



# Ministry of JUSTICE

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BY E-MAIL

To: All crematoria, medical referees  
and deputy medical referees

13 December 2012

Dear colleagues

## **Crematorium medical referees and deputies and GMC revalidation**

I am writing to clarify the position for cremation authorities and crematorium medical referees and deputy referees regarding the General Medical Council (GMC) licence to practise and the current programme of revalidation which the GMC is taking forward. I also wish to provide some guidance for medical referees and deputies who are retired from clinical practice and who wish to undertake revalidation so as to continue in post as referees.

As you know, under Regulations 2 and 7(1) of the Cremation Regulations 2008, to be appointed as a medical referee or deputy medical referee, a doctor must have been a fully registered medical practitioner for at least five years and must hold a licence to practise. The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) requires a medical referee or deputy to continue to hold a current licence to practise in order to carry out his or her statutory responsibilities. To retain a licence to practise, doctors will now need to undertake GMC revalidation. Cremation authorities must ensure that their medical referees continue to hold a licence to practise.

For doctors who are in practice, revalidation is naturally associated with their main professional activity. However, we appreciate that many medical referees and deputy referees are retired from clinical practice, and we greatly value the contribution that doctors who are otherwise retired continue to make by way of their work in evaluating applications and authorising cremations.

We have contacted the GMC to seek guidance to assist retired doctors who wish to undertake revalidation so as to continue as medical referees. The GMC are aware that some doctors wishing to revalidate will not now be members of a responsible organisation or be under the supervision of a reporting officer. The GMC ask doctors in this situation to contact them so that other arrangements can be made to enable them to be revalidated.

The GMC ask doctors to contact them through the doctor's GMC Online Account, if the doctor has one (if not, guidance on setting up an account can be found via this link to the GMC website:

[http://www.gmc-uk.org/doctors/information\\_for\\_doctors/gmconlinehelp.asp](http://www.gmc-uk.org/doctors/information_for_doctors/gmconlinehelp.asp) )

Alternatively, doctors can telephone the GMC revalidation team on **0161 923 6277** or **0161 923 6602** to make arrangements for revalidation.

Much further information on revalidation is available on the GMC website at:

<http://www.gmc-uk.org/doctors/revalidation.asp>

I hope this information is helpful. If you have any queries, please contact Barrie Thurlow in my team (020 3334 6406; [barrie.thurlow@justice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:barrie.thurlow@justice.gsi.gov.uk)).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Judith Bernstein', written in a cursive style.

**Judith Bernstein**

Head of Coroners, Burials, Cremation and Inquiries Policy Team