



Association for
Palliative Medicine
Of Great Britain and Ireland



North West Coast
Clinical Networks

Training & Development Framework

for

**Staff Grade, Associate Specialist (SAS) &
Specialty (SAS) and Specialist Doctors**

working in

Palliative Medicine

Revised 2014, 2018, 2020, 2021 and 2022

Endorsed by the Association of Palliative Medicine SAS Committee, the Executive Board and the Specialty Advisory Committee for Palliative Medicine in June 2021

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The document has been reviewed and endorsed by the Association of Palliative Medicine SAS Committee, the Executive Board and the Speciality Advisory Committee for Palliative Medicine in June 2021.

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First written in 2012 and all subsequent revisions undertaken by Dr Helen Bonwick

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2. BACKGROUND

Speciality doctors, staff grade and associate specialist medical staff (SAS Doctors) are an important part of the palliative care workforce.

There are between 20 – 25 SAS doctors who work within Cheshire and Merseyside in Palliative Care. The proportion of SAS and Locally employed (LE) doctors working in all specialities is 20 - 25% from the GMC survey published in January 2020.¹ Most SAS and LE doctors working in palliative care are delivering care within the hospice sector. For the purposes of this development process, the SAS doctors will be defined as working for more than two sessions in palliative care who have a speciality doctor, staff grade or associate specialist doctor contract.

The educational development of this group of doctors is essential to maintain competence and allow for the delivery of care to the highest standard. There is also a need to ensure that the workforce is valued to improve retention within the speciality.

There is evidence from around the country that education plays an important part in the recruitment and retention of SAS doctors.² There are innovative initiatives which allow this group of doctors to develop the skills, knowledge and competencies to enhance their patient care, role in the education of others and management of services.³

One of the challenges is that the SAS doctors have different job plans and experience, so creating a development process needs to account for this. The rationale for being employed as an SAS doctor varies widely which may then influence their career progression.

There have been national initiatives to try and improve the support and development of SAS doctors across the country in all specialities. These include the SAS Charter⁴, Maximising the Potential⁵, SAS Charter Toolkit⁶ for implementation and the SAS Charter monitoring tool.⁷

The idea for a Development framework was conceived in 2003 and was part of a palliative care leadership initiative within in the Merseyside and Cheshire region. An action learning set which followed this process enabled further development . The Development programme has been presented to the Greater Manchester and Eastern Cheshire Strategic Clinical Network and been endorsed in May 2019.⁸

3. DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (Years 1-4 in employment)

This suggested educational and development programme has utilised some elements of the speciality registrars training programme from Cheshire and Merseyside. The modifications made have taken into account the varied SAS roles. The development programme would be undertaken on a pro rata basis for each doctor. It is a suggested framework and development may be supported in a different order, if this is more appropriate to the individual doctor.

It is appreciated that role of each SAS doctor is different, and their role descriptions and job plan will vary as will their level of clinical experience. This document should be used as guidance by the SAS doctor and their educational supervisor and adapted according to their aspirations, previous experiences and employing organisational objectives. It is expected that all SAS doctors will have an appropriately trained educational supervisor allocated to them as soon as possible after commencing their employment. Some SAS doctors may choose to concentrate on some elements of the programme rather than others.

This development programme will help a SAS doctor who may wish to work towards making a Certificate of Eligibility for Specialist Registration (CESR) application. It is not the only part of the process and anyone in this grade who is considering making an application are strongly advised to access advice from the Training Programme Director (Dr Andrew Khodabukus or Dr Andrew Fletcher), a senior doctor who has experience of supporting a doctor making a submission or a SAS doctor who has had a successful application.

If the SAS doctor is planning to make a CESR application they may wish to use the e portfolio process to log information, this may be accessed by paying a yearly fee to the JRCPTB.⁹

This development programme may be used as part of the formal appraisal and revalidation process and may be part of a professional development programme. As such this development process should be used alongside the Appraisal Metrics for Consultants and SAS doctors in Specialist Palliative Care.¹⁰

A list of appropriate courses is listed in appendix 1. The list is not exhaustive and contains suggestions only. These courses will be reviewed and updated on a yearly basis.

