

The SAS Development Programme

Purpose, Structure and Governance

Purpose

The Staff, Associate Specialist and Specialty (SAS) Doctors and Dentists development programme was established in 2012 as a result of Scottish Government funding to develop SAS doctors and dentists working in NHS Scotland. Funding was initially on a three-year project basis; in 2015 this was added to NES's baseline funding. In 2022, the new Specialist grade was established in Scotland as a new senior SAS grade, and the SAS Programme now supports this group too. The SAS Programme now refers to Specialist, Associate Specialist and Specialty Doctors and Dentists in Scotland.

There are approximately 1300 SAS grade doctors and dentists working in NHS Scotland. They make up about 10% of the senior medical workforce and are often appointed to these posts at an earlier stage in their career compared to those pursuing a Consultant position.

Taking up an SAS post should not mean cessation of career development. Rather it is envisaged that while these doctors and dentists will provide practice in areas of learned competencies, they will also continue to develop new skills to support changing specialist service development.

The programme aims to direct national funding to those SAS doctors and dentists whose clinical teams are seeking to develop new or improved clinical services, or to enhance their role within the clinical team, and where funding is not otherwise provided by the employing Health Board. If approved, funding is available to support costs for training, salary backfill, or completion of training to apply for a Specialist Registration through the Portfolio route. In addition, funding has enabled the creation of a national network of Education Advisers (who are themselves SAS doctors or dentists) to support local SAS doctors and dentists, and to guide them (and their employing Health Boards) to make best use of this funding opportunity.

Structure:

The SAS Development Programme is managed within the Professional Development workstream of the Medical Directorate of NES. The operational arrangements for the programme are guided by the SAS Development Programme Board (see Terms of Reference at Annex 1) which meets on a quarterly basis, and key roles and responsibilities are as follows:

- *Associate Postgraduate Dean / SAS Development Programme Lead.* Operational lead for the programme including: Chairing the SAS Programme Board and supporting the prioritisation of decisions for funding; development of the programme; supporting the Administrative Assistant(s) for the programme; appointment, support, development and performance management of the network of Education Advisers; ensuring that up-to-date and relevant information is available online, leading on the production of an annual summary of the work of the SAS Programme and associated documents and reports; providing a lead role in

organising the annual conference and network development meetings, and representing Scotland at UK SAS meetings. *(full Job Description at Annex 2)*

- *SAS Development Programme Education Advisers.* Regional / local implementation of the programme including: raising the local profile of training and education for SAS doctors and dentists, including advocating for and supporting access to national funding; support for SAS doctors and dentists within a Health Board area; development and maintenance of working relationships with the Director of Medical Education and Clinical Directors; and contribution to the national network of Education Advisers. *(Job Description at Annex 3)*

EA Health Board cover	Current PA allocation (may be adjusted proportionately)
NHS Grampian, NHS Orkney and NHS Shetland	1 PA
NHS Highland and NHS Western Isles	1 PA
NHS Tayside	1 PA
NHS Fife	1 PA
NHS Lothian and NSS	2 PAs
NHS Borders	0.5 PA
NHS Dumfries & Galloway	0.5 PA
NHS Ayrshire & Arran	1 PA
NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde and Golden Jubilee National Hospital	2.5 PAs
NHS Lanarkshire and State Hospital	1.5 PA
NHS Forth Valley	0.5 PA

- *Administrative Officer(s).* Administrative support for all aspects of the programme including: support for the Associate Postgraduate Dean / SAS Development Programme Lead and Education Adviser network; administering the process of applications for funding, including communication with, and support for individual applicants; liaising with NES finance to ensure accuracy of applications and support budgetary reporting, supporting the production of an annual summary; maintenance of the information on the Deanery website (<http://www.scotlanddeanery.nhs.scot/your-development/specialist-and-associate-specialist-doctors-and-dentists/>); and providing secretariat support for the Programme Board.
- *Principal Lead, NES Medicine Directorate, including the Professional Development workstream.* Overall managerial responsibility for the programme including working with NES finance in relation to budgetary management.

Governance

NHS Education for Scotland is accountable to the Scottish Government for the appropriate use of funding that is provided. The Programme Board, which has a dual operational and strategic function (see Terms of Reference at Annex 1) is chaired by the Associate Postgraduate Dean (APGD); the

APGD reports to the NES Deputy Medical Director, who reports to the Medical Directorate Apex Group (MDAG) of NES.

A summary of the SAS Programme work is published each year and available on the SAS Development homepage at [this link](#).

These governance arrangements have been scrutinised by the MDAG on [INSERT DATE].

This 'Structure and Governance' document will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Next review: June 2025

Annex 1

Terms of reference

Name of group: SAS Development Programme Board

Title: Terms of reference; September 2017. Last reviewed June 2024.

