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New to Partnership Payment scheme: frequently asked questions

June 2020

1. What is the scheme?

The New to Partnerships Payment scheme is a commitment made in *Update to the GP contract 2020/2021–2023/2024*.

It is a nationally managed scheme aimed at supporting registered healthcare professionals to become practice partners* through creating a learning allowance to develop skills, coupled with a financial payment.

**As defined in section 86(2) of the National Health Service Act 2006*

2. What are the anticipated benefits to the scheme?

The overarching aim is to increase the number of partners and individuals with equivalent status working in primary care, stabilising the partnership model and helping to increase clinicians' participation so that primary care and the patients it serves have access to the workforce they need.

The scheme builds sustainability into the general practice workforce, through expanding the partnership cohort and gaining a commitment from individuals to remain in role for a minimum of five years. We hope that it will help support a diverse range of clinical groups to take up partnerships.

3. When does the scheme open and close?

The application process is expected to open on 1 July 2020, and it is anticipated the scheme will run for two years, ending on 21 March 2022. The scheme will consider applications from individuals who accepted a partnership role on or after 1 April 2020.

4. Who is eligible for the scheme?

Applications are invited from individuals who are eligible to become partners as set out at s86(2) of the NHS Act 2006, working in general practice who are registered with their respective professional body and delivering clinical care to patients in their own general practice setting through a GMS contract

The role of 'Partner' (or equivalent) must meet the description as in the Partnership Act of 1890, meaning participants to this scheme cannot be employed on a salaried basis, and individuals must have an equity share partnership arrangement in place

NHSEI may at its absolute discretion consider applications from individuals broadly comparable to partners and otherwise in line with the eligibility criteria but providing services under primary medical services contracts and where the applicant can provide evidence of the broad comparability to NHSEI

In the instances of APMS, this contract should have a minimum of two years remaining.

Other eligibility criteria:

- The Applicant must be a partner have signed a legally-liable, equity-share partnership agreement on or after 1 April 2020 and before the scheme closes. Applications can be made on a retrospective basis where applicants accepted/accept the partnership role on or after 1 April 2020

Applicants cannot previously have been a partner in England.

The list of eligible professions that can apply to the scheme therefore is: general practitioner, nurse (including ANP), pharmacist, pharmacy technician, physiotherapist, paramedic, midwife, dietitian, podiatrist, occupational therapist and mental health practitioner.

In joining the scheme, participants agree to remain in a partnership role for five years (or repay part of the sum), and to deliver two clinical sessions per week in their partnership practice.

5. Do I need to be in a partnership before I apply or can I apply before this?

The signed partnership agreement needs to be in place before applying to the scheme. Prospective participants should also ensure they meet the eligibility criteria, and will want to take their own personal financial advice in advance of their application.

6. How do I apply?

Applications will be accepted by email and then handled through an online application portal. Interested colleagues and their practice will complete an application form and provide supporting supplementary evidence. The required supplementary evidence is a signed partnership agreement and a copy of the applicant's GMS/PMS/APMS contract, which will show contract length.

The application form and the scheme guidance are available on the NHS England and NHS Improvement website at: https://www.england.nhs.uk/gp/the-best-place-to-work/

Applicants will send their completed application form together with copies of the required documentation to england.newtopartnershipenquiries@nhs.net

7. I am an international recruit. Can I apply?

The scheme accepts applications from those who are recent returners to their profession and have been through an induction and refreshers scheme (or similar), and international recruits. Both groups must meet the other criteria.

8. Is this scheme only open to people who work full time?

No, the scheme is open to all eligible participants working a minimum of two clinical sessions a week, with the sum calculated on a pro-rata basis.

9. How do I maintain eligibility?

The scheme requirements are:

- individuals need to have successfully gained a fair-shares, legally-liable partnership position after 31 March 2020, and cannot previously have been a partner in England.
- individuals must commit to delivering two clinical sessions a week (4 hours 10 minutes each) in their general practice partnership setting (other than when on annual leave or short-term sickness) throughout the subsequent five-year period.
- individuals can only participate once in the scheme.
- in joining the scheme, the participant agrees to an annual eligibility check and reconciliation process.

10. If I am successful in applying to the scheme, what can I expect to receive?

Successful applicants are able to access two benefits of the scheme:

1. a sum of up to £20,000 for an FTE clinician to support establishment as a new partner. (FTE is 37.5 hours a week.) Participants working less than full-time will receive a pro-rata payment. Successful applicants will receive an extra 20% to support tax and National Insurance.
2. a training allowance of up to £3,000 to support partnership skills development. This sum is available to every successful applicant, regardless of the number of hours worked.

NHE England and NHS Improvement have developed a ‘ready reckoner’ that allows participants to work out the sum that they might expect to receive. This can be found on FutureNHS. However, all prospective participants should take personal financial advice before applying to the scheme.

Where the participant either increases or decreases their hours – or leaves the partnership altogether – within the five year period the sum will be adjusted proportionate to the hours/years worked, subject to a cap.

11. Will I need to make tax and pension contributions to the sum?
Subject to Parliamentary approval, the sum is intended to be non-superannuable income, meaning it is not subject to pension contributions, but you should expect it to be subject to tax and National Insurance, as for any other item of income. This means the ‘take home sum’ will be smaller than the payment made. The scheme has sought to mitigate this in part by attaching a 20% on-cost supplement.

