



# ***NASGP allied* Sessional GP Group Scheme - aSGPG**

## **Pilot**

### *Providing support to local Sessional GP groups*

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aSGPG Pilot

## aSGPG

Dear group leader or *potential* group leader,

We would like to introduce you to a new scheme from the NASGP and to invite you to apply to pilot the **NASGP's allied Sessional GP Group Scheme (aSGPG)**. The scheme gives a budget to each aSGPG whilst taking over many of the management aspects of running the group such as managing its database, accounting and banking issues and data protection, whilst still allowing the group the same full control. It also gives an opportunity to feed into the NASGP's role as a representative organisation.

Benefits of the scheme include:

### Leadership/management

- Income
  - For every member over a minimum number of 5, we will allocate you a budget of £20 for 2009-10, and plan to increase this amount in subsequent years, depending on the success of the scheme. It will be entirely up to you and your group what you spend the money on – all you have to do is to state to us who you want the cheque made payable to. All we insist upon is that, once a year, you declare your expenditure and income to your group and present it as part of your personal annual NHS appraisal discussion.
    - Once the scheme is established, a member's membership fee becomes linked to that group's budget immediately.
      - A member's NASGP membership fee can only be allocated once per year to any group and is not transferable once allocated.
      - For existing or new groups, in the pilot phase, members who've paid their annual fee within the previous 6 months can still have their fee allocated to that group.
- Invoicing
  - If you need to collect a payment from, for example, a drug company or a local postgraduate centre, we can handle the invoicing/banking etc on your behalf.
- Banking
  - You won't need to go through the hassle of setting up and managing a bank account on behalf of your group. Any cheques that may need to be made payable to you, simply ask to be made to 'National Association of Sessional GPs' or, easier still, send us an email and we'll do it for you! All funds from these

will be held by the NASGP and credited to your budget. Your group's budget will be displayed in your group's control panel, accessible by the group's nominated leader via the NASGP website.

- For purposes of the pilot, this will initially be performed 'off line'

#### • Spending

- The only limitations on what you can spend your budget will be determined by you and your group. Suggestions include:
  - IT equipment (laptop/projector)
  - Stationery
  - Attendance at annual NASGP Representatives Meeting
  - Web-design
  - Speaker meetings
    - Catering
    - rental
  - Annual party
  - Chairman fees
  - Research
  - Attendance at conferences
  - Chairman Honorarium/remuneration
  - NASGP membership
  - Donated back to NASGP
  - Practice Packs
  - Annually nominated NASGP charity e.g. Amnesty International

#### • Accounts

- All payments to and from the groups budget will be visible from your control panel, and a formal report can be downloaded as often as you like\* to produce for your group's benefit.
  - \*Pilot – upon request
- Corporation tax:

NASGP Limited is a company limited by guarantee and has obtained mutual trading status with HMRC and is therefore not liable to corporation tax on any profits. This status is achieved as all profits are applied for the benefit of its members.

  - *It is proposed that each allied group would be a separate legal entity (a members' club) and as such each group would need to demonstrate that it too applied all its income for the benefit of its members in order to avoid a liability to corporation tax on any profits. It is proposed that HMRC clearance is requested for one group based on a standard constitution and accompanying letter to HMRC. Assuming this is successful this template can then be used by new groups to seek their own approval as well.*

- Data Protection Act
  - If you run a group you will no doubt be aware that you will most likely need to be registered with the Data Protection Act, and so will also be associated with the cost and form-filling involved. By being a member of the scheme, you won't need to hold member's data as this will be covered by the NASGP's registration.
  
- Probity
  - Because you're a GP we know that every year you will undergo NHS appraisal and, in time, your revalidation, and will necessarily discuss your leadership of your group as part of this. We also ask you to declare your financial activities with your group at least once a year.
  
- Membership
  - All your members will be NASGP members, so from your 'control panel'\* you can email them all individually or as a group, or print off labels for envelopes or merge their address for letters.
    - \*pilot – we will provide this manually
  - Your list of members will be accessible around the clock from any PC – you'll have full control over the membership of your group, as a member can only be allocated to your group once you accept them via your control panel. Should a member then leave your group, simply de-select them from your list\*.
    - \*pilot – we will do this manually for you.
  - If you don't already have one, we will create a simple website for you and register the domain of your choice for you to allow you and your group to have its own email and web address.
  
