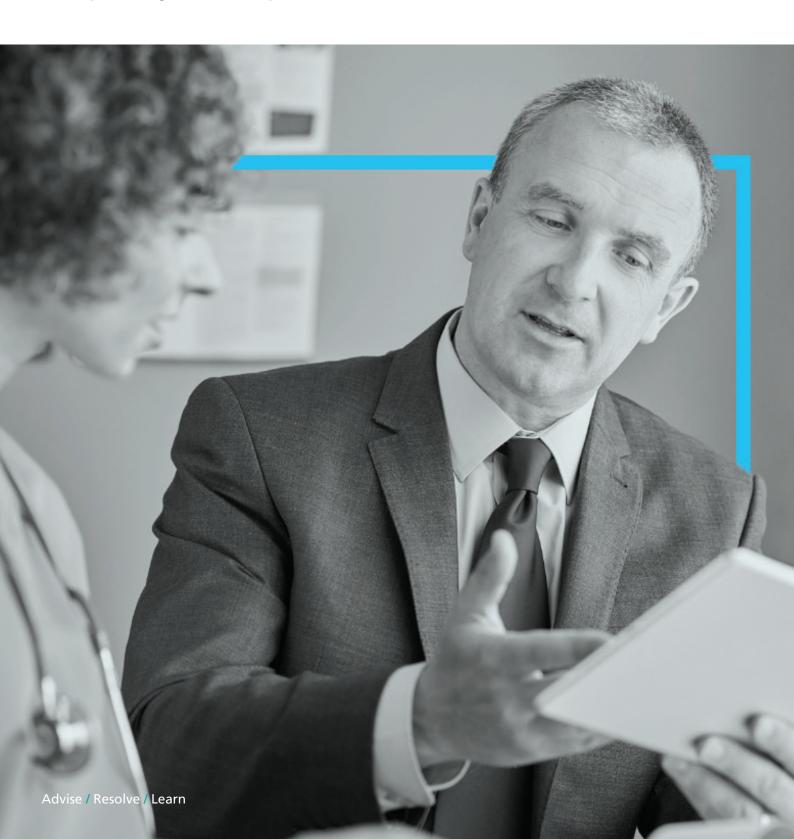


Practitioner Performance Advice

A guide for healthcare practitioners

Frequently asked questions



Practitioner Performance Advice – fundamentals

- We provide impartial and expert advice to employers and contracting healthcare organisations to support the local management and resolution of performance concerns relating to individual doctors, dentists and pharmacists.
- We are an advisory body and do not act for either the practitioner or the healthcare organisation.
- In all cases, our aim is to help ensure that where concerns have been raised about an individual these are managed and resolved in a fair, proportionate and timely way.
- Patient safety and public protection are our paramount concerns.
- As well as giving advice, we can also assist by carrying out assessments or other interventions, where these will help bring the case to a resolution.
- We support and encourage open and constructive dialogue between individual practitioners and healthcare organisations.
- We are not a decision-making body any decisions about the ongoing management, employment or contractual status of a practitioner rest solely with the healthcare organisation.
- Where concerns are raised about an individual's practice, we encourage them to cooperate and engage with local processes to support early resolution.
- We always encourage practitioners to access timely support and advice from their trade union, defence organisation or other representative body, as well as appropriate personal support.