It would be ideal if the SAS doctor also has the opportunity to work in other clinical settings, either by working in different sectors or settings as part of a rotation. This would allow them to experience care in other units or health sectors. This would not be exclusive to those who wished to submit a CESR application but should be accessible to all SAS doctors who feel this would aid their development. This would be providing this could be accommodated within the local organisations. This process has been achieved within Cheshire and Merseyside on a pilot basis and is hoped to be extended

YEAR ONE

CLINICAL

1. Manage inpatients with senior supervision (depending upon clinical experience)
2. Review of day therapy patients with senior supervision (depending upon clinical experience)
3. Attend and participate in inpatient MDT meetings

EDUCATION

1. Undertake a 2-day Advanced Communication Skills (formerly CONNECTED course)
2. Attend regional Specialist Palliative Care monthly teaching as often as possible (this also serves to gain the evidence for parts of the curriculum)
3. If wanted attend Specialist Registrar Course, or Masters in Advanced Practice¹¹ September – January. This would include the Advanced Communication skills course
4. Undertake Opening the Spiritual Gate; either a face to face or e-learning course¹²

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT AND AUDIT

1. Attend Pallaborative NW Audit meetings and if possible, participate in an audit during that year¹³
2. Take part in internal audit within working environment
3. To attend the Pallaborative Essential skills for Audit teaching (3 half days and one full day over the next 2 years¹⁴)

SUPERVISION

1. Have regular meetings with an educational supervisor (suggested at least 4 times a year)
2. Continue to maintain an e-portfolio (using the curriculum as a guide) if appropriate
3. Gain appropriately supervised clinical skills and knowledge, may include case based discussions and reflection on learning

YEAR TWO

CLINICAL

1. Continue to gain clinical experience in managing patients (for example day therapy, outpatients, domiciliary visits) alongside inpatient experience
2. Commence supervised outpatient clinics
3. Support other trainees as appropriate

EDUCATION

1. Attend an Advanced Symptom Control Course or equivalent course^{13,14}
2. Attend a Training the Teachers course or equivalent either in year two or three depending upon the amount of teaching they undertake¹⁵
3. Attend NWCLC Advance Care Planning Study day¹⁶
4. Continue to attend regional teaching sessions if possible
5. Attend a relevant research course¹⁷
6. Complete an equality and diversity course¹⁸
7. Consider commencing Diploma or Masters

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT AND AUDIT

1. Undertake an audit or quality improvement project in own working environment
2. Participate in the regional audit process.¹²

TEACHING

1. Participate in teaching of medical students
2. Participate in teaching of other health care professionals
3. Possible co-facilitation of medical student communication skills courses. This would be after attending an advanced communication skills course and observing teaching communication skills to the medical students.

YEAR THREE

CLINICAL
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As previous years 2. Work with less supervision and more autonomy depending on clinical experience 3. Support, supervise and mentor trainees or less experienced SAS doctors 4. Work in all health care settings if possible, community; hospice &/or hospital sector
EDUCATION
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attend Training the Teachers course if not already attended one¹⁶ 2. Attend Training the Trainers course for delivery of communication skills if available, and if the SAS doctor facilitates communication skills courses on a regular basis¹⁹
QUALITY IMPROVEMENT AND AUDIT
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to participate in the regional audit process – to be an active member in writing publications and posters 2. Participate in internal audits within the working environment
TEACHING
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide teaching and mentorship to medical students as appropriate 2. Participate in appropriate teaching within the hospice unit or other sectors
MANAGEMENT
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be involved in service innovation projects within the workplace 2. Be involved in interviewing other SAS doctors if appropriate