- Representation
  - All groups with 20 or more members will be given a place on the NASGP Steering Group. Not only will this allow the group to influence the way the NASGP is run but also give local members a voice at a national level. Once we have around 5 aSGPGs with appropriate membership we will hold an NASGP Representatives Meeting in London.

## Members

- They'll belong to a group with the potential to access larger financial resources.
- On joining NASGP, they'll be offered a list of the closest groups (based on postcode) for them to apply to\*.
  - \*Pilot – will be done manually
- On joining NASGP, they can manually select online the list of groups – perhaps after being prompted by you – and select the appropriate one to apply to.
- NASGP membership

- We've provided an information leaflet for you to help inform your members - see below Appendix 1.

## **T&Cs**

- All your members must belong to the NASGP.
- You must have a minimum of 5 members
- You must present your group's financial activity to all members at least once a year.
- You are a GP and the elected representative of your group.
- All income must be applied to the benefit of the members.
- You must sign a legal disclaimer
  - accepting that the NASGP takes no responsibility in any way for the conduct of you or any of its members.
  - That we accept no financial liability whatsoever for your group.
- Sample group constitutions can be found on the NASGP website

## Appendix 1 – letter to potential members

### First line of letter for existing groups:

Our Sessional GP Group is joining the new pilot scheme launched by the NASGP to support local Sessional GP Groups – the ***allied* Sessional GP Group scheme**.

### First line of letter for new groups:

I have decided to pilot a new scheme launched by the NASGP to support local Sessional GP Groups – the ***allied* Sessional GP Group scheme**

### Rest of text:

Not only will the scheme provide our group with a generous budget to spend how we please, but it will also make it significantly easier to run our group on a voluntary basis. The scheme is quite simple; all members of our group must be NASGP members (currently paying between £45 to £75 per year), and NASGP will then not only allocate approximately 30% of this fee from each member to our group to spend as we please, it will also support me in managing the group:

- Manage our database, allowing me to keep right up to date with members' contact details and more efficiently notify you all of meetings, news etc.
  - We won't need to register with the Data Protection Act individually as the data will be held and managed centrally.
- Manage any invoicing or banking for us
- Create a basic website and email address for us if needed
- Provide us with 24/7 access to our allocated budget
  
- If the number of members of our group exceeds 20 members we will be given a place on the NASGP's Steering Group.
  
- Examples of what we could spend our annual budget on includes:
  - IT equipment (e.g. laptop/projector)
  - Stationery
  - Web-design
  - Speaker meetings
    - Catering
    - rental
  - Annual party
  - Chairman fees
  - Research
  - Attendance at conferences
  - Chairman Honorarium/remuneration
  - NASGP membership
  - Donated back to NASGP
  - Practice Packs

- Annually nominated NASGP charity e.g. Amnesty International, Oxfam etc
- Why should we become an aSGPG?
  - Secure funding
  - Taking away the pressure of managing our accounts
  - Overcoming the bureaucracy in running a bank account
  - Supporting the running of the group
  - Managing our database
  - Data Protection Act
  - Supports the NASGP as the only independent organisation representing Sessional GPs in the UK
- Why should I join the NASGP?
  - Provides significant local support for our group
  - The only independent organisation representing Sessional GPs
  - Lobby the BMA, RCGP and government on behalf of Sessional GPs
  - Access to hundreds of pages of information on the NASGP website
  - Bi-monthly newsletter
  - Facilitates the free distribution of the BNF to all locums in England.
  - 92 page booklet on Guidelines for the Management of Common Medical Emergencies in General Practice
  - More info at <http://www.nasgp.org.uk/join>

## Appendix 2 - Judging the success of the Pilot

The success of the aSGPG scheme will be dependent upon new members joining the NASGP, allowing NASGP to divert income generated from new members to their local group. We can only gauge this success when we know that new members will join in sufficient numbers in order to receive the benefits of their local group.

