

NHS Employers announces negotiating team for new staff grade and associate specialist doctors contract

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NHS Employers has today announced the team who will be negotiating the new contract for staff grade and associate specialist doctors on its behalf.

The team of seven will be led by Heather Lawrence, chief executive of Chelsea and Westminster Healthcare NHS Trust and has representatives from across England.

Heather Lawrence, chair of the NHS Employers negotiating team said: "Staff grade and associate specialist doctors play a vital role in the NHS. We want to make sure they receive the recognition they deserve by negotiating a new contract with the BMA that will ensure pay is linked to their roles and responsibilities and that these doctors are able to develop and progress in their career.

"Our negotiating team will bring a wide range of experience to the discussions and we look forward to having a constructive working relationship with the BMA."

Mr Awani Choudhary, lead negotiator and joint deputy chair of the BMA's Staff and Associate Specialists Committee, said:

"The BMA is pleased to see the negotiating team in place, and ready to work with us. We look forward to achieving a deal which recognises staff grade and associate specialist doctors as essential partners in the NHS team."

The negotiations are expected to begin shortly with the new contractual arrangements due to be implemented from April 2006. The new contract will affect more than 7,000 doctors.

The NHS Employers team will be joined by representatives from other UK countries and will be supported by an email reference group, drawn from the NHS, who will act as a sounding board for ideas and proposals.

NHS Employers' negotiating team members are:

- Heather Lawrence, Chief Executive at Chelsea and Westminster Healthcare NHS Trust
- Hugo Mascie-Taylor, Medical Director at The Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust
- Kathy McLean, Medical Director at Derby Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- David Grantham, Deputy Director of Human Resources at Whipps Cross University Hospital NHS Trust
- Renee Braithwaite, Head of Clinical Operations at National Blood Service
- Gwyneth Knight, Associate Personnel Director at Avon & Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust
- Ashley Fraser, Consultant Histopathologist and Medical Director, on secondment to NHS Employers