

THE SAS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME



Unlocking the Potential
of Speciality Doctors
and Dentists, Associate
Specialists and Staff Grades

MISSION



Enabling SAS doctors and dentists to achieve their full clinical potential.

BACKGROUND



The Scottish Health Service is known for the quality of its clinical care. Doctors and Dentists in the Specialty Doctor and Associate Specialist (SAS) grade are a vital part of the teams that enable this service delivery. Scotland has 1250 SAS doctors and dentists; some are appointed to such posts at an earlier stage in their career than those pursuing a Consultant career. It has been recognised that taking up a Consultant or SAS post should not mean cessation of career development. Rather it is envisaged that, while doctors and dentists will practice their learned competencies, they should continue to develop new skills to support changing specialist service development.

In clinical departments which are supported by SAS doctors or dentists, these individuals often deliver a significant proportion of the core clinical services. SAS doctors and dentists are often closest to understanding the practical issues affecting care delivery. The Scottish Government recognises this, and believes that the additional development of specialist skills by SAS doctors and dentists makes an enhanced contribution to resolving local service issues and enables better overall delivery of care.

AIMS



The SAS Development programme directs 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. Development of specialist skills by SAS doctors and dentists makes an enhanced contribution to resolving local service issues and enables better delivery of care.

If approved, funding is available to support costs for training, courses, salary backfill to allow the applicant to be released from their role to undergo relevant training, or allow completion of training to be eligible to apply for a Certificate of Eligibility for Specialist Registration (CESR).

FUNDING FOR FUTURE CARE



- To support a new/improved clinic.
- To support a new/improved procedural service.
- To target services with limited delivery and resultant delays in patient treatment.
- To improve knowledge for better clinical care.
- To acquire the necessary skills to ensure there is senior presence with these specialist skills.
- To enable improved medical/dental education.
- To support a new managerial role.
- To support SAS doctors who wish to achieve CESR.

OUR STRATEGY

1 Identifying a clinical need

2 Enabling a transparent process

3 Providing a network of support

4 Evidencing successful outcomes

A standardised application process is used with clear assessment criteria. Successful applicants and their clinical directors will be asked to report on the subsequent service improvements.



APPLICATION PROCESS



There is a standard and transparent process:

- All clinical staff in substantive SAS appointments are eligible to apply. Those in long term fixed term posts should discuss eligibility with their local SAS Education Adviser.
- Nationally agreed application forms are available through the [Scotland Deanery website](#) and applicants are supported in the process by SAS **Education Advisers** in each Health Board area.
- A key component of applications is the statement from the local Clinical Director on the relevance of the application to the development of improved clinical service.
- A national panel meets quarterly, (in January, April, July and October) and applies agreed criteria to assess and approve or reject applications. This Programme Board is NES-based, with representation from Directors of Medical Education (DMEs), Scottish BMA SAS, Scottish Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, and the Medical and Dental Directorates of NES.
- We assess the impact that the approved funding has made to local service issues and patient care by seeking feedback from the applicants and their teams in order that the SAS Programme can demonstrate the added benefit to Scottish Healthcare.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DAYS



Our experienced team of Education Advisers deliver development days in their local health boards, providing an opportunity for local SAS to learn, network and develop non-clinical skills; a wide range of topics and speakers are covered at each event.

SAS TRAINING CALENDAR



We organise bespoke, CPD accredited training courses for SAS doctors and dentists which are designed to meet the specific training needs highlighted by SAS themselves.

This has included training on: leadership & management, CESR workshops, court familiarisation & report writing, quality improvement, and patient safety/human factors.

You can find this online at:

www.scotlanddeanery.nhs.scot/your-development/specialist-and-associate-specialist-doctors-and-dentists/

“ Truly developmental ”

“ Useful, practical sessions ”

“ Empowering, positive & enriching ”

SCOTTISH NATIONAL SAS



A Development Day for Scottish SAS

The SAS Programme's national conference enables SAS doctors and dentists to come together for a full day of CPD accredited learning and development. An exceptionally well-received event offering a combination of plenaries and workshops - key stakeholders (including the GMC, BMA, medical defence unions, GDC and the Royal Colleges) have regularly contributed to the programme.





