

## Senior Career Medical Officers: Guidelines for Personal Regrading & Establishment of New Positions

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**Summary** These guidelines are intended to assist public health organisations in the Senior Career Medical Officer application process by clearly outlining the documentation required by the Senior Medical Officer Grading Committee. The guidelines also specify the establishment and recruitment processes to be followed when creating new Senior Career Medical Officer positions.

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# **SENIOR CAREER MEDICAL OFFICERS**

## **GUIDELINES FOR PERSONAL REGRADING AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW POSITIONS**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### Purpose and Scope

These guidelines are intended to assist public health organisations in the Senior Career Medical Officer application process by clearly outlining the documentation required by the Senior Medical Officer Grading Committee. These guidelines are intended to prevent delays caused by Committee requests to resubmit applications or provide additional information.

The guidelines also specify the establishment and recruitment processes, to be followed in when creating new Senior Career Medical Officer positions.

This document should be read in conjunction with the Public Hospital (Career Medical Officer) (State) Award.

### Applicability

This document is applies to staff members of the NSW Health Service employed under the Public Hospital (Career Medical Officer) (State) Award.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

**Award:** the Public Hospital (Career Medical Officer) (State) Award.

**Committee:** means the Senior Career Medical Officer Committee as prescribed under Clause 3, *Salaries* of the Public Hospital (Career Medical Officers) (State) Award.

**Director-General:** means the Director-General of the NSW Department of Health.

**Employer:** means the Director-General or any person authorised to exercise the Director-General's functions of employer under this policy in respect of staff of the NSW Health Service.

**NSW Health Service:** consists of those persons who are employed under Chapter 9, Part 1 of the *Health Services Act 1997* by the Government of New South Wales in the service of the Crown.

**Public Health Organisation:** means an area health service, statutory health corporation, or declared affiliated health organisations in respect of their recognised establishments or services.

## 3. THE SENIOR CAREER MEDICAL OFFICER GRADE

Clause 3 of the Award prescribes the requirements for a Career Medical Officer to be regraded as a Senior Career Medical Officer.

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The Award states that a Committee shall be constituted to consider and make representations to the employer in relation to appointment to the Senior grade. No appointment can be made to the Senior Grade without the recommendation of the Committee.

The Award also prescribes that the Committee shall not recommend appointment to the Senior grade unless the individual satisfies the below Criteria:

- (i) Has at least seven years post graduate experience; and
- (ii) Has a demonstrated capacity to perform clinical duties and responsibilities at a senior level with minimal clinical supervision in one or more areas of medical speciality; and
- (iii) Is to perform clinical duties and responsibilities at a senior level with minimal clinical supervision in one or more areas of medical speciality as required by the employer.

## **4. APPLICATIONS FOR REGRADING – STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS**

This process is to be followed in regard to those Career Medical Officers currently employed within the NSW Health Service who are seeking regrading to the Senior Grade. Clause 5 specifies the establishment and recruitment process to be followed for new or vacant Senior Career Medical Officer positions.

### **4.1 New Applications**

All applications received by public health organisations are to be submitted to the Committee, regardless of whether or not they are supported by the employer.

### **4.2 Addressing Each Award Criterion**

The public health organisation needs to ensure that each Award criterion is addressed and any supporting documentation is attached before submitting individual applications to the Committee. The Committee will not make a recommendation in regard to an application without the documentation specified in 4.2.1 – 4.2.3.

#### **4.2.1 Award Criterion (i) - Seven Years Postgraduate Experience**

To address criterion (i) the public health organisation needs to provide the Committee with:

- a copy of registration that clearly demonstrates the applicant's date of first registration. For those applicants who have moved to New South Wales from another jurisdiction, registration details should be

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provided for the time worked in both New South Wales and other jurisdictions, cited by the applicant as satisfying the seven years postgraduate experience; and

- a current CV of the applicant that clearly and comprehensively outlines the applicant's professional history.

#### **4.2.2 Award Criterion (ii) - Individual Competence**

To address criterion (ii) the public health organisation needs to provide the Committee with:

- Documentation provided by the applicant that demonstrates his or her capacity in a particular medical specialty to work at a senior level with minimal clinical supervision; and
- A letter from the Clinical Line Manager/Department Head/Director, Medical Services or equivalent that indicates with examples whether or not the applicant demonstrates capacity in a particular medical specialty to work at a senior level with minimal clinical supervision.