YEAR FOUR

CLINICAL
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As previous years 2. Work more autonomously and lead some clinical meetings (for example MDT meetings)
EDUCATION
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attend a clinical and/or educational supervision course RCP or local equivalent 2. Attend leadership/management course²⁰ 3. Attend a national/international conference²¹
QUALITY IMPROVEMENT AND AUDIT
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to participate in the regional audit process – to be an active member in writing publications and posters 2. Participate in internal audits within the working environment
TEACHING
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to participate in teaching medical students 2. Continue to participate in teaching other health care professionals as appropriate
MANAGEMENT
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To continue to attend appropriate management meetings 2. To participate or lead innovation or service improvement projects
RESEARCH
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participate in research if possible

4. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Sources of advice and support

The SAS doctor should be supported by their educational supervisor but also may wish to seek advice from other SAS doctors. The Training Programme Director for Palliative Medicine in Mersey region (Dr Andrew Khodabukus, Andrew.Khodabukus@liverpoolft.nhs.uk) is also available for advice and support.

The SAS doctor should also be supported by the SAS lead within their hospital Trust or if they work predominately within the hospice or community they have access to the SAS Lead for palliative medicine (Dr Helen Bonwick, helen.bonwick@mariecurie.org.uk or helen.bonwick@lhch.nhs.uk) for Merseyside and Cheshire and Dr Alison Bacon Alison.bacon@stcatherines.co.uk covering the North West coast area)

If the SAS doctor is a member of the Association of Palliative Medicine, they may also use the APM SAS and Hospice Doctors committee for advice (www.apmonline.org).

Funding

Each SAS doctor should have a study leave budget from their employer to support their continued professional development. The amount varies between employers and ideally should be discussed with their educational supervisor and lead clinician

If additional funding is required there is access to the Health Education England North West SAS Development Fund, this is via an application process (<http://www.nwpgmd.nhs.uk/sas-doctors/applying-sas-development-fund>). This is available to those doctors who are employed under national terms and conditions, although they do not have to have a NHS contract.

SAS doctors who work in a hospice may be able to apply to Hospice UK for a professional development grant (www.hospiceuk.org/what-we-offer/grants).

Courses and learning

During the four years the SAS doctor may consider studying for a Postgraduate Certificate or Masters in palliative and end of life care, education, leadership or ethics

Level 7 Modules – Palliative & End of Life Care²²

Postgraduate Certificate in Integrated Palliative & End of Life Care²³

Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching & Learning in Clinical Practice²⁴

Masters in Palliative Care / Integrated Palliative & End of Life Care²⁵

Masters in the Ethics of Palliative and End of Life Care²⁶

5. FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

Initial discussions are taking place within the region regarding rotational posts to increase clinical experience in different sectors. As a pilot there has been a rotation between SAS Doctors at Willowbrook Hospice and Clatterbridge Cancer Centre. This will then form the basis of a wider adaptation of rotational posts within the region. This would allow the SAS doctor to gain experience in another inpatient unit, but also within the other sectors of hospital and community palliative medicine. This would promote cross sector and collaborative working. Ultimately this would improve knowledge and clinical skills and thus allow the delivery of higher quality care to the patients.

The Development Guide would be used as the basis for career progression within the SAS and newly created Specialist Doctor role.²⁷

