**Medical Appraisal Scotland**

Annual Report (2017/2018)

**Graphical version of this report can be located at:**  
<http://www.appraisal.nes.scot.nhs.uk/resources/AnnualReport-17-18/index.html>

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# Foreword

I’ve been involved in appraisal and revalidation since 2001/2, when consultant appraisal was introduced in Scotland. I have a very clear memory of the suspicion and outright fear that came from some quarters when being part of a team that toured around hospitals to explain what the object of the exercise was to be. It seemed very clear to some of us that a once per year chance to share what you were doing with an informed appraiser was a good idea, and if our feedback is correct, it has proved so here in Scotland.

The facility to have an online system, accessible to all doctors who practice in Scotland, combined with a cadre of appraisers who are trained to a very high standard, has proved to be a real bonus for all who work in our country. The decisions of the Revalidation Delivery Board for Scotland, set up to implement revalidation here, have meant that the profession has ownership of the processes, and whilst it will continue to improve on an iterative basis, the consensus is that it works well for our purposes. I have lost count of the number of times, both in UK and international meetings, someone from the audience has said “Why don’t we do it the way Scotland has?”, which always gives me a warm glow inside.

This report gives a summary of those iterative changes, to improve how the process is carried out and to continue to engage both appraisers and appraisees in improvements we make. Following the publication of Sir Keith Pearson’s review of revalidation, many workstreams have been set up to look at how things can be improved from the point of view of – quality of appraisal, feedback from patients, and other issues detailed in this report.

Some of you will notice that the report is now produced by NHS Education for Scotland instead of Healthcare Improvement for Scotland. This approach was another decision to streamline the oversight of the systems. I hope that you find it informative and helpful to you.

**Prof Bill Reid***Lead for Medical Revalidation, NHS Education for Scotland*

# Overview of Medical Appraisal in Scotland

My involvement with appraisal began in 2003 and was motivated by both an interest in medical education and a conviction that for a ‘caring’ profession medicine was often very poor in supporting colleagues who were struggling in their role. Not surprisingly I will happily argue that appraisal can not only contribute to professional development and excellence but can also help colleagues who for whatever reason are at risk of drifting into the realms of underperformance.

In Scotland even before the introduction of revalidation we had managed to achieve a consistently high level of engagement with appraisal across all specialities and could claim with some certainty that the ethos and the mechanics of appraisal were reasonably consistent whether you were a single-handed GP in Shetland or a specialist in a large teaching hospital.

Revalidation has had a fairly long gestation but when it arrived like many others I was very interested to see how revalidation would influence the appraisal process; would there be positive outcomes or could the explicit link to revalidation damage the process? The UMbRELLA project represented an ideal opportunity to work with colleagues from across the UK to evaluate the impact of revalidation. This was the largest and undoubtedly the most comprehensive and complex piece of work I have been involved with, involving the collection and analysis of a huge amount of material.

This research has provided an opportunity to analyse how revalidation has impacted across all sections of the medical workforce and to assess the Impact on the appraisal process. A clear benefit of revalidation has been that it has extended the appraisal process to groups of our colleagues who may have been previously regarded as hard to engage with or perhaps ‘easy to ignore’. The introduction of revalidation has clearly resulted in a more equitable and inclusive system where all doctors regardless of role have to be offered an appraisal by their employer and there is evidence from UMbRELLA that these groups see the process of revalidation as providing them with meaningful validation.

I have a very familiar refrain that if appraisal is to be effective then appraisers and appraisees need meaningful support. The UMbRELLA report emphasises that the skills of the appraiser and the resources available for appraisees are key to enhancing the experience of the appraisal and revalidation process. NES has led the way in providing appraiser training and supporting development in all areas identified as contributing to an effective appraisal and revalidation process. The results of UMbRELLA and the Pearson review demonstrate that Scotland is very well placed.

I would like to thank the Scottish Government and the revalidation delivery board for their continuing support and the central appraisal team at NES for all their efforts over the last year. As always I would like to acknowledge the efforts of all those involved in delivering and supporting the appraisal process at a local level; the administrative teams, the appraisers, course tutors and lead appraisers deserve recognition for their efforts and my particular thanks.

**Dr Niall Cameron**  
*National Appraisal Adviser*

# Training and Recruitment of Medical Appraisers

## Medical Appraiser training courses in 2017/2018

2017/2018 has been another successful and busy year for the training team as it strived to meet ongoing demand for training of New Appraisers. With Appraisal and revalidation now embedded and into its second 5-year cycle, turnover of appraisers due to other work commitments or retirement is beginning to impact in some of the territorial Boards.