Calculations for new partners should be considered on an individual basis, as each person will have different personal circumstances. Prospective participants are advised to take financial advice before applying to the scheme.

12. How does a scheme participant receive their financial sum?
Funding is held by the national team in NHS England and NHS Improvement. Payment is made to the primary medical services provider which holds the contract with NHSE and in which the individual becomes a partner. The practice is obliged to pass the payment in full to the programme participant. This arrangement will be governed by the S96 agreement, and an update to the SFE.

Payment for successful GMS and PMS applicants will be made in one lump sum. Payment for successful APMS participants will be calculated and paid in line with the length of the APMS contract, which must have a minimum of two years remaining.

13. What if I am not successful in applying to the scheme? Is there an appeals process?
If an applicant is not successful, they will be notified why and how to either:

- update their application appropriately.
- appeal to NHS England and NHS Improvement.

14. What are the criteria for business training?

To support all new partners, the full £3,000 is available to every successful applicant, regardless of number of hours worked.

This budget is to be used in garnering non-clinical skills that are support working effectively in a partnership role. The scheme participant can select the training they wish to undertake and should note there will be no learning needs assessment. Where the participant is also on the General Practice Fellowship programme, this business training should be over and above the learning opportunities available through the fellowship.

The training must meet the following criteria:

- training must start within the first year of accepting a partnership role
- training must support skills relevant to the delivery of a partnership role
- participants should ensure they are getting good value for money when selecting training, to ensure they are making good use of public funds.

Participants should personally assess what training they need to develop their non-clinical skills, to successfully deliver in a partnership role. This may cover, for example, practice management, financial management, HR and developing staff, IT. To check the training you want to undertake meets the criteria, you can email: england.newtopartnershipenquiries@nhs.net for advice.

Training should start within one year of taking up a partnership role.

15. How do I access the training allowance?

The scheme participant should initially pay for the training they select, and then claim reimbursement from NHS England and NHS Improvement. Participants will need to scan their receipts and email them to england.newtopartnershipenquiries@nhs.net. Further detail on this process will be included in the welcome letter sent to all successful applicants.

As one of the requirements of the scheme and to access the funding for training, participants must maintain their partnership for a minimum of one year, otherwise costs paid cannot be reimbursed. Reimbursement of training receipts will be made soon after the first anniversary of the Grant Beneficiary executing the partnership agreement.

16. What happens if I leave a partnership role before my five-year time period is up?

Individuals may port their participation from one partnership role to another partnership role. However, where individuals leave a partnership role altogether, the sum is repayable on a weighted scale.

17. What happens if I increase or decrease my hours while on the scheme?

Where there is an increase or decrease in hours worked during the five year term of the arrangements, there may be a full or partial clawback of funding or an additional payment (subject to a cap) which will be identified through an annual reconciliation process.

18. How is time calculated?

Number of hours worked is measured in sessions. One session is 4 hours and ten minutes. This table demonstrates how this is calculated:

Hours worked	No of sessions
8 hours 20 mins	2
12 hours 30 mins	3
16 hours 40 mins	4
20 hours 50 mins	5
25 hours	6
29 hour 10 mins	7
33 hours 20 mins	8
37 hours 30 mins +	9

19. How do I let you know if my circumstances change?

All participants will be subject to an annual reconciliation process as standard. Where changes occur part way through a year, such as change in personal details, a period of absence from work or change in surname, you can notify NHS England and NHS Improvement using the change form on the website.

20. What happens if I need/want to pause my time on the scheme?

In the limited instances of (1) maternity/parental/adoption leave or (2) long-term sickness, where you maintain your partnership for this period, you can continue with the scheme and receive payment for participating in it. You are not required to notify NHS England and NHS Improvement in these circumstances.

However, if you want to take time out from practice for another reason, eg a sabbatical, then you will need to notify the NHS England and NHS Improvement of this using the online change form. We will work with you to agree a position on the impact of the pause.

21. When should I let you know about my absence?

For **planned** absences, as soon as you know/have confirmation of the absence.

For **unplanned** absences, as soon as possible.

22. Do I need to tell you when I return to work?

Yes. For planned leave (leave that is longer than usual annual leave) you should let NHS England and NHS Improvement know how long you are planning to be absent when notifying us that you intend to be absent. We will ask you to confirm that you are back at work on your return.

If your absence is shorter or longer than expected, then please contact NHS England and Improvement as soon as you aware of any changes to your planned absence and then confirm this with us.

23. How do I contact NHS England and NHS Improvement about this scheme?

- the formal guidance for the scheme and associated application template can be found on the NHS England website. Any updates to the scheme will be published on the website.
- a sample s96 contract and the ready reckoner can be found on the FutureNHS web page: New to Partnership Payment scheme. If you don't already hold an account you can register via the FutureNHS login page.
- To request a username and password to access this, please email: england.primarycareworkforce@nhs.net.
- applications are to be sent to: england.newtopartnershipenquiries@nhs.net.
- any queries relating to the scheme not covered in this FAQ document should be sent to: england.newtopartnershipenquiries@nhs.net.