Purpose/ role of the group: The dual purpose of the Programme Board is to provide strategic overview and direction for the SAS Development Programme, and to act as a decision-making panel to scrutinise and prioritise funding applications. Funding decisions are made collectively and by consensus, and the Board will be considered to be quorate if there are at least four Board members present to include at least two NES representatives and one non-NES representative.

Membership: the current membership of the Programme Board is as follows:

- NES Associate Postgraduate Dean / SAS Development Programme Lead (Chair)
- NES Associate Postgraduate Dental Dean
- Principal Lead, Medicine Directorate, NES (Deputy Chair)
- BMA representation from its Scottish SAS Committee x 2
- Academy of Medical Royal Colleges SAS representative x 1
- Representative of the Directors of Medical Education group x 1
- SAS Development Programme Education Advisers by open invitation

Beginning in 2025, the SAS Development Programme will also seek to add a layperson to the panel to represent public interest.

Organisations that provide representatives from out with NES are encouraged to identify deputies to ensure adequate representation at each Board meeting.

Accountability: The Programme Board reports to the NES Medical Directorate Apex Group (MDAG) through the Deputy Medical Director. Minutes will be kept of Board meetings containing records of all decisions reached and agreements made.

Review: These Terms of Reference are agreed by the Programme Board, which will review them annually, making changes as appropriate.

Working methods / ways of working: The Programme Board will:

- Meet quarterly (additional panels may be scheduled to maximise use of the financial year's budget).
- Be chaired by the NES Associate Postgraduate Dean who reports to the Deputy Medical Director, NES.
- Provide an annual summary report of the work of the SAS Programme.

Supporting infrastructure:

- Information sharing, storage and information management is undertaken via a dedicated NES Sharepoint space.
- Secretariat is provided by the NES Professional Development workstream.

Annex 2

NHS EDUCATION FOR SCOTLAND

Medical Directorate

Associate Postgraduate Dean/ SAS Development Programme Lead

Job Description

Post: Associate Postgraduate Dean / SAS Development Programme Lead

Grade: NHS SAS Grade Doctor or Dentist in a substantive post

Hours: 5 PAs

Accountable to: Deputy Medical Director, NES

Reports to: Deputy Medical Director, NES

Job summary:

The Medical Directorate is responsible for a programme to support the professional development needs of substantive Specialist, Associate Specialist, and Specialty Grade (SAS) doctors and dentists, employed by Health Boards throughout Scotland. Funding is specifically aimed to deliver improvement in patient care delivered by SAS grade staff.

Launched in recognition of the vital contribution made by these doctors and dentists and the importance of their professional development as identified in the document Choice and Opportunity (2003), the programme moved into a new phase following a highly evaluated three-year project phase (2012-2015). There are around 1300 SAS doctors and dentists employed in NHS Scotland across all territorial Health Boards.

The range of educational needs of this diverse group include:

- Top-up postgraduate medical training to meet the requirements for an application for Specialist Registration via the Portfolio route
- Secondment opportunities by means of a time limited placement for a specific training opportunity or requirement in order to develop a specialist service
- Specific clinical, management or generic skills courses or study days, tailored to individual needs that are identified through Appraisal and Personal Development Planning.

Following the pilot phase and under Scottish Government guidance, it was agreed to re-focus and streamline the work, directing more effort towards the impact on clinical services of funding available. To this end the managed educational network of SAS Educational Advisers was refreshed and streamlined. The Associate Postgraduate Dean is the NES operational lead for the development of this managed educational network of territorial Health Board SAS Educational Advisers.

He/she is expected to provide meaningful leadership to these educational advisers and provide advice in relation to managing their local network of SAS Doctors & Dentists. He/she leads arrangements for managing the professional development funding for SAS doctors and dentists and lead any further evaluation of the impact of this approach for the NHS in Scotland.

As a senior member of the Directorate's Professional Development team, he/she will take responsibility for contributing to and leading this programme.

The Associate Postgraduate Dean, who is a SAS doctor or dentist, reports directly to the Deputy Medical Director of NES and is expected to make themselves available during the working day and on occasions during the evening.

