



Code of Good Practice

The National Association of Sessional GPs (NASGP) has a continued aim to foster good relationships between all who work in general practice and in doing so promote high standards of medical care. As an integral part of these aims, the NASGP has detailed its Code of Good Practice which includes endorsing the General Medical Council's guidance contained in 'Good medical practice'. Bearing this guidance and our Code of Good Practice in mind, it is hoped all in general practice can work towards meeting these aims.

The NASGP acknowledges that there are some established core principles that it supports, namely that:

- Patients have a right to receive high standards of care from all doctors
- Doctors have a professional responsibility to maintain a high standard of knowledge and skills
- Doctors have a responsibility to uphold standards of professional and personal conduct
- Doctors are individually accountable for their actions
- The quality of care delivered depends as much on robust systems of organisation and communication as it does on the performance of individuals.

In addition The National Association of Sessional GPs believes

- Sessional GPs should be able to demonstrate, when asked to do so, their legal eligibility to work, their current full registration with the GMC, their inclusion on the Primary Medical Performers list and membership of a medical defence organisation
- Sessional GPs should be valued as providers of general medical services
- They should be appropriately and promptly remunerated for all aspects of the work they do
- Practices and their staff have a responsibility to facilitate the delivery of a high standard of care by
 - being well organised, and by ensuring consulting rooms are appropriately equipped and furnished
 - providing adequate up to date information, such as that contained in the NASGP Standardised Practice Induction Pack
 - supporting Sessional GPs, whether employed or self-employed, in their work, as they do other GPs
 - supporting Sessional GPs in their continuing professional development and appraisal by including them in practice educational meetings, significant event audits and supporting their efforts to evaluate their performance through audit, surveys and peer feedback
- Practices and all GPs have a responsibility to
 - ensure they communicate clearly and effectively
 - ensure Sessional GPs are able to use computer systems securely, effectively and, appropriately for that practice
- Doctors and practice staff should not make any patient doubt a colleague's professional ability by making unsustainable remarks about them.
- Sessional GPs' flexibility and adaptability are key strengths which should not be abused or exploited
- Both parties should formally agree terms of employment. We advise the use of locum booking forms.
- All parties must recognise their reciprocal responsibilities when booking and cancelling work
- Appointment intervals of ten minutes are desirable to provide a high standard of care
- Sessional GPs should be invited to attend practice meetings on clinical issues and service provision
- They should, if required, participate fully in the practice complaints system
- There should be equal opportunities for access to and funding of continuous medical education and annual appraisal for all general practitioners
- GP tutors should be available to support all GPs and facilitate learner centred personal education plans

Sessional GPs are referred to the General Medical Council's guidance booklet, Good Medical Practice (2001), for further information. The NASGP website (www.nasgp.org.uk) also provides further guidance for practices and Sessional GPs.