Where the position description reflects a senior position, but the application to the Senior grade is not supported by the Clinical Line Manager/Department Head, Director, Medical Services or equivalent, there should be documented evidence that this has been drawn to the attention of the applicant and, where necessary, a process put in place to address the issues raised.

#### **4.2.3 Award Criterion (iii) - Requirements of the position**

To address criterion (iii) the public health organisation needs to provide the Committee with:

- Documentation provided by the applicant demonstrating that he or she is required to work at a senior level with minimal clinical supervision in one or more areas of medical specialty; and
- Documentation provided and signed by the Clinical Line Manager/Department Head/DMS providing comment on whether or not the applicant is required to work at a senior level with minimal clinical supervision in one or more areas of medical specialty; and
- A copy of the Position Description.  
The position description should reflect the duties actually required by the employer and performed by the applicant, although it is recognised that in some circumstances the position description may not reflect this.

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While this will not necessarily be a barrier to the Committee recommending appointment to the Senior Grade, it is expected that where it is recommended that the applicant be appointed to the Senior Grade, the employer will subsequently forward to the Committee a revised position description reflecting the senior duties.

Where the position description reflects a higher level of work than that actually being performed by the applicant, the employer needs to advise the Committee of those areas in the Position Description that are not being performed by the applicant, including reasons why.

- As a guide, the Committee will generally recommend a Senior grading if the position requires one or more of the following:
  1. That the applicant is performing work that may have otherwise been performed by a specialist. Examples include:
    - Drug & Alcohol/Sexual Health/Community Mental Health services where it is not uncommon for clinics in these specialties to be run by Career Medical Officers with little or no specialist support. In these cases the Career Medical Officer is effectively acting as the primary and often sole medical practitioner;
    - The Career Medical Officer is included in the same roster as specialists in the department. In these circumstances, the Committee will require a copy of the roster which demonstrates that the applicant is being rostered for, and undertaking a role that would otherwise be filled by a specialist;
    - The Career Medical Officer has significant additional responsibilities that would typically be performed by a specialist, such as the routine coordination of teaching programs, administrative, quality assurance, research or similar duties.
  2. That the applicant is regularly required to be the Medical Officer In Charge of the hospital without significant on site support (the level of off site support will be taken into account).
  3. The applicant is regularly called upon to provide advice to other staff because of his/her seniority and experience; is supported by management as being of significant value to the hospital/service; his/her experience and skills reduces the onerousness of the duties of other medical staff, e.g. reduces

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the number of times that Visiting Medical Officers or Staff Specialists are likely to be called; and has been in the position (or a similar position in the NSW Health Service) for no less than 3 years.

## **4.3 Area of Need and Training Positions**

### **4.3.1 Area of Need**

The Committee has determined that applicants in Area of Need positions will not normally be approved to the Senior grade because they generally do not meet the requirement for “minimal supervision”.

However in exceptional circumstances applications for a Senior grading will be considered for Area of Need applicants if the level of supervision required by the Medical Board is determined at the *Oversight* level. In such circumstances, applications will need to include copies of all Supervisor reports sent to the Medical Board from the commencement of the applicant’s Area of Need appointment up until the date of application to the Committee.

### **4.3.2 Training Positions**

Career Medical Officers who are on a Fellowship training program will not be recommended to the Senior grade. This is because a Career Medical Officer, as defined under Clause 2 the Award, is not a medical officer in training.

## **4.4 Sign off by the Public Health Organisation**

Once the documentation requested in 4.2.1 – 4.2.3 is collated, the public health organisation’s Director, Clinical Operations and Director, Workforce Development must provide joint or separate letters indicating whether the application is supported by the Public Health Organisation, in the context of and consistent with other approved applications

## **4.5 Submitting Applications to the Committee**

A Checklist has been developed by the Committee and is an annexure to these guidelines. The Checklist is to be completed by the public health organisation and submitted with the application.

