

# Physician Associate (PA) Primary Care Preceptorship year – guidance

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## Introduction

As part of the nationally agreed funding model introduced in 2018, NHS England (NHSE) have invested a £5100 education support payment for GP practices/PCNs available for:

- New (or new to primary care) PAs who contract to work in Primary Care within the first 12 months of practice after becoming registered
- Existing PAs in Primary Care who have not undertaken a preceptorship: This includes those in their first role who have not yet participated in the preceptorship scheme
- Employers seeking additional assurance: Practices that wish to provide enhanced supervision and assurance for their PAs, even if they are not newly qualified, could apply for the funding to cover additional supervision costs, and;
- upon delivery of a Preceptorship Programme which meets NHSE Preceptorship Criteria outlined below.

## NHSE Preceptorship Criteria

1. The preceptorship programme will be undertaken for a minimum of 1 year [whole time equivalent] and must entail a minimum of 50% [or 6 months' full time equivalent in any rotation of placements] being spent in Primary Care.
2. The Preceptorship is available to employers who meet the above eligibility criteria.
3. The Employer is aware of existing guidance from the [Royal College of General Practitioners \(RCGP\) on PAs working in general practice](#).
4. The weekly timetable must include at least 1 dedicated session for education.
  - *The PA preceptee must work under GP clinical supervision during their day-to-day clinical practice. They must also have access to a GP Clinical /Educational Supervisor to support their professional development and undertaking of any*

*portfolio-based assessments (GP clinical supervision training available if not accredited at time of appointment of PA).*

5. The Preceptee must have access to a trained mentor for the duration of the Preceptorship. The mentor should be external to the employing practice or Primary Care Network (PCN).
6. If being employed by a PCN, the PA Preceptee must work in no more than 2 practices for the first 6 months of their Preceptorship year.
7. The preceptee must have a suitable induction period, an induction meeting with their supervisor, a mid-point and an end of programme review with their supervisor [regardless of whether they have been a PA student on placement with the practice].
8. The programme must use suitable supportive records of the preceptor's progress.
9. The preceptee must take part in the employer's annual appraisal system.
10. Offer an approved structured development plan with clear objectives, goals and a shared understanding around how the practice will support the preceptee to gain the clinical experience and skills required. For example, this could be from a local HEI or equivalent, which will include alumni activity or could also be in-house (or could be in-network).
11. The preceptorship programme will set out expected outcomes for the preceptee in the form of competence acquisition or a brief curriculum which may be locally derived but based on established national guidance.
12. The preceptorship programme must enable the post-holder to engage in multi-professional learning activities with protected time to ensure this.
13. Where the post-holder's objectives include a further course of study, this should usually be funded from the support payment. This could be up to the cost of a postgraduate certificate qualification if appropriate for the preceptor and the service context; this funding should be used flexibly to meet the needs of the preceptor.
14. Individual post-holders will be expected to complete and maintain all of the requirements of the UK PA Managed Voluntary Register [PAMVR] or subsequent register.
15. At the start of employment, newly qualified PAs in Primary Care should have 30-minute patient consultation time allocation with a debrief after each patient. This should be reviewed between 3-6 months and the consultation time adjusted as appropriate.
16. Employers must consider a rota with a maximum of eight patient-facing clinical sessions a week for the first 6 months of the Preceptorship programme.

## Application process

Following acceptance of the above criteria, employing organisations will need to contact their relevant NHSE office via the following details to begin the application process:

- North West: [england.physicanassociates.nw@nhs.net](mailto:england.physicanassociates.nw@nhs.net)

## Funding

- NHSE shall pay the preceptorship sum to the Employer via agreed local processes
- The preceptorship payment is allocated to employers to support the preceptorship programme, recognising the infrastructure, education and learning requirements and input/supervision/teaching required in the practice setting during the preceptorship
- The Employer will produce invoices for NHSE in order to receive these payments at agreed local arrangements
- If a preceptee resigns from a preceptorship, payments will be adjusted to the date of their resignation and the Employer accepts that preceptorship payments will cease from the date the preceptee leaves the preceptorship/employment
- ~~If a preceptee interrupts their preceptorship due to a period of absence the preceptorship payments will be paused from the month of interruption and will recommence once the preceptee recommenced their preceptorship~~  
Not applicable in Northwest England
- Where applicable, the trust and primary care employer working together shall have appropriate service level agreements in place between them to agree the employment and funding arrangements to support the rotational post(s)

## Termination of Preceptorship

- The Employer will inform NHSE at the earliest opportunity if the preceptee no longer wishes to continue the preceptorship and/or the preceptee's employment with the Employer ceases
- The Employer agrees to repay any excess preceptorship payment received (to be identified by NHSE)
- If the preceptee takes up employment elsewhere the preceptorship funding will no longer be payable to the Employer and will be paid pro rata
- Should NHSE consider that the Employer is not fulfilling its obligations as laid out in the above criteria, NHSE will firstly notify the Employer of its concerns and agree a set time period for the Employer to comply. Should NHSE subsequently consider that the Employer is still not fulfilling its obligations the funding will be withdrawn