6. REFERENCES

- ¹[Survey of specialty and associate specialist and locally employed doctors - GMC \(gmc-uk.org\)](https://www.gmc-uk.org/specialty-and-specialists/specialty-and-specialists.aspx)
- ²SAS Development and Retention Programme. Toolkit for implementation 2018
www.hee.nhs.uk
- ³SAS Charter Joint Publication with NHS England, Academy of Royal Medical Colleges and the British Medical Association 2014 www.bma.org.uk
- ⁴Maximising the Potential – essential measures to support SAS doctors January 2019
www.hee.nhs.uk
- ⁵[SAS Charter Toolkit for implementation](#)
- ⁶[SAS Charter monitoring tool](#)
- ⁷Greater Manchester and Eastern Cheshire Strategic Clinical Network – Training and Development Framework for SAS Doctors working in Specialist Palliative Care
- ⁸JRCPTB e-portfolio www.jrcptb.org.uk/eportfolio-information
- ⁹Appraisal Metrics for Consultants and SSAS doctors in Specialist Palliative Care
www.apmonline.org
- ¹⁰Masters in Palliative care MS160 University of Liverpool
- ¹¹Opening the Spiritual Gate www.openingthespiritualgate.net
- ¹²Cheshire and Merseyside Palliative Care Audit Group www.pallaborative.org.uk
- ¹³Oxford Advance Symptom Control Course sobelleducation.org.uk/courses
- ¹⁴Guildford Symptom Control course www.apmonline.org/documents
- ¹⁵Training the Teachers Course www.pcil.org.uk
- ¹⁶North West Coast Learning Collaborative Advance Care Planning Study day
www.nwclearningcollaborative.org.uk
<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/clinical-research>
- ¹⁷<https://www.nihr.ac.uk/health-and-care-professionals/learning-and-support/good-clinical-practice.htm>
- ¹⁸Equality and Diversity www.nwpgmd.nhs.uk
- ¹⁹Train the Trainers for Communication Skills www.pcil.org.uk
- ²⁰Leadership & Management Courses www.rcplondon.ac.uk / www.nwpgmd.nhs.uk / www.edgehill.ac.uk / www.keele.ac.uk / leadership course for SAS doctors run by Marie Curie Edinburgh Hospice
- ²¹www.apmonline.org / www.appm.org.uk / www.eapcnet.eu
- ²²Level 7 Palliative & End of Life Care Modules www.pcil.org.uk / www.edeghill.ac.uk
- ²³PGCert Integrated Palliative & End of Life Care www.edgehill.ac.uk
- ²⁴PGCert Teaching & Learning in Clinical Practice www.edgehill.ac.uk
- ²⁵MSc Palliative Care www.csi.kcl.ac.uk / www.cardiff.ac.uk MSc Integrated Palliative & End of Life Care www.edgehill.ac.uk
- ²⁶MA Ethics Palliative & End of Life Care www.keele.ac.uk
- ²⁷<https://www.nhsemployers.org/articles/new-specialist-grade-sas-2021>

7. APPENDIX 1 COURSES

The list is not exhaustive but suggests some courses which may be useful, there may be other courses which are just as applicable for development

TOPIC	COURSE
Clinical	<p>Health Education England North West Palliative Medicine Regional Teaching (bimonthly)</p> <p>Advanced Communication Skills Training (e.g. Maguire Unit, Christie, Palliative Care Institute, Liverpool, Terence Burgess Education Centre and Cheshire End of Life Partnership)</p> <p>Opening the Spiritual Gate</p> <p>Oxford or Guildford Advanced Pain and Symptom Management Courses</p> <p>Strathcarron Hospice Annual Conference</p> <p>APM Supportive and Palliative Care Conference/ Palliative Care Congress</p> <p>Hospice UK Conference</p> <p>APM Ethics Study Day – twice yearly</p> <p>APM SAS Study Days - yearly</p> <p>APM courses are available to non-members</p> <p>Essential Skills for Audit run by the Pallaborative NW group</p>
Leadership and Management	<p>RCP Individual as Leader/ Organisational Leadership courses</p> <p>Keele Advanced Leadership Course for SAS Doctors</p> <p>St Christopher's Hospice Management Course for StRs and SAS Doctors in Palliative Medicine</p> <p>SAS Doctors Leadership Course Marie Curie Edinburgh (yearly)</p>

