

GP Trainees subcommittee e-bulletin, October 2007

Welcome to the first issue of the 2007-2008 e-bulletin of the GP Trainees subcommittee of the GPC. The aim of this e-bulletin is to keep you up to date with the major issues being faced by GP trainees and the current work of the subcommittee.

Changes to the Directions, 1 August 2007

From 1 August 2007, amendments to the Directions concerning GP Registrars came into effect bringing about changes to Motor Vehicle Allowance (MVA) and Maternity Pay.

MVA

Before 1 August 2007, most GP Specialty Registrars (GPStRs) had been directly reimbursed, with a lump sum payment, for the expense of having a motor vehicle and its use for business purposes. This has now changed and with effect from 1 August 2007, all GPStRs entering practice placements will receive their allowance under the new system which is primarily mileage based and rates GPStRs as either standard or regular users according to their level of usage.

It is strongly advised that all GPStRs should keep a log of their mileage for tax purposes. Trainees should note that tax can be reclaimed up to 40p per mile.

What mileage can be claimed?

According to the Directions, as of 1 August 2007, GPStRs are able to claim for mileage they would not otherwise have covered had their vehicle not been required for business use. This means that:

- When their vehicle is required on an official journey that day, GPStRs may claim the business mileage incurred, plus the home to practice base return journey up to a maximum of 10 miles each way.
- When their vehicle is used to attend a training course or day release, GPStRs are only permitted to claim the excess mileage above that covered on their normal home to base return mileage. However, deanery policy on this may differ, and GPStRs should check what their deanery policy is in relation to mileage used for educational purposes.

Maternity Pay

The Directions have been finally amended to reflect the provisions under the hospital doctors terms and conditions. GPStRs are now entitled to the first 8 weeks of maternity leave to be paid at full allowance, less any Statutory Maternity Pay or Maternity Allowance (including any dependant's allowances) receivable; and for the next 18 weeks of absence, payable at half of the full allowance, which has increased from the previous 14 weeks at half pay.

A GPStR already on maternity leave at the first of August, and who qualifies for maternity pay under the Directions, will be eligible for any maternity leave under the new provisions applicable from the date of amendments to the Directions. This means that if a GPStR was on maternity leave and qualified for maternity pay under the revised provisions and they were within 26 weeks of the start of maternity leave at that date, then the practice could be reimbursed for the period from 1 August for any additional occupational maternity pay due.

Further guidance on how the changes, brought about by the revised Directions, affect your training will be available on the BMA website shortly:

www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/Hubgpregistrars

COGPED guidance regarding Out-of-Hours requirements

COGPED recently updated their guidance on Out-of-Hours (OOH) requirements for GP Specialty Registrars, which advises that as in indicative benchmark, the time required to achieve and maintain competencies is likely to be one four to six hour session every four weeks, adjusted accordingly on a pro-rata basis.

The full document is available at:

www.cogped.org.uk/document_store/1186480594_1_jxpuCmxd.doc .

nMRCGP

From 1 August 2007 the MRCGP was replaced, with a one year transition period, by nMRCGP. The nMRCGP is now compulsory for all GP Registrars wishing to obtain a CCT and for entry onto the GMC GP register. Assuming the candidate passes every module first time the costs of gaining the nMRCGP is now more than £2,100, a significant increase on last year's fee of £1,240. The Chairman of the subcommittee has written to the RCGP and has been invited by the Treasurer, Dr Colin Hunter, to discuss the issues surrounding the costs imposed on GP Registrars following the implementation of the nMRCGP and associated exams.

Handbook for GPs in training

The subcommittee has begun work on putting together a Handbook for GPs in training, to act as an aid throughout the VTS, as the Junior Doctors' Handbook does for those in Hospital training. It is intended that this resource will be web-based, providing information that is up-to-date throughout GP training, and that smaller, executive summary versions will be produced in hard format to act as a quick reference tool. It is anticipated that the Handbook will be completed for August 2008.

MTAS/MMC

The BMA has formed an MMC Cross Craft group, of which the Chairman of the subcommittee is a member. The GPT subcommittee continues to support the JDC and their work in resolving the situation brought about by MMC, and its effects on all doctors in training. The BMA, as a whole, is involved in resolving the problems of MMC/MTAS from all angles of medical training, and consequently the website is constantly updated with the latest developments. Further information is available at: www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/HubMTAS

Subcommittee membership

Following the GPR summer newsletter the subcommittee are pleased to report that there is now almost a full quota of representatives, whilst vacancies still exist in the following regions: SE Scotland and N. Scotland, N.E. Scotland and E. Scotland. To ensure continuity on the subcommittee any eligible GP in training volunteering to act as representative in one of these regions would be allowed to fill the post until the end of the current session in July 2008. Work is ongoing to ensure a regional election structure is in place for the 2008-10 regional vacancies. Information regarding the work of the subcommittee and it's membership is available at: www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/gpregrep and if you would like to be involved in the work of the subcommittee, please contact Angela Button for further information, abutton@bma.org.uk

Endnote

We hope that you have found this edition of the GP Registrars e-bulletin interesting and helpful. Please do pass this e-bulletin on to anyone interested in GP Registrar issues, and if you would like to be added to our mailing list please email vwhite@bma.org.uk