Contents

Introd	uction – purpose of this guide	4				
Freque service	ently asked questions – practitioner guide to Practitioner Performance Advice	6				
Q1.	What is Practitioner Performance Advice's role?	7				
Q2.	Why has my employer/contracting organisation (healthcare organisation) contacted Practitioner Performance Advice about me?	9				
Q3.	What is the service's approach to giving advice?	10				
Q4.	Who in the service will be dealing with my case?	12				
Q5 .	I need to speak to someone about my case. Who do I contact?	12				
Q6 .	Can you make decisions about my employment or practice status?	13				
Q7.	Do I have a right of reply in relation to the concerns that a healthcare organisation has about me?	13				
Q8.	Does Practitioner Performance Advice conduct investigations into specific incidents or events?	14				
Q9.	What is the difference in role between Practitioner Performance Advice and my professional regulator?	14				
Q10.	What help can Practitioner Performance Advice offer to me directly?	15				
Q11.	I have a concern about my healthcare organisation's handling of my case. Can Practitioner Performance Advice help?	15				
Q12.	My healthcare organisation has referred me for an Practitioner Performance Advice assessment or other intervention. What does this mean?	16				
Q13.	What types of assessment do the service carry out?	18				
Q14.	What is Practitioner Performance Advice's Professional Support and Remediation (PSR) service?	20				
Q15.	How does Practitioner Performance Advice use the information it holds about me?	22				
Q16.	How does Practitioner Performance Advice deal with concerns raised by a whistleblower?	22				
Q17.	A Healthcare Professionals Alert Notice (HPAN) has been issued in relation to me. What does this mean?	23				
Q18.	Concerns have been raised about me – what avenues of support are available to me?	23				
Q19.	I would like to provide feedback on my experience of Practitioner Performance Advice. How can I do that?	24				
For further information and to contact us 26						

Introduction – purpose of this guide

This guide is aimed at healthcare practitioners whose employer or contracting body (referred to in this guide as 'healthcare organisation') has made contact with NHS Resolution's Practitioner Performance Advice service.

This guide describes Practitioner Performance Advice's role and services, and how we deliver our services in relation to doctors, dentists and pharmacists ('practitioners') about whom we have been approached for advice.

We hope this guide is helpful to practitioners in understanding the role of Practitioner Performance Advice and addressing the most frequently asked questions about Practitioner Performance Advice services.

The services we provide are tailored to individual cases and this document is a general guide only. We are always happy to discuss with you any relevant issues to your situation that are not covered in this guide – please contact the Practitioner Performance Advice Adviser allocated to your case.

We are developing a range of additional guides to describe each of our services in more detail – please see the Practitioner Performance Advice page at www.resolution.nhs.uk for the latest information.

This guide describes Practitioner Performance Advice's role and services, and how we deliver our services in relation to doctors, dentists and pharmacists.

Frequently asked questions – practitioner guide to Practitioner Performance Advice's services

Q1. What is Practitioners Perfomance Advice's role?

General

Practitioner Performance Advice's role is to provide impartial advice to healthcare organisations to effectively manage and resolve concerns raised about the practice of individual practitioners.

We are an operating division of NHS Resolution (www.resolution.nhs.uk). Although each of the operational functions which sit within NHS Resolution focus on distinct areas of activity, all parts of the organisation serve a common purpose to provide expertise to the NHS on resolving concerns fairly, share learning for improvement and preserve resources for patient care.

Practitioner Performance Advice's functions are set out in <u>The National Health Service</u> <u>Litigation Authority Directions 2013</u>, issued by the Secretary of State for Health. We provide a range of core services to NHS organisations and other bodies in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, including:

- Advice service
- Assessment and intervention services
- Other expert services.

These services are described below.

Advice service

Each year, we receive around 1,000 requests for advice from healthcare organisations with concerns about the practice of individual practitioners. The advice we offer focuses on:

- the fair and effective application of the healthcare organisation's own local performance management and associated procedures
- good practice in relation to local case management and investigation
- helping to identify and consider options available to the healthcare organisation to address and resolve concerns raised about an individual's practice
- signposting available avenues of professional support and other resources.

We are also able to provide advice directly to practitioners who may, for example, be concerned about some aspect of their own practice, or wish to access advice about rebuilding their skills after a career break.