Dr Pinky Yadav
Specialty Doctor, Cardiology, NHS Borders
Funding for attachment in echocardiography

NHS Borders had long waiting times for both in- and out-patient Echocardiography & identified that their SAS doctor, Dr Yadav, would be ideally placed to develop this service with appropriate accredited training. Dr Yadav successfully applied for SAS Development funding to finance this. Following the curriculum of the British Society of Echocardiology (BSE), SAS funding enabled Dr Yadav to work a session each week at a large Cardiology training unit where she received hands on supervision until she achieved the level of competency required for full accreditation.

SAS funding has enabled Dr Yadav to become skilled at performing and reporting Echo independently, thus directly addressing staff shortages & reducing patient waiting times.

Specialty Doctor, Psychiatry (Substance Misuse), NHS Ayrshire & Arran
EMDR training course

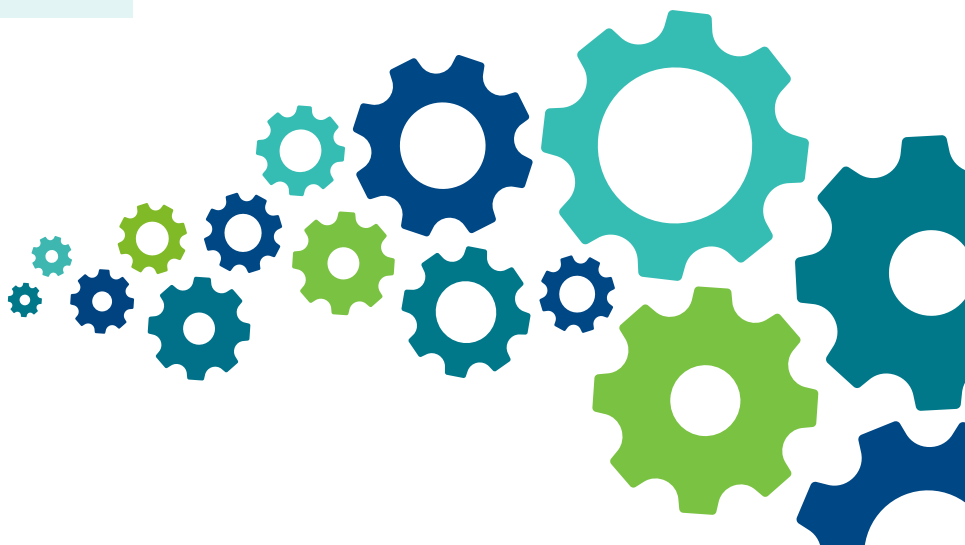
This applicant applied to the SAS Development Fund regarding a 3 day training course in EMDR, a form of trauma-focused psychotherapy that had become unavailable in his service. When his application was approved, the Fund was able to pay for a place in the course on his behalf. The learning from the course proved the springboard for the applicant to develop his own psychological interventions clinic, and he is now utilising aspects of his EMDR training to help his patients develop new coping skills and strategies for post-traumatic thoughts and emotions.

Dr Nicola Grant
Specialty Doctor, Dermatology, NHS Lothian
Introduction to Dermoscopy course

Dr Grant successfully applied for funding of a 12-week online learning course in Dermoscopy. Following her attendance, she reported increased knowledge and confidence in assessing lesions and skin cancers, and that she had been able to take on a more varied and complex caseload, enabling her department to offer a more efficient and effective service to patients. Building on the learning from two previously SAS Development-funded courses in phototherapy and skin surgery, Dr Grant's training has enabled her to help run her department's phototherapy service.

Dr MP Eugenicos
Associate Specialist & Senior Lecturer
Gastroenterology, NHS Lothian
MSc in Clinical Education

Dr Eugenicos was successful in applying for funded online study of an MSc in Clinical Education with the University of Edinburgh. Attaining this qualification allowed Dr Eugenicos to introduce novel peer-based methods of teaching and assessment for medical students, offering notable improvement in their performance. The MSc course undoubtedly helped Dr Eugenicos to further not only the quality of the education programme for students, important in the making of competent newly qualified medics, but has helped develop a competitive management plan for patients with Irritable Bowel Syndrome, a common but challenging condition.





