

JMCC Consultation – Consultant Working Environments

Purpose:

To seek the views of the Medical (Royal) Colleges and the BMA Consultants Committee to develop and agree what the safe, well-supported environments for consultants should be to ensure the highest standards of care for patients.

Introduction:

At the last meeting of the Joint Medical Consultative Council (JMCC), the Consultants Committee (CC) requested that the council take forward a motion passed at the Consultants Conference on 5 March 2014: -

Motion: BY NORTHWEST RCC That this conference requires the BMA to work with the Medical (Royal) Colleges to develop and agree what the safe, well-supported, environments for consultants should be to ensure the highest standards of care for patients.

Pursuant to this aim, the JMCC set up a working group to examine how this motion might be realised.

They concluded;

- That a consultation be undertaken to seek input from the Medical (Royal) Colleges on what requirements are necessary to provide “safe, well-supported environments for consultants”.
- That the requirements for such an environment can be broken down into eight key domains, namely –
 1. Health and safety
 2. Comfort breaks and refreshment
 3. Access to ancillary services (e.g. IT, pharmacy, test results etc)
 4. Support staff
 5. Access to out of hospital community services
 6. Step up and step down services
 7. Professional development (PDP, SPA, CPD)
 8. Supervision of educational trainees and multi-professional staff

Background:

It was agreed that a set of guidelines be developed for two reasons.

Firstly, there are no such guidelines of this type in existence – the creation of which would greatly benefit the profession. For example, trainee doctors currently have a multitude of documents and handbooks that clearly outline standards they should come to expect throughout their training curriculums such as ‘The Trainee Doctor’, by the General Medical Council (GMC) and ‘The Gold Guide’, by the Conference of Postgraduate Medical Deans (CoPMED). The development of a similar guide for consultants should reflect ongoing personal development and clearly define what the basic expectation of a safe and well-supported work environment should look like, would help to ensure that patients are receiving the highest standard of care that is available, as well as supply individual consultants and hospital management staff with a set of agreed standards by which to measure the service they are providing.

Secondly, it is widely assumed that a move toward seven day services (7DS) is inevitable within the NHS. National contract negotiations currently taking place between the BMA, NHS Employers (NHS E) and the Department of Health (DoH), has made clear that implementation of 7DS is the leading driver in the government’s future plans for the health service. Sir Bruce Keogh’s ‘NHS Services, Seven Days a Week Forum’ has also reinforced this notion, which describes an estimated three year roll-out plan for 7DS by 2017. Against the backdrop of this change to service provision, it is important to find out whether the needs of consultants would

vary when working a seven day work pattern and illustrate a benchmark for such a service to be implemented.

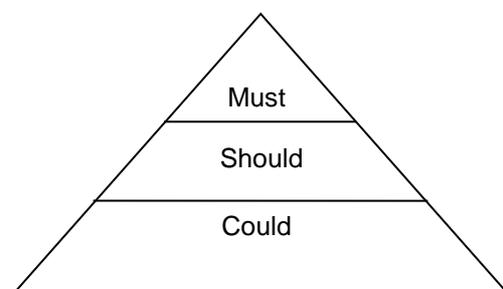
Vital to this will be input from consultants identifying specific requirements needed to be able to deliver this service safely and effectively.

Proposed Domains:

The aim of this consultation is to gather expert opinion on the following eight domains:

1. <i>Health and safety</i>	This domain includes all regulations and procedures which contribute to the safety and wellbeing of consultants in the working environment.
2. <i>Comfort breaks and refreshment</i>	This domain includes all aspects of shift patterns, frequency and duration of breaks, and facilities for breaks and refreshment.
3. <i>Access to ancillary services (e.g. IT, pharmacy, test results etc.)</i>	This domain includes a wide range of support utilities that might assist the work of consultants to provide the best possible care, ranging from IT services to pharmacies.
4. <i>Support staff</i>	This domain includes any and all staff who support the work of consultants, and materially contribute to the safe and well-supported environment in which they work.
5. <i>Access to out of hospital community services</i>	This domain includes access to all types of community and social care pathways which support the work of consultants.
6. <i>Step up and Step Down services (e.g. transfer to ITU, discharge to appropriate after care etc.)</i>	This domain includes the provision of step up/step down placements to consultants, and the resources available to conduct placement assessments.
7. <i>Professional development (e.g. PDP, SPA, CPD)</i>	This domain includes all aspects of a consultant's professional training and development, ranging from PDP and SPA to CPD. Both access to training, and its breadth and quality should be considered.
8. <i>Supervision of educational trainees and multi-professional staff</i>	This domain includes the environmental requirements needed to provide clinical education for trainees and the supervision of multi-professional staff.

In your replies to the forthcoming questions, please try to structure your responses according to the 'must, should and could' pyramid model outlined below.



Any measures, provisions, rules, or general proposals you think contribute to a safe and well-supported environment for consultants should be listed according to whether you think a given factor is a feature of a consultant's work that *must* be present, *should* be present, or just *could* be present to foster a safe and well supportive environment for consultants.

MUST - This includes all aspects of the physical, temporal and training environment you think are absolutely essential to the safe and well-supported functioning of a consultant's work in providing the best patient care.

SHOULD - This might include any aspects of the working environment for consultants that fall short of the 'absolutely essential' characterisation, but should still invariably feature in the consultant's work place nevertheless.

COULD - This may include suggestions for improvements as yet featured in the working environment for consultants, alongside any other provisions or rules that would benefit such an environment.

Questions:

Please answer the following questions specific to each domain, and according to the pyramid model outlined above wherever possible.

- 1.) What health and safety considerations are required for a safe and well-supported working environment for consultants?
 - 1.1) Does this change or vary when working a seven day work pattern and if so, how?
- 2.) What constitutes the satisfactory provision of comfort breaks and refreshments conducive to a safe and well-supported working environment for consultants?
 - 2.1) Does this change or vary when working a seven day work pattern and if so, how?
- 3.) How do ancillary services feature in a safe and well-supported working environment for consultants?
 - 3.1) Does this change or vary when working a seven day work pattern and if so, how?
- 4.) How does support staff feature in a safe and well-supported working environment for consultants?
 - 4.1) Does this change or vary when working a seven day work pattern and if so, how?
- 5.) How does access to out of hospital community services feature in a safe and well-supported working environment for consultants?
 - 5.1) Does this change or vary when working a seven day work pattern and if so, how?
- 6.) How does the access and provision of Step up and Step Down services contribute to a safe and well-supported working environment for consultants?
 - 6.1) Does this change or vary when working a seven day work pattern and if so, how?
- 7.) How does the access and provision of professional development opportunities feature in a safe and well-supported working environment for consultants?
 - 7.1) Does this change or vary when working a seven day work pattern and if so, how?

8.) What constitutes a satisfactory work environment in order for consultants to adequately and safely deliver educational trainees, as well as provide supervision to multi-professional staff?

8.1) Does this change or vary when working a seven day work pattern and if so, how?