Practitioner Performance Advice's service is provided by an established team of Advisers, comprising senior staff who are aligned regionally to specific healthcare organisations and NHS regions across England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Assessment and intervention services

In some cases, we can offer more detailed input to support the management and resolution of the concerns raised about a practitioner, through our assessment and intervention services. These services include:

- detailed, comprehensive and evidence-based assessments of an individual practitioner's behaviour and/or clinical performance in the workplace. Our assessments provide findings and conclusions aimed at informing a clear way forward to bring the case to a resolution
- professional support and remediation services to develop action plans to address concerns and help return an individual practitioner to safe and effective clinical practice
- assisted mediation in which Practitioner Performance Advice accredited mediators work with the parties in dispute on a confidential and impartial basis to help resolve difficulties which are impacting on professional relationships at work.

Where Practitioner Performance Advice has offered to undertake an assessment or other intervention, we will only proceed with the explicit agreement of both the practitioner and their healthcare organisation.

Other expert services

We are responsible for the management of the Healthcare Professional Alert Notices (HPANs) system. This is a system where notices are

issued by Practitioner Performance Advice to inform NHS bodies and others about health professionals who may pose a significant risk of harm to patients, staff or the public.

We also provide other expert services including education programmes on a diverse range of subjects, such as good practice in case management and case investigation. In addition, we offer a range of expert casework and consultancy services commissioned directly by regulators and other professional bodies.

Q2. Why has my employer/contracting organisation (healthcare organisation) contacted Practitioner Performance Advice about me?

We are usually contacted by a healthcare organisation where they have concerns about an individual's practice and are seeking expert advice to help them determine the way forward. Healthcare organisations seek our advice on a wide range of matters, including concerns about individual practitioner behaviour, clinical practice, conduct, health working in teams and/or working environment, and its relationship with the individual practitioner's performance. We are usually contacted by a senior member of staff, such as the Medical Director, Director of Human Resources or relevant Clinical Director someone who understands the complexity and nature of any reported concerns and can commit to organisational action.

If you have any queries about why your healthcare organisation has made contact with us, it is always advisable to speak to them directly in the first instance, and to familiarise yourself with your organisation's local procedures on managing performance.

Exclusions, suspensions and restrictions

We will also usually be contacted for advice where a healthcare organisation is considering excluding, suspending or restricting a practitioner's practice. Where patient safety is considered to be at risk or where there are allegations of serious misconduct, it is important for healthcare organisations to be able to take appropriate steps so that the situation can be thoroughly and promptly investigated.

However, we also recognise that such mechanisms should not be used without sufficient justification, as to do so can have an adverse impact on the practitioner, the wider team and the provision of clinical services.

For these reasons, we work with healthcare organisations to help them consider the options available to them to understand and address the concerns, and to help ensure that their decisions are reasonable and proportionate to the circumstances. Where exclusion, suspension or restriction is thought to be appropriate, we will continue to work with the healthcare organisation to routinely monitor the position and advise on good practice, taking account of local and national policy requirements.

Circumstances where healthcare organisations are required to contact Practitioner Performance Advice for advice

There are some limited circumstances where an NHS organisation is required to contact Practitioner Performance Advice for input. These include circumstances where:

- the concerns relate to an employed doctor or salaried dentist and formal exclusion is being considered; or
- a healthcare organisation is considering taking action in relation to a employed practitioner under the capability procedures set out in Part IV of Maintaining High Professional Standards in the Modern NHS (applicable in England), or Part IV of Maintaining High Professional Standards in the Modern HPSS (applicable in Northern Ireland) and is asked to consider whether an assessment should be undertaken; or

Q2. Continued from page 9

 an NHS body based in England is seeking the issuing of a Healthcare Professionals Alert Notice. We strongly encourage healthcare organisations to inform the individual practitioner about whom advice is being sought that Practitioner Performance Advice has been approached, except for very limited circumstances (for example where this would compromise the local investigation process of the healthcare organisation).

Q3. What is the service's approach to giving advice?