**Associate Specialist, Community Paediatrics,
NHS Grampian
CESR top-up training attachments**

In order to make a successful application for CESR in Paediatrics, this SAS Doctor obtained expert advice on how best to address the gaps in her training and experience. With this information, she applied for SAS Development Funding in order to undertake supervised clinical attachments across 2 sub-specialty areas. The SAS Fund provided backfill funding to cover her normal service post, allowing her to be released for both of these training attachments. For each attachment, she had a named Clinical Supervisor who ensured that the required competencies were achieved. This training enabled her to complete her training and provide the evidence required to make a CESR application soon after. We are delighted that she has now been successful in achieving CESR.

**Ms Sameena Rashid, Specialty Doctor, Plastic Surgery, NHS Lanarkshire
Non CESR secondment in Plastic Surgery**

As NHS Lanarkshire had no arrangement to carry out day case plastic surgery procedures, patients were experiencing particularly long referral times. Ms Rashid applied successfully for backfill funding to allow her release into a non-CESR related clinical attachment, for training to enable her to develop an enhanced day case service for excision and biopsy of skin cancer lesions. By receiving focused one-on-one training from a consultant plastic surgeon until she had achieved competency, she is now trained to independently carry out her own theatre lists and clinics in plastic surgery, significantly reducing the wait time for patient referral without the cost of hiring external locums.

**Mr Gavin Wilson
Specialty Doctor, Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery,
NHS Forth Valley
Postgraduate Diploma in Conscious Sedation**

Mr Wilson was successful in applying for funding to pay for a Conscious Sedation in Dentistry course with the University of Newcastle, allowing the Development Programme to cover his course fees. Formally attaining this qualification allowed Mr Wilson to begin independently operating sedation sessions in his service, reducing pressure on their own waiting times as well as their demand on general anaesthetics. He has since obtained a specialty training post in oral surgery, and reports that the diploma undoubtedly helped him in obtaining a training place in a very competitive specialty.

Just some of the many examples of the training that have been supported to date!



Background

Currently there is a significant national shortage of breast radiologists. Most Health Boards in Scotland are seeing large numbers of new breast referrals in waiting list clinics performed in the evenings and weekends often not in their local area and at significant additional cost.

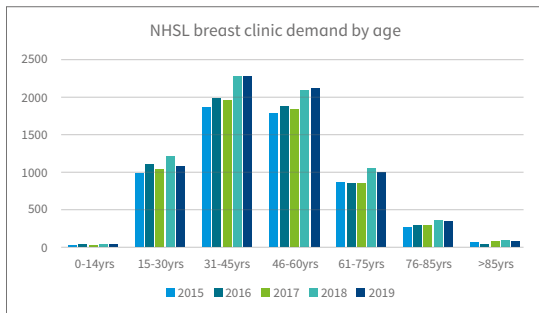


Figure 1: Five year review of breast clinic referrals by age.

Audit of referrals to breast clinics in NHS Lanarkshire confirmed increasing numbers of referrals requiring assessment across all age groups. Persistent high numbers of referrals are seen in the younger age groups-Figure 1. Patients under 40 do not routinely undergo mammography as part of their assessment but require examination and often breast ultrasound.

Southmead Hospital in Bristol developed a training course for non-radiologists to develop enhanced skills in performing breast ultrasound and ultrasound guided biopsies. This model was felt to be particularly relevant to our service in Lanarkshire where we have 2 very experienced specialty doctors who have a wide range of diagnostic experience and who work closely with our existing radiology team.

Method

An application was made to the SAS development fund to support Dr Rachel Leach and Dr Katharin MacBain to pursue breast ultrasound training. Initial training was a 2 day course at Southmead Hospital Bristol.

Day one: physics of ultrasound, the principles of ultrasound in breast assessment, and criteria for assessment and investigation of breast lesions.



Dr Rachel Leach with Consultant radiologist mentor Dr Karen Gray.

Day two: practical training in use of the ultrasound machine and performing guided aspiration and biopsy.

The next phase of training was a period of mentored practical training and completion of a log book of 100 breast ultrasound cases to include a range of pathology, guided cyst aspirations and guided core biopsies.



Dr Katharin MacBain with Consultant Radiologist mentor Dr Barbara Macpherson.

SAS development funding covered the cost of secondment out of clinics to undergo this training. Logbooks were submitted for marking in 2019 and assessed as fulfilling the course criteria successfully. The final assessment was back at Southmead Hospital and covered practical use of the ultrasound machine to obtain optimum imaging, then an OSCE exam of ultrasound images to be discussed graded and appropriate intervention discussed. Drs Leach and MacBain were both successful in completing this assessment.