Specialty Certificate Examination Course	St Gemma's Hospice SCE Revision Course (annually September)
Research Methods courses	NIHR run free courses which are accredited by them which are either online or face to face
Teaching	<p>RCP Educational Supervisor workshop</p> <p>RCP Physicians as Educators courses</p> <p>Edge Hill Postgraduate Certificate in Workplace-Based Medical Education</p> <p>Liverpool Palliative Care Institute Training for Teachers in Palliative Care Foundation and Masterclass Course (annually October)</p>
Other Diplomas and Masters degrees	<p>Diploma and MSc in Palliative Medicine, Cardiff University</p> <p>Diploma and MSc in Palliative Care, Newcastle University</p> <p>Diploma and MSc in Palliative Care, St Christopher's Hospice/ Kings College, London</p>
E Learning e-ELCA (end of life care for all)	<p>160 sessions grouped into nine modules which are Advance Care Planning, Assessment, Communication Skills, Symptom Management, Social Care, Spirituality, Integrating learning, Bereavement and Specialist content</p> <p>BMJ Learning and doctors</p>
Local SAS courses	List of various courses available on the Health Education England North West

CESR courses and information	General Medical Council Royal College of Physicians
Other organisations which offer training and teaching locally	<p>Queenscourt Hospice www.queenscourt.org.uk</p> <p>End of Life Partnership info@eolp.org.uk</p> <p>Palliative Care Institute www.pcil.org.uk</p> <p>St Catherine's Hospice https://www.stcatherines.co.uk/resources-training/</p>

8. FURTHER RESOURCES

1. SAS development and retention programme: Toolkit for implementation. Health Education England (March 2018).
<https://www.hee.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/documents/SAS%20retention%20toolkit%20WEB.pdf>
2. The Consensus Statement on the Role of the Doctor. Chief Medical Officers of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, Association of UK University Hospitals, British Medical Association, Conference of Postgraduate Medical Deans, General Medical Council, King's Fund, Medical Schools Council, NHS Employers and NHS Health Education England (2014).
<https://www.medschools.ac.uk/media/1922/role-of-the-doctor-consensus-statement.pdf>
3. Guidance on safe medical staffing. Royal College of Physicians (July 2018).
<https://www.rcplondon.ac.uk/projects/outputs/safe-medical-staffing>
4. Appraisal metrics for Consultants and SSAS doctors in Specialist Palliative Care. Association for Palliative Medicine (March 2017). <https://apmonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Appraisal-Metrics-for-Consultants-and-SSAS-Doctors-in-Specialist-Palliative-Care-March-2017.pdf>
5. Guidance template for the development of autonomous practice for SAS doctors and dentists. British Medical Association (2015).
6. <https://www.bma.org.uk/advice/employment/contracts/sas-contracts/autonomy-for-sas-grade-doctors/introduction>
7. Maximising the Potential: Essential Measures to support SAS Doctors. Health Education England and NHS Improvement (February 2019).
https://www.hee.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/documents/SAS_Report_Web.pdf
8. A charter for staff and associate specialist and specialty doctors. British Medical Association (2014).
<https://www.bma.org.uk/advice/employment/contracts/sas-contracts/sas-charters>
9. SAS Doctor Development: Summary of Resources and Further Work. British Medical Association (February 2017)
<https://www.bma.org.uk/advice/career/progress-your-career/sas-doctor-development>
10. SAS Charter Evaluation and Monitoring resources. NHS Employers (November 2018)
<https://www.nhsemployers.org/news/2018/11/sas-charter-evaluation-and-monitoring>
11. <http://www.nihr.ac.uk>
12. SAS doctor strategy 2022-24. Royal College of Physicians
13. <http://www.nhsemployers.org/articles/new-specialist-grade-sas-2021>
14. <http://www.bma.org.uk/the-2021-specialist-grade-explained>.

9. USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS

* Association for Palliative Medicine SAS Committee

www.apmonline.org

* Health Education England North West Palliative Medicine Regional Teaching

henwpalliativemedicine@gmail.com

* Training Programme Director for Palliative Medicine (Merseyside and Cheshire)

https://www.nwpgmd.nhs.uk/Specialty_Schools/Medicine/Palliative_Medicine/Mersey

* Pallaborative North West (formerly Cheshire and Merseyside Palliative and End of Life Care Network Audit Group) <https://pallaborative.org.uk/>

* Health Education England North West SAS Team

sasdoctors. NW@hee.nhs.uk

Weblinks correct as of March 2022