In short, if we can at least balance the figures (including the additional costs to NASGP to provide the logistical support from here in West Sussex) then we can roll out the scheme to more groups.

For the initial stages of the pilot, we will need to freeze the release of the group's budget until sufficient *new* NASGP members have joined that group – this will equate to a group in effect recruiting approximately 30% of its new members who were previously *not* NASGP members. When this has occurred, both the existing NASGP members and new members will be counted as the headcount for the aSGPG and we can then immediately 'unfreeze' your budget.

If you've recruited a new member to your group on the premise that it'll be an aSGPG and the pilot is not a success for some reason e.g. inability to recruit enough members - we will of course offer to refund your member's NASGP membership fee.

## **Appendix 3 - Frequently asked Questions**

### **"compulsion...existing members don't want to join NASGP? "**

This could well happen, in which case it'll be up to the group on what to do - do they join aSGPG or don't they? Of course, if a member does not wish to join the NASGP, the group will have to decline them entry to the group. Or the group could pay for that member to join the NASGP out of their new found funds (if hardship were an issue, for example).

### **"Ceding 'control' to NASGP could be seen as detrimental "**

We must be very clear that we won't control the group. Indeed, because of improved funding, these groups would have more control than previously. The group will have total control over what they do - they could buy a yacht with the money if they wanted and all dress up as Wombles on the 3rd Tuesday of the month - just so long as at least 5 other GPs plus their appraiser also agree (which, let's face it, is unlikely).

### **"Group leaders would have extra work in having to send on new member details to NASGP"**

No; the individual members do all this themselves via their membership admin panel on the NASGP website - the local group leader won't ever have to do anything like type a member's email address etc

### **"Will I have to wait for the database to update "**

It'll be instantaneous!

### **"How will I collect member's fees?"**

You don't need to – they simply join the NASGP on-line or via post; they say which group they want to be a member of. You get sent an email and either accept them (and instantaneously increase your budget by £20) or decline them.

### **"How will our group's membership subscriptions be rebated?"**

There won't be subscription rebates - we keep all the money centrally and it gets looked after in the NASGP's bank account. If the group leader needs to write a cheque, they log on to NASGP website, state to whom and where the cheque should be posted OR the bank account details if it's to be an electronic payment, and we do the rest.

### **"May I make alterations to the database locally"**

ONLY members can change their address (who else would need to?). The group leader has to 'accept' or 'decline' requests to join so it's entirely up to the leader which applicants (to the group) joins their group.

**"I'm not sure our group wants to be told what to spend its money on"**

It's entirely up to the group what to spend it on. We know that Sessional GP groups are hard work to run and that the GPs running them are doing so for entirely altruistic reasons. Because the group's leader is nominated by their group, and a statement of the budget must be presented at least annually, if the group's leader were to spend the money irresponsibly they would be ousted and it wouldn't go down well in the probity section of their appraisal.

**"What about retired or non-practising GPs who still support the group?"**

This is the one exception whereby we feel it entirely appropriate for you and your group to decide, recognising of course the wisdom and experience that such members would bring to the group.

**"Could we have a category of membership e.g. associate member who is not an NASGP member"**

Unfortunately not; the budget that we'd allocate to the group can only be done because of the economy of scale afforded by every member paying their NASGP membership fee. Non-paying members would therefore undermine the scheme.

**"We already have a bank account, with money it?!"**

That's no problem. Either keep it running as you've always done, or give the full amount to the NASGP and we'll look after it for you – obviously allocating the entire amount to your group's budget. You'll then be able to close the account down. Either way, it's entirely up to you!

**"What's in it for the NASGP?"**

The NASGP is the only independent representative organisation for Sessional GPs, and our aim is to provide support to sessional GPs. Not only will this scheme do this directly, but indirectly the increased membership – borne through increased local ownership and involvement of the NASGP – will greatly enhance what we can do for our members on a national level. For groups with more than 20 members, we'll also be able to benefit from the knowledge and wisdom of these local groups from them having a place on the NASGP Steering Group.