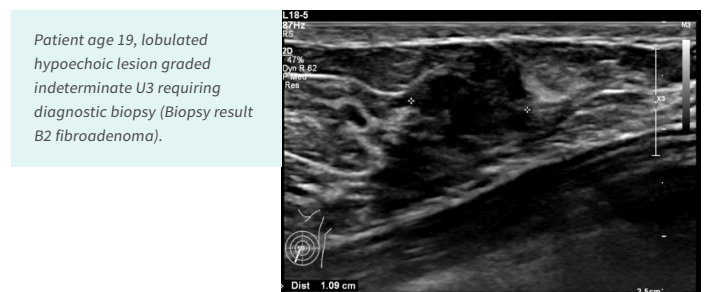
Results

Low risk one stop clinics have now been established in two hospitals in Lanarkshire run by Dr Leach and Dr MacBain. These are now routinely processing 18-24 young low risk patients per week. As anticipated the clinic appointments allow full triple assessment of breast symptoms (examination, imaging and biopsy if required) and the average time patients are in the clinic is 20 minutes. This compares favourably with the total time in clinic of 1.5-2 hours in the traditional model of patients attending for examination, moving to the x-ray department for imaging then back to the outpatient clinic to be given results.

Ultrasound scans are performed, graded and reported and any biopsies required (following the Association of Breast Surgery and Royal College for Radiologists guidelines) are performed.



Patient age 24, well defined oval hypoechoic lesion graded U2 meeting Stavros criteria for benign fibroadenoma, not requiring diagnostic biopsy as patient under 25.



Patient age 19, lobulated hypoechoic lesion graded indeterminate U3 requiring diagnostic biopsy (Biopsy result B2 fibroadenoma).

There is improved continuity of care with ultrasound being performed by the examining clinician, allowing ongoing explanation of investigations and an opportunity to consolidate patient reassurance with demonstration of the ultrasound findings. This initiative also provides flexibility of staff allowing cover for clinics when radiologists are not available and therefore maximising clinic throughput particularly of urgent GP referrals.

Conclusion

To date this project has been a success developing the role of experienced specialty doctors, improving the clinic experience for a cohort of young low risk breast patients and optimising use of resources to allow timely full assessment of new GP referrals.

Co authors: Dr Katharin MacBain Specialty Doctor, Miss Juliette Murray Consultant Surgeon, Dr Karen Gray Consultant Radiologist, Dr Barbara Macpherson Consultant Radiologist, Dr Barbara Hamilton Consultant Radiologist, Anne Lang Consultant Radiographer NHS Lanarkshire Breast Surgery Department.

SAS DEVELOPMENT NETWORK



Dr Lynne Meekison, SAS Associate Postgraduate Dean, provides leadership and direction for the programme as a whole (pictured with SAS Education Advisers and SAS Development Programme team, Sept 2019)

SAS EDUCATION ADVISER

Fostering a culture of skills development

A national network of SAS Education Advisers, themselves SAS doctors or dentists, are based in each of the Territorial Health Boards. Each SAS Education Adviser aims to support substantive SAS doctors and dentists in their professional development needs and to promote the recognition of SAS skills and their development, identifying and supporting those well placed to develop new roles for the benefit of clinical service, working with Directors of Medical Education and Service Leads as appropriate.

They guide local SAS doctors and dentists in making the best use of this funding, organise local training days and will also be a source of contact at regional and national levels.

EVIDENCING IMPROVEMENT

In order to support the evaluation of this investment in development, advisers will be the key contact for the gathering of local information about the progress and outcome of each application.

CONTACT US

NHS Education for Scotland
3rd Floor, 2 Central Quay
89 Hydepark Street
Glasgow
G3 8BW

Email: SASDevelopment@nes.scot.nhs.uk

Telephone: 0141 223 1509

Contact details for your local SAS Education Adviser can be found on our website:



[www.scotlanddeanery.nhs.scot/
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associate-specialist-doctors-and-
dentists/](http://www.scotlanddeanery.nhs.scot/your-development/specialist-and-associate-specialist-doctors-and-dentists/)