All applications are then to be forwarded to the Director, Employee Relations, NSW Department of Health and marked to the attention of the Senior Career Medical Officer Committee.



## **5. ADVERTISING NEW POSITIONS AT THE SENIOR GRADE**

Public health organisations can advertise new positions at the Senior grade, however potential new appointees must still satisfy Award criteria (i) and (ii) and the position description must satisfy Award criterion (iii) and be recommended by the Committee.

Therefore to assist public health organisation in advertising and appointing potential applicants to a vacant Senior grade, the following process must be followed.

### **5.1 Submitting a Position Description to the Committee**

A position description must be forwarded to the Committee for approval prior to advertising the position. In drafting the position description, public health organisations should take account of the examples outlined in subclause 4.2.3. When submitting the position description to the Committee, a joint or separate letter must be provided confirming that the public health organisation's Director, Workforce Development and Director, Clinical Operations supports the position.

It is anticipated that the Committee will be able to consider position descriptions without meeting in person and therefore will be able to provide a response to the public health organisation promptly. Once the Committee recommends the position description, the public health organisation can advertise the position, subject to complying with any other directive issued by the Director-General in respect to the advertisement of positions.

### **5.2 The Selection Process**

Applicants to the position must be told in advance that appointment to the Senior grade is subject to the approval of the Committee and is not guaranteed.

Immediately after the selection of a preferred applicant, the public health organisation must provide the Committee with documentary evidence of how the applicant meets Award criteria (i) as outlined in 4.2.1.

With regard to the individual competence criteria outlined in 4.2.2, the documentation provided to the Committee will need to include reports from referees and the views of the Interview Selection panel. It will assist the Committee if the applicant's referees are provided with a copy of the position description and asked to comment on how the candidate has demonstrated that he/she is capable of undertaking the requirements of the position. Public health organisations may wish to consider seeking such referees' reports for all applicants prior to interview to avoid delays in appointments.

Public health organisations should take care that all documentation specified above is provided to the Grading Committee. Recognising the desire of public health organisations to have a recommendation as soon as possible, as with

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the position description, if all the requested documentation is provided in the first instance, the Committee it should be able to consider the application without meeting in person and provide a prompt response within seven working days of having received the information.

If the applicant is not recommended by the Committee at the Senior grade, the public health organisation may still offer the applicant a position as a Career Medical Officer Grade 2, with the option to resubmit an application to the Senior grade at a later date, if appropriate.

### **5.3 Area of Need Applicants to New Positions**

As Area of Need doctors without previous Australian experience will not be able to provide Supervisor reports, they therefore will not be eligible for direct appointment to vacant positions at the Senior grade.

This does not prevent an Area of Need appointment from applying for the Senior grade at a later date, subject to them satisfying the criteria mentioned in the 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph of subclause 4.3.1.

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## Application Checklist

Each application forwarded to the Grading Committee must include the following (applications will be returned for completion if it does not include the information clearly tabbed as outlined below):

- Tab 1  
Curriculum Vitae
- Tab 2  
Evidence of date of first registration
- Tab 3  
Photocopy of current registration
- Tab 4  
Position Description
- Tab 5  
Documentation provided by the **applicant** that demonstrates his or her capacity in a particular medical specialty to work at a senior level with minimal clinical supervision.
- Tab 6  
Documentation provided and signed by the **Clinical Line Manager/Department Head/DMS** providing comment on whether or not the applicant demonstrates capacity in a particular medical specialty to work at a senior level with minimal clinical supervision.
- Tab 7  
Documentation provided by the **applicant** demonstrating that he or she is required to work at a senior level with minimal clinical supervision in one or more areas of medical specialty.
- Tab 8  
Documentation provided and signed by the **Clinical Line Manager/Department Head/DMS** providing comment on whether or not the **applicant** is required to work at a senior level with minimal clinical supervision in one or more areas of medical specialty.
- Tab 9  
Joint or separate letters from the relevant **Director, Clinical Operations** and the **Director, Workforce Development** indicating whether the application is supported by the Public Health Organisation, in the context of and consistent with other approved applications.

Information Collated By ..... Dated .....

Position .....

Contact Phone No. if the Committee Requires Further Information .....