.org/Medical\\_revalidation\\_a\\_statement\\_of\\_support\\_from\\_UK\\_patient\\_organisations\\_FIN\\_AL.pdf\\_49303617.pdf](http://www.gmc-uk.org/Medical_revalidation_a_statement_of_support_from_UK_patient_organisations_FIN_AL.pdf_49303617.pdf)

Katherine Murphy's letter can be found here: <http://patients-association.com/Portals/0/Public/Files/Research%20Publications/120416%20Andrew%20Lansley.docx>

Malcolm Alexander's letter can be found here:

<http://www.nalm2010.org.uk/uploads/6/6/0/6/6606397/nationalassociationoflinksmembers-final-june26-2012-agreed.pdf>

Further information on revalidation can be found here: [www.gmc-uk.org/revalidation](http://www.gmc-uk.org/revalidation)

The GMC is keeping doctors updated and telling them exactly what they need to do and by when, in order that they will be ready to revalidate.

For further information please contact the Media Relations Office on 020 7189 5454, out of hours 020 7189 5444/ 07920 461497, email [press@gmc-uk.org](mailto:press@gmc-uk.org), website [www.gmc-uk.org](http://www.gmc-uk.org).

The General Medical Council registers and licenses doctors to practise medicine in the UK. Our purpose is summed up in the phrase: Regulating doctors, Ensuring Good Medical Practice.

The law gives us four main functions:

- keeping up-to-date registers of qualified doctors
- fostering good medical practice
- promoting high standards of medical education and training
- dealing firmly and fairly with doctors whose fitness to practise is in doubt