Principal responsibilities:

1. Operational lead for the SAS professional development programme.
2. Attendance at relevant meetings in relation to the programme and support for the Administrative Assistant(s) for the programme.
3. Appointment, support, development and performance management of the network of SAS Education Advisers.
4. Chair the Programme Board and support the prioritisation of decisions for funding and ensure the appropriate administration of professional development funding.
5. Lead role in the organisation of the annual conference and network development meetings.
6. Lead evaluation activities for the programme including an annual report and associated reports.
7. Ensuring that up-to-date and relevant information is available on-line.
8. Represent Scotland at UK SAS meetings.
9. Carry out other duties appropriate to the level of the post as required.
10. Ensure that the SAS Development Programme governance structures align to the reporting requirements required by the Scottish Government and NES

NHS EDUCATION for SCOTLAND

Specialist, Associate Specialist, and Specialty (SAS) Doctors and Dentists Development Programme

SAS Education Adviser

Job Description

Job Title:	Specialist, Associate Specialist, and Specialty (SAS) Doctors and Dentists Development Programme SAS Education Adviser
Accountable to:	Associate Postgraduate Dean / SAS Development Programme Lead
Remuneration:	These activities are recognised as a programmed activity (PA) in the job plan, and payment will be on a PA basis. The allocation of time will aim to reflect the number of SAS doctors and dentists which the post would be covering.

INTRODUCTION

The SAS Education Adviser has responsibility, in conjunction with the relevant Board Director of Medical Education (DME), for supporting all substantive SAS doctors and dentists employed by the Board, in their professional development needs that are not met by the usual local Study Leave arrangements.

Specific responsibilities of the SAS Education Adviser are as set out in this job description. The list of responsibilities in this job description is not exhaustive.

The SAS Education Adviser will be currently employed as a SAS doctor or dentist in NHS Scotland or within 3 years of retirement and will report to the Associate Postgraduate Dean/ SAS Development Programme Lead. They will have a close relationship with the relevant DME to ensure quality management of their role.

MAIN TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

The SAS Education Adviser is an established role, and will have responsibility for supporting doctors and dentists holding the following substantive appointments: Specialty Doctor/ Dentist; Specialist; Staff Grade; Associate Specialist; [and legacy equivalent posts e.g. SCMO; CMO; clinical assistant] in their professional development needs.

The specific responsibilities of the SAS Education Advisers are to:

- Support SAS doctors and dentists in their professional development needs as aligned to delivery of local services and where the development of the individual will tangibly impact on the quality of that service.
- Work as part of a national network with Advisers from other Health Boards in developing a managed approach to SAS professional development.
- Through local leadership, facilitate development for SAS doctors and dentists alongside existing processes e.g. employer managed funding such as Study Leave funding and appraisal processes.
- Participate in and further develop the SAS managed educational network, including prioritising attendance at Adviser development days. Advisers are also encouraged to attend at least one Programme Board meeting.
- Provide input to the maintenance of a SAS doctors' and dentists' section on the Deanery website.
- Become familiar with existing generic courses of interest/relevant to SAS doctors and dentists (e.g. LaMP; Faculty Development Alliance).
- Raise the profile of training and development opportunities for SAS doctors and dentists.
- Offer advice on processes to enable employed SAS doctors and dentists with supportive evidence in their portfolio/PDP to make an application for career development.
- Work with the others in the network, and the Programme Board to identify resources and agree funding support for SAS doctors and dentists.
- Participate in a quality management approach including undertaking educational needs assessment, canvassing SAS doctors' and dentists' views and contributing to evaluation of service impact.
- Be trained in equality and diversity to promote equality of opportunity and eliminate unfair discrimination.
- Develop and maintain working relationships with the Director of medical education and Clinical Directors.

This list is not exhaustive, and may be amended as part of the ongoing review of the programme.

The SAS Advisers also have a career management role. They will need to:

- become familiar with the Scotland Deanery policy for careers management and counselling which covers the needs of all SAS doctors and dentists.
- develop career management skills (or be able to provide access to them)
- play a part in marketing the professional development for SAS doctors and dentists, where there is a need to do so, to attract appropriate applications.

KEY RESULT AREAS:

The SAS Education Advisers' network is well-established. Advisers join a highly performing team of educators with excellent links to the territorial Health Boards.

Advisers respond to information on the aspirations and needs of local SAS doctors and dentists and use this to inform subsequent service and individual career development opportunities.

Advisers review outcomes of developments and successful funding applications from local SAS doctors and dentists, and assist Clinical Service Leads/Directors and DMEs to provide service impact information as requested.

PROCEDURE FOR APPOINTMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY:

The appointment process is the responsibility of the NES Medical Directorate, is nationally coordinated and locally (Board-level) delivered at interview stage. Interviews are held virtually. DMEs are kept informed of the appointments process. The SAS Education Advisers are managerially accountable to the Associate Postgraduate Dean/ SAS Development Programme Lead.

An annual review takes place with the Associate Postgraduate Dean/ SAS Development Programme Lead.

TENURE:

Through a Service Level Agreement with the employing Board, 3 years in the first instance, renewable for a further 3 years subject subject to continuing to meet entry criteria for the post and the approval of the Associate Postgraduate Dean / SAS Development Programme Lead, in consultation with the Deputy Medical Director, NES.