

EP2	Procedure to identify individuals entitled to act as Referrers, Practitioners, Operators and Medical Physics Experts and a description of their duties.	IRMER Employers Procedures NHS Dumfries and Galloway
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Procedure to identify individuals entitled to act as Referrers, Practitioners, Operators, and Medical Physics Experts and a description of their duties.

1. Objectives

Employer's Level 1 Procedure 'EP1' describes the procedures that will be used throughout NHS Dumfries & Galloway to entitle staff to act as referrer or practitioner or operator (including Medical Physics Experts). The scope of entitlement or these duty holders shall be limited, in accordance with qualifications, experience and training.

This associated Level 1 Procedure defines, for identified staff groups, the classes or types of medical exposures for which they may be considered for entitlement as a duty holder, and the basic qualifications and experience required. The actual scope of entitlement for each individual duty holder who meets these basic qualifications and experience requirements is then for the appropriate Clinical Director / Specialty Team Lead to confer, in accordance with Procedure 'EP1', with due regard to the need for adequate training, pursuant to Regulation 17 and Schedule 3 of the IRMER.

2. Classes of duty holders and their functions

2.1 Referrers

A **Referrer** is a registered healthcare professional who is entitled (in NHS D&G) to refer individuals to a Practitioner for medical exposure. The Referrer must be competent to understand the reported findings and to ensure that appropriate action is taken on those findings.

The Referrer **must**:

- Provide the Practitioner with sufficient personal and clinical information (such as previous diagnostic information or medical records) relevant to the medical exposure requested, including pregnancy and breast feeding status to enable the Practitioner to identify the patient and decide whether there is sufficient net benefit.
- Identify whether the examination is a non-medical imaging procedure to be carried out on medical equipment (e.g. forensic imaging, concealed drugs).
- Identify whether the examination is only for research purposes.

Referrers for medical exposure procedure carried out in NHS Dumfries & Galloway shall be entitled generically, by staff group or individual, as detailed in EP1 in accordance with Appendix 1 of this procedure, without further consideration of the need for associated training.

Non medical Health Care Professionals will be entitled only if evidence presented is deemed sufficient to confirm both their need to act as a referrer and their ability to provide the medical information necessary for the practitioner to justify the exposure. An appropriate IRMER Approval Panel will advise the IRMER Policy Lead whether the

Date issued: 22/11/10	Version No: 9	Authorised by: CS	Author: VG	Date of last review: 11/06/18	Next review date: 11/06/19	Page 1 of 6
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EP2	Procedure to identify individuals entitled to act as Referrers, Practitioners, Operators and Medical Physics Experts and a description of their duties.	IRMER Employers Procedures NHS Dumfries and Galloway
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evidence for any such group or individual is sufficient. Such groups or individuals will only refer for those procedures for which written approval has been given.

2.2 Practitioners

A **Practitioner** is a registered healthcare professional who is entitled (in NHS D&G) to take responsibility for an individual exposure. The primary function of the Practitioner is to undertake the justification of medical exposures, taking into account the risks and benefits while considering alternative investigations or procedures.

If the Practitioner is aware prior to the exposure that no clinical evaluation will occur, then the exposure is not justified and cannot lawfully take place.

Practitioners must be able to assess the risk and potential benefit from the radiation exposure and be capable of recommending an alternative investigation with no or lower radiation exposure, as required by IR (ME) R Regulation 11. This implies sufficient medical training and knowledge, including a full understanding of the reason for the examination, the merits of alternative radiological examinations, the merits of alternative non-radiological examinations and the impact of the examination on clinical management. The scope of entitlement of registered healthcare professional as practitioners in NHS D&G will be determined with regard to their recorded training in these areas.

For work involving radionuclides only an ARSAC (Administration of Radioactive Substances Advisory Committee) certificate holder is recognised as being qualified to act as a Practitioner (for the nuclear medicine procedures detailed on his/her ARSAC certificate).

2.3 Operators

An **Operator** is any person who is entitled (in NHS D&G) to carry out practical aspects of a medical exposure. This includes the following:

- correct identification of the individual to be exposed in accordance with Employer's Level 1 Procedure 'EP7'
- checking the age, pregnancy or breast-feeding status of the patient where appropriate Employer's Level 1 Procedure 'EP8/9'
- authorising an exposure - an exposure may be authorised by an Operator when acting in accordance with written guidelines approved by the Practitioner.
- physically effecting the exposure in an X-ray examination.
- acquiring or processing images.
- administering radiopharmaceuticals in nuclear medicine procedures.
- quality assuring the equipment which controls the exposure or processes the resultant images.
- clinical evaluation of radiation exposure.

Date issued: 22/11/10	Version No: 9	Authorised by: CS	Author: VG	Date of last review: 11/06/18	Next review date: 11/06/19	Page 2 of 6
--------------------------	------------------	----------------------	---------------	----------------------------------	-------------------------------	----------------

EP2	Procedure to identify individuals entitled to act as Referrers, Practitioners, Operators and Medical Physics Experts and a description of their duties.	IRMER Employers Procedures NHS Dumfries and Galloway
-----	---	---

Note that there may be more than one *Operator* involved in a single exposure.

