

How to have great First 5 appraisals

Congratulations on completing your first NHS Lothian & Borders GP appraisal. This document will help you get the most out of appraisal for your First 5 years.

Your appraiser remains your primary point of contact. You will usually have the same appraiser for 3-4 years, which lets you develop a conversation. You can ask them questions through the year.

You need to:

- Collect supporting information and upload it. In year 2, this should be your learning log, an SEA and a piece of QIA. You don't need to upload course certificates – reflection is more useful. In years 3 and 4 you should have your learning log, an SEA and one of your MSF and PSQ in each year.
- Set yourself some PDP goals for the next year. Most people have 3-5 goals. You can consider a mix of clinical and non-clinical.

What is appraisal

Appraisal is an annual opportunity to sit with an experienced GP and reflect on learning (formal, informal and experiential) over the last year, review your supporting information and think together about where you want to be and how to get there.

How do I get the most from appraisal?

Prepare in advance! This may be the one chance you have in the year to think through your experience of work and your hopes for the future. It is so much more than a tick-box exercise. You may well come up with new PDP goals during the meeting, which can be added later.

How do I decide on a PDP?

Think about how you want to develop. You might have clinical learning needs which you identify through PUNs and DENs. You might have learning needs related to additional roles. You might have a really personal goal that you want to capture. Good PDP goals are SMART.

What happens if I don't do a PDP?

That is OK! Your PDP is a plan but it might turn out not to be relevant or useful. Some PDP goals take more than 1 year. In your next set of forms, you mark each PDP goal as 'complete' 'continuing' or 'not continuing'. That is OK!

What if I have a complaint?

Complaints happen. They can be distressing but they are always an opportunity for learning. Discussing with a GP who has not been involved after the immediate events at your appraisal is often really helpful.

What supporting information do you need every year?

- Reflective learning log showing you have kept up to date. Use a format that suits you.
- Set a PDP for the next year and reflect on your PDP from last year.
- SEA with documented learning points.
- Complete a declaration about health, complaints and probity.

What supporting information do you need one year in five?

- Feedback from colleagues MSF – use the WASP tool in SOAR for this.
- Feedback from patients PSQ – your appraiser can let you know about options. The Lothian PSQ is a free to use online tool that allows you to text patients and collect anonymous responses.
- Quality Improvement Activity – note that it is best practice to include this every year, and practices will all be engaged in QIA.

Top tips

- Get started building up your supporting information. Don't leave recording all your learning until the last minute.
- Don't leave MSF and PSQ until the last appraisal! Sometimes the unexpected happens.
- [Toolkits | Medical Appraisal Scotland](#) has resources for supporting information.
- It should take about 1 session to prepare for and 1 session to have your appraisal.