The following principles guide our approach to giving advice to healthcare organisations:

- We are an advisory body and do not act for the healthcare organisation or the practitioner. In all cases, our role is to provide impartial and expert advice which is aimed towards supporting the local management and resolution of performance concerns.
- In all cases, patient safety and public protection are our paramount concerns.
- Whilst the advice we offer is based on the description of concerns and other information presented to us by the healthcare organisation, we will seek to clarify, understand and, where necessary, challenge the course of action or options being contemplated by the healthcare organisation and how the information available to them may be appropriately used to inform their decision making.
- The advice we provide and options we suggest are underpinned by a clearly explained rationale, with reference to relevant local procedures, national frameworks, policy and guidance as appropriate. We draw on our experience of what is realistically likely to work in the often complex context in which the practitioner and healthcare organisation operate.
- Our advice, and the accompanying rationale for that advice, is always confirmed in writing.
- We support open and constructive dialogue between individual healthcare organisations and practitioners where concerns have been raised about an individual's practice.

We are not a decision making body. In all cases, any decisions about the ongoing management, employment or contractual status of the practitioner rests solely with the healthcare organisation.

Case study

An important part of Practitioner
Performance Advice's role in supporting the management of performance concerns is to provide expert advice and help employers monitor cases which involve the exclusion of a practitioner from their workplace in accordance with the requirements of Part II of the national framework Maintaining High Professional Standards in the Modern NHS. This includes providing advice which supports the principle that exclusion from work is only applied once other options have been considered or exhausted.

The case involved two doctors where one was alleged to have assaulted the other at work (in a pressurised clinical environment). The alleged victim asked for the matter to be managed formally. Practitioner Performance Advice had a detailed discussion about the circumstances of the case with the healthcare organisation to help inform its local decision making.

On the face of it, a period of immediate exclusion initially appeared warranted, because serious allegations had been made and it was evident relations between the parties were strained.

The Practitioner Performance Advice Adviser, however, explored several alternative scenarios taking account of public protection and safety of staff, and how the complainant might feel about the options available. Practitioner Performance Advice advised that it was particularly important for the healthcare organisation to carefully consider the risk of recurrence of the alleged altercation, and that if the healthcare organisation was satisfied that the practitioner was remorseful and apologetic - and the complainant was not fearful for their safety - there would be greater flexibility for the healthcare organisation to consider management options whilst also minimising risk.

With Practitioner Performance Advice's ongoing support, the healthcare organisation successfully investigated and resolved the matter to the satisfaction of all concerned and without recourse to immediate exclusion. A key factor in the successful management and resolution of this case was to give the healthcare organisation the confidence that options other than exclusion could be safe, reasonable and proportionate, taking account of the specific circumstances of the case.

Q4. Who in the service will be dealing with my case?

Practitioner Performance Advice has an established team of Advisers, comprising senior staff from a variety of clinical, legal and managerial backgrounds with considerable experience of handling concerns raised in relation to professional practice. In each case, Practitioner Performance Advice's input is overseen by a designated Adviser, who oversees the provision of our services throughout the life of the case.

The Adviser will provide telephone or face-toface advice and will always confirm their advice in writing to the healthcare organisation.

Our Adviser team members are aligned regionally to specific trusts and NHS regions across England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

We also have a dedicated team of Assessment & Intervention staff with expertise in the methods and processes which underpin the delivery of our assessments and other specialist interventions. In each case where we are carrying out a specialist intervention, the Assessment & Intervention team will act as the key point of contact to share information and guide the practitioner and healthcare organisation through our processes.

Q5. I need to speak to someone about my case. Who do I contact?

If you need to speak to someone at Practitioner Performance Advice about your case, the best person to get in touch with is usually the Adviser allocated to your case. Each case has an allocated case number and it is helpful if you have your case number to hand if you know it. You can arrange a time to speak with them by contacting Practitioner Performance Advice on 020 7811 2600 or via advice@resolution.nhs.uk.

If your query relates specifically to the management of your assessment or other intervention, please contact the named member of our Assessment & Intervention team handling the matter either through the contact details provided to you, or by calling us on 020 7811 2600 or emailing us on advice@resolution.nhs.uk.