Each operator must have a defined scope of practice which clearly indicates the operator tasks for which they have been entitled. Persons must not carry out any Operator tasks for which they have not received entitlement.

2.3 Medical Physics Experts

A **Medical Physics Expert** is an individual or group of individuals, having the knowledge, training and experience to act or give advice on matters relating to radiation physics applied to exposure, whose competence in this respect is recognised by the Secretary of State.

A Medical Physics Expert (MPE) will be: -

- closely involved in every radiotherapeutic practice other than standardised therapeutic nuclear medicine practices.
- Involved in practices involving standardised therapeutic nuclear medicine practices, diagnostic nuclear medicine practices and high dose interventional radiology and high dose CT.
- Involved as appropriate for consultation in all other radiological practices not mentioned above.

MPE will be entitled specific to their area of specialisation (Radiotherapy, Nuclear Medicine or Diagnostic Radiology) and their scope of practice will be those aspects of IRMER Regulation 14 in which they have been deemed competent to act.

3. Basic qualifications and experience for entitled duty holders

The minimum qualifications and experience needed for Operator functions are defined by each specialty and will be specific to the operator task.

Appendix 1 describes the basic qualifications and experience needed by members of the identified staff groups for consideration for entitlement as Referrers and Practitioners within NHS Dumfries & Galloway.

Date issued: 22/11/10	Version No: 9	Authorised by: CS	Author: VG	Date of last review: 11/06/18	Next review date: 11/06/19	Page 3 of 6
--------------------------	------------------	----------------------	---------------	----------------------------------	-------------------------------	----------------

EP2	Procedure to identify individuals entitled to act as Referrers, Practitioners, Operators and Medical Physics Experts and a description of their duties.	IRMER Employers Procedures NHS Dumfries and Galloway
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Appendix 1

Basic qualifications and experience required for members of the identified staff groups to be considered for entitlement as Referrers and Practitioners.

Table 1: Referrers.

Staff Group	Basic qualifications and experience	Scope of referral
Medical Consultant	Appropriate Royal College Membership and GMC registration	All imaging relevant to specialty
Medical Consultant (or Specialist Doctor) specialising in Endocrinology	Appropriate Royal College Membership and GMC registration	All imaging relevant to specialty + therapeutic radioiodine for benign thyroid disease
Specialty Doctor	GMC Registration	All imaging relevant to specialty
Staff Grade and Associate Specialists	GMC registration	All imaging relevant to specialty
Non-consultant Hospital Doctor	GMC Registration	Plain X-ray imaging <i>Other examinations may be requested after discussion with a Radiologist</i>
FY2	GMC Registration	Plain X-Ray imaging Other examinations may be requested after discussion with a Radiologist
FY1	Provisional GMC Registration	Plain X-Ray imaging Other examinations may be requested after discussion with a Radiologist
General Practitioners	GMC registration	Plain X-ray imaging DEXA scans Barium Swallows Renal tract imaging <i>Other examinations may be requested after discussion with a Radiologist</i>
Dental Practitioners	GDC Registration	Dental Radiography
Health Care Professionals	HCPC or NMC Registration plus formal post-graduate or documented in-house training	As defined by departmental protocol agreed and approved by the IRMER approval panel

Date issued: 22/11/10	Version No: 9	Authorised by: CS	Author: VG	Date of last review: 11/06/18	Next review date: 11/06/19	Page 4 of 6
--------------------------	------------------	----------------------	---------------	----------------------------------	-------------------------------	----------------

EP2	Procedure to identify individuals entitled to act as Referrers, Practitioners, Operators and Medical Physics Experts and a description of their duties.	IRMER Employers Procedures NHS Dumfries and Galloway
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Table 2 : Practitioners.

Staff Group	Basic qualifications and experience	Classes or types of procedures for which entitlement as a practitioner may be sought
Consultant Radiologists	FRCR and GMC registration	Diagnostic x-ray examinations and interventional procedures
Medica Radiologists	GMC Registration GMC Specialist Register for Clinical Radiology Minimum 2 years in substantive NHS post or completed a post CCT just short of 5 years and spent a minimum of 1 year in a high quality fellowship advancing their subspeciality interest	Diagnostic x-ray examinations
ARSAC Certificate Holders	Medical Degree plus training approved by ARSAC Committee, and GMC registration	Radio-iodine Therapy Administration of radiopharmaceutical for sentinel lymph node localisation
Primary Sector General Dental Practitioners	GDC registration	Dental Radiography
Cardiologists	Specialist Register IRMER Schedule 3 training, GMC registration	x-ray cardiology Procedures
General Surgeons	Specialist Register + IRMER Schedule 3 training, and GMC registration	ERCP examinations and Oesophageal stent insertions
Vascular Surgeons	Professional Registration + IRMER Schedule 3 training	Diagnostic angiography and interventional vascular procedures
Radiographers	HPC Registration and documented in-house training on referral criteria. GMC Registration	Plain x-ray examinations only, excluding mammography and Non Accidental Injury skeletal survey.

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Date issued: 22/11/10	Version No: 9	Authorised by: CS	Author: VG	Date of last review: 11/06/18	Next review date: 11/06/19	Page 6 of 6
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