Q6. Can you make decisions about my employment or practice status?

No. As mentioned earlier, we are an advisory and not a determining or regulatory body. Any management decisions, including in relation to your employment or practice status, rest solely with your healthcare organisation.

Practitioner Performance Advice's advisory role applies to all of our casework functions, including our Assessment & Intervention services.

Where we have undertaken an assessment of a practitioner, the assessment report which follows is advisory and the opinions expressed are aimed at providing an independent view on a practitioner's performance in order that a clear and informed way forward can be identified to support the resolution of the case. In making any decision about an individual's employment or practice status, the healthcare organisation may have regard to our advice alongside any other information which it considers to be relevant, including submissions from the practitioner and/or their professional representatives. The healthcare organisation is not bound by our advice. It therefore follows that, having considered and weighed up all the relevant information available, the healthcare organisation may decide to take a differing view to that expressed by us.

Q7. Do I have a right of reply in relation to the concerns that a healthcare organisation has about me?

We always encourage open and constructive dialogue between a practitioner and their healthcare organisation about any concerns raised. As such, it is always advisable for a practitioner to share their comments directly with their healthcare organisation to help inform the local management of the case.

We do not test the veracity of the information provided to us by either the healthcare organisation or the practitioner, nor can we be the judge or arbiter where there are conflicting views.

We can however advise on options available to clarify the concerns as well as to facilitate discussions between the parties involved to help towards a resolution.

It is important to remember that any decision affecting an individual's practice or employment status rests with the healthcare organisation based on the information available to it, including information provided by the practitioner themselves.

Q8. Does Practitioner Performance Advice conduct investigations into specific incidents or events?

Whilst we do not offer an investigation service ourselves, we regularly advise healthcare organisations on good practice when carrying out investigations.

We also deliver skills-based workshops on conducting and managing investigations to a range of clinical and managerial audiences.

Q9. What is the difference in role between Practitioner Performance Advice and my professional regulator (the General Medical Council, General Dental Council and General Pharmaceutical Council)?

The focus of our input is to support the local management and resolution of performance concerns raised about a practitioner in the context of their employment. We provide advice to the healthcare organisation to inform their decision making, and do not have any regulatory function.

By contrast, healthcare regulators and their relevant committees have statutory powers to investigate and take action where there are concerns about the fitness to practise of a registered practitioner.

Practitioner Performance Advice work in partnership with healthcare regulators to ensure that our respective roles and activities are clear and to help ensure effective channels of communication exist at both national and local levels.

Q10. What help can Practitioner Performance Advice offer to me directly?

Whilst our services are aimed primarily at healthcare organisations, we also welcome contact from individual practitioners who may be seeking advice about performance concerns or might wish to know more about the services we provide.

We can assist practitioners contacting us in a number of ways, for example, by:

Providing general advice where a practitioner may be concerned about some aspect of their own health or clinical practice, or wishes to access advice about rebuilding their skills after a career break.

Providing general information to help a practitioner better understand some of the procedural requirements that may inform a healthcare organisation's management decisions about an individual practice.

Responding to a request for information, for example, if a practitioner wishes to check whether they are, or have been, the subject of a case at Practitioner Performance Advice. Providing information about Practitioner Performance Advice's range of services.

Q11. I have a concern about my healthcare organisation's handling of my case. Can Practitioner Performance Advice help?

If you have concerns about your healthcare organisation's handling of your case, it is important that your healthcare organisation is made aware of your concerns. Whilst Practitioner Performance Advice is unable to arbitrate on such matters, we can, where appropriate, facilitate discussion between you and your healthcare organisation in an effort to support a constructive dialogue about the issues of concern.

You should also discuss your position with your representative of your trade union or defence organisation if you are a member.

Q12. My healthcare organisation has referred me for an Practitioner Performance Advice assessment or other intervention. What does this mean?

In some cases, a healthcare organisation may seek our view on whether an assessment of a practitioner's practice would be helpful in clarifying and managing performance concerns in order to move the case to a resolution.

Our assessments are aimed at:

- Supporting the implementation of evidencebased, timely and fair management solutions to resolve concerns about performance.
- Enabling practitioners to return to safe and effective practice, where appropriate.
- Helping to ensure public protection and patient safety.



Our assessment services help to clarify and understand the performance of individual practitioners, and provide the healthcare organisation and practitioner with a sound basis upon which to bring the case towards a resolution.

Where we recommend that an assessment should be carried out we can offer to undertake one of a range of independent assessments, including, for example, clinical performance assessments and behavioural assessments. Each type of assessment is described further in the response to question 13 below. Where appropriate to the circumstances of the case, we are also able to offer access to our Professional Support and Remediation services which may follow on from a Practitioner Performance Advice assessment or local investigation or review.

Our assessment services are aimed at clarifying and understanding the performance of individual practitioners and providing healthcare organisations and practitioners with a sound basis upon which to bring the case towards a resolution.

As noted earlier, in some circumstances the healthcare organisation may be required to seek a view from Practitioner Performance Advice on whether an assessment should be carried out, specifically if they are considering taking action in relation to a practitioner under the capability procedures set out in Part IV of Maintaining High Professional Standards in the Modern NHS (applicable in England) or Part IV of NCAS Maintaining High Professional Standards in the Modern HPSS (applicable in Northern Ireland).

Our approach in each case to considering whether to recommend that an assessment should be carried out is described in our Consideration of Assessment – Practitioner Performance Advice Policy Statement which can be found on our website.

We are committed to working with both the healthcare organisation and the practitioner to help understand whether an assessment should be carried out, and if so the type of assessment that would be most appropriate to the circumstances.

With that in mind:

- we will want to hear the views of both the healthcare organisation and the practitioner before deciding whether to recommend that an assessment be undertaken
- where we recommend that an assessment should be carried out, it should be understood that this may only be one of a range of options open to the healthcare organisation and we can only proceed with the assessment once we have the explicit agreement of both the healthcare organisation and practitioner.

If an assessment is being considered in your case, we will ask your healthcare organisation to ensure that you have access to the relevant information as soon as possible, and we will also make contact with you (as well as your healthcare organisation) to inform you of our decision on whether or not an assessment is recommended, including suggested next steps.

Q13. What types of assessment do the service carry out?

The exact type of assessment we carry out will be dependent on the exact circumstances of the case. The types of assessments we carry out include the following:

Clinical performance assessments

Behavioural assessments

Clinical performance assessment

The purpose of this assessment is to:

- provide an independent view on the clinical performance of the practitioner, identifying both satisfactory practice and any areas of poor practice.
- provide information to assist the referring organisation in decisions about the next steps in their management of the case.

The assessment is carried out through a clinical assessment visit by a trained team of two clinical assessors and an Assessment and Intervention Manager. It includes:

- Clinical record review: of a sample of patient records.
- Direct observation of practice: the practitioner's normal clinical work.

• Case-based assessment: exploring clinical reasoning and decision making about the practitioner's own cases.

Clinical assessors will have relevant clinical experience in the practitioner's speciality, be familiar with the standards relating to their clinical specialty and be able to apply them to assess the performance of a peer. We also ensure that they are in good standing with the relevant professional bodies and regulators. Our assessments are underpinned by a comprehensive training programme for our assessors as well as a rigorous quality assurance framework. The result is a comprehensive report with robust, evidence-based findings and conclusions in respect of the individual's practice, which provide the basis for a clear way forward to bring the case towards a resolution.

Behavioural assessment

The purpose of this assessment is to:

- provide an independent view on the behavioural characteristics of the practitioner, including any areas which require consideration
- provide information to assist the referring organisation in decisions about the next steps in their management of the case.

Where the concerns about an individual practitioner primarily focus on their behaviours and relationships with colleagues, and where there is not misconduct requiring the use of disciplinary procedures, we may offer to undertake an assessment of the practitioner's behaviours.

The assessment includes:

- The practitioner completing two online psychometric questionnaires (the Revised NEO Personality Inventory and the Hogan Development Survey).
- The practitioner attending an all-day appointment with a behavioural assessor (an occupational psychologist). The day involves an in-depth interview, during which the assessor explores a range of aspects of the practitioner's work, including: what they do in their job, which aspects they enjoy most and least, how they approach the different aspects and demands of their role etc. This typically lasts three to four hours. There is then a break (during which the psychologist reflects on the interview) and then gives initial feedback to the practitioner.

The report that follows is used as a basis for informing next steps to address any behavioural problems or areas for development that have been identified.

Q14. What is Practitioner Performance Advice's Professional Support and Remediation (PSR) service?

Through our PSR service, Practitioner Performance Advice offers a wide range of bespoke action plans aimed at supporting healthcare organisations and practitioners to help individual practitioners return to safe and effective practice. Structured action plans are developed following a review of the particular circumstances of each case, taking into account any development needs in areas such as leadership, patient or colleague interaction or other behavioural issues, in addition to supporting the development of clinical knowledge and skills.

Practitioner Performance Advice action plans include:

Remediation **Return to work Professional development** action plans action plans action plans Where evidence Supporting a practitioner's To support a practitioner to identifying performance re-skilling and/or develop particular areas of concerns is available reintegration into clinical their practice further. either following an practice following **Practitioner Performance** a prolonged period Advice assessment or of absence (with or local assessment. without pre-existing performance concerns).

Case study

Practitioner Performance Advice work with healthcare organisations and practitioners to support the return of practitioners to safe and effective clinical practice where appropriate. This can include circumstances where Practitioner Performance Advice has undertaken an assessment or our input may follow a local investigation or review, or the involvement of another external body.

Mr A was a consultant surgeon whose practice had been found to be deficient in a number of areas following a performance assessment carried out by the General Medical Council. As a result, Mr A's clinical practice was restricted for a period of 13 months and Practitioner Performance Advice was asked by his healthcare organisation to produce an action plan aimed at addressing the areas of practice requiring remediation. These included his operative and technical skills, approach to infection control, communication with patients and leadership skills. Following Practitioner Performance Advice, Mr A was placed on a phased return to clinical practice in a host placement Trust which involved direct supervision and support from a clinical supervisor.

Practitioner Performance Advice designed a nine month action plan to provide Mr A with an opportunity to rebuild his confidence and clinical skills in a supported environment. The programme provided a clear structure for Mr A's return to

work and clinical practice, based on clear milestones for performance review and informed by the interventions within the plan to ensure a fair, evidence-based approach. The plan included an induction phase for the placement, provision for a sliding scale of supervision from an experienced senior consultant as well as protected time for regular and structured reflection, feedback and professional development activities.

Mr A completed the plan successfully, taking increasing responsibility for patient care and leadership as he worked towards a return to consultant level practice. At the conclusion of the programme, Mr A's clinical supervisor reported that Mr A was providing satisfactory care for patients expected at consultant level and that he was in a position to return to his employing Trust.

A shorter three month follow-up programme designed by Practitioner Performance Advice allowed the employing Trust to actively manage and support Mr A's reintegration to the department. This plan was also completed successfully and evidence gathered through the reintegration plan demonstrated that the concerns identified by the GMC had been successfully resolved and that Mr A was delivering the level of patient care expected of a consultant in his specialty.

Q15. How does Practitioner Performance Advice use the information it holds about me?

We will not normally share details of a case (or even confirm that Practitioner Performance Advice has a case in relation to a practitioner) other than with the healthcare organisation or the practitioner themselves.

There are, however, some limited circumstances where it may be necessary to disclose information to another party such as where there is an overriding public interest or where we are otherwise legally obliged to do so.

Further details about how we process personal information can be found on our website at www.resolution.nhs.uk

Q16. How does Practitioner Performance Advice deal with concerns raised by a whistleblower?

Practitioner Performance Advice can sometimes receive unsolicited expressions of concern about a practitioner, who may or may not be the subject of an Practitioner Performance Advice case.

These concerns might be raised by colleagues, patients or members of the public. In addition, we may receive information from a practitioner who has concerns about their healthcare organisation.

Where the individual raising the concerns is regarded as a 'whistleblower', we will advise them on directing their concerns to the relevant prescribed person or body and in a manner that is consistent with our overriding duty towards patient safety and public protection.

Q17. A Healthcare Professionals Alert Notice (HPAN) has been issued in relation to me. What does this mean?

Since April 2013, we have been responsible for issuing HPANs. The HPAN system is used to inform NHS bodies and others of healthcare professionals whose performance or conduct gives rise to concern. HPANs are usually used whilst the relevant regulator is considering the concerns, and are aimed at providing an additional safeguard during the preemployment checking process.

HPANs are issued where the information provided toP ractitioner Performance Advice indicates that patients or staff may be at significant risk of harm from inadequate or unsafe clinical practice or from inappropriate behaviour and/or there is a risk that an individual may pose a threat to patients or staff because their conduct compromises the effective functions of a team or local primary care service.

The HPAN system may also be used to notify NHS bodies and others of a bogus healthcare practitioner.

Q18. Concerns have been raised about me – what avenues of support are available to me?

We recognise that where concerns have been raised about a practitioner's work, this can be a very stressful experience for the individual concerned. We are committed to ensuring the services we offer and the way we deliver our services are sensitive to the impact on the individual about whom concerns have been raised.

Whilst Practitioner Performance Advice cannot act as a practitioner's advocate (nor do we act as the healthcare organisation's advocate), we always recommend that practitioners access appropriate and timely professional support through their defence organisation or other representative body. We would also encourage practitioners to draw on personal support that is available to them, for example, through friends or family.

The practitioner's General Practitioner can also be an important source of support.

It also worth remembering that support is available through the healthcare organisation, for example through its local occupational health and counselling services. More avenues of support may be available locally or accessed through the relevant Royal College.

We can also signpost practitioners to other possible avenues of advice and support – please get in touch with our Adviser team if you would like to explore options.

Q19. I would like to provide feedback on my experience of Practitioner Performance Advice. How can I do that?

We are committed to the continuous improvement and development of our services and we always welcome feedback – whether it relates to what we do well or where we can improve. You can provide feedback at any time to the person dealing with your case. We may also contact you to request feedback as part of the routine evaluation of our services.

If you feel unhappy about an aspect of the service we have provided in your case, please let us know and how you feel we could do things better. We would encourage you to contact the person dealing with your case in the first instance to see what can be done to resolve the matter.

If you are still not satisfied with the response you have received, you can raise your concerns through our formal complaints process – full details can be found at www.resolution.nhs.uk

To provide general feedback or suggestions about our services, please contact us on advice@resolution.nhs.uk.



For further information and to contact us

We hope this guide has been of use to you. If you would like to know more about any of the following, please speak to an Practitioner Performance Advice Adviser on 020 7811 2600:

- Your individual case
- Our services, such as assessments
 & interventions
- Avenues of support that may be available to you.

You can also visit <u>resolution.nhs.uk</u> for more information about the work of Practitioner Performance Advice.

To provide general feedback or suggestions about our services and publications, please contact us on advice@resolution.nhs.uk.

Further information about how Practitioner Performance Advice uses and shares information can be found in our privacy notice, which is published on our website. If you have any specific queries about how we use information in your case, or wish to make a request for information under the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 or Freedom of Information Act 2000, please contact our Information Governance team in the first instance on FOI@resolution.nhs.uk.

151 Buckingham Palace Road London SW1W 9SZ Telephone 020 7811 2700 Fax 020 7821 0029 DX 6611000 Victoria 91 SW

www.resolution.nhs.uk