The team sought to forecast the potential demand for the training of new appraisers and to factor this into a distributed series of courses across Scotland. As part of our cost efficiencies we have, where possible, brought courses in-house to use the modern office facilities of the NES estate.

Whilst this has predominantly been at our larger offices in Edinburgh and Glasgow, we have also utilised Inverness and provided training at Stirling Management Centre to give a location in central Scotland that would be easier to access for those based further north. The potential exists to use the recently re-furbished NES offices in Aberdeen however we are yet to run a course at that location as demand for places in 2017 was insufficient to make a course viable.

We carried out **14** training events this year across Scotland:

* 2-day New Appraiser Training (x7)
* 1-day Refresher Training (x3)
* additional 2-day New Appraiser Training (x1)
* 1-day Responsible Officers Conference Day (x1)
* 1-day Tutor Training Day (x1)
* 1 day Postgraduate Deans Appraiser Training (x1)

Three 2-day New Appraiser courses and four 1-day Refresher courses that were scheduled across the year had to be cancelled due to insufficient delegate numbers.

The 7 New Appraiser Training courses successfully trained a total of 79 new Secondary Care Appraisers and 19 new Primary Care (GP) Appraisers.

In Scotland, it is a Revalidation requirement for all appraisals to be completed by a NES-trained Appraiser. The Refresher Medical Appraiser training offers an opportunity for experienced appraisers to refresh their skills and allow them to continue in their role as an appraiser. Refresher training is recommended to be undertaken every 5 years by active appraisers.

During the period covered by this report a total of 43 Secondary Care Appraisers and 8 Primary Care Appraisers attended our Refresher training events.

The following tables give a further breakdown of course numbers

### New Medical Appraiser Training Courses

The following table illustrates the attendance at the courses.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Course** | **Participants** | | | | **Unused** *(out of 18)* |
| **Primary Care** | **Secondary Care** | **Total** | *DNAs* |
| N32 - 7 & 15 June 2017, Aberdeen | 3 | 10 | 13 | *2* | *5* |
| N33 - 1 & 11 August 2017, Edinburgh, Cancelled | 0 | 0 | 0 | *0* | *0* |
| N34 - 21 & 31 August 2017, Glasgow | 3 | 10 | 13 | *0* | *2*  *(15 capacity)* |
| N35 - 4 & 12 September 2017, Aberdeen, Cancelled | 0 | 0 | 0 | *0* | *0* |
| N36 5 & 15 September 2017, Edinburgh | 1 | 11 | 12 | *0* | *6* |
| N37 11 & 18 September 2017, Inverness | 2 | 6 | 8 | *0* | *1*  *(9 capacity)* |
| N38 4 & 16 October 2017  Glasgow | 3 | 11 | 14 | *0* | *4* |
| N39 10 & 18 October 2017  Stirling, Cancelled | 0 | 0 | 0 | *0* | *0* |
| N40 1 & 14 December 2017, Edinburgh | 4 | 10 | 14 | *0* | *4* |
| N41 8 & 17 January 2018  Edinburgh | 0 | 12 | 12 | *0* | *0*  *(12 capacity)* |
| XN9 29 January and 9 February 2018, Edinburgh | 3 | 9 | 12 | *0* | *0*  *(12 capacity)* |
| **Total** | **19** | **79** | **98** | **2** | *22* |

**1** additional New Appraiser Training Course (XN9) was added into our existing training delivery schedule to meet the demand for training that emerged late in 2017.

### Refresher Medical Appraiser Training Course

We successfully trained 8 Primary Care and 43 Secondary Care doctors. The following table summarises attendance at the courses.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Course** | **Participants** | | | | **Unused** *(out of 24)* |
| **Primary Care** | **Secondary Care** | **Total** | *DNAs* |
| R17 -17May 2017 Edinburgh | 5 | 14 | 19 | *2* | *5* |
| R18 – 25 September 2017 Edinburgh, Cancelled | 0 | 0 | 0 | *0* | *0* |
| R19 – 26 January 2018  Glasgow | 2 | 13 | 15 | *0* | *0*  *(course only had capacity for 15)* |
| R20 – 21 February 2018 Edinburgh | 1 | 16 | 17 | *0* | *1*  *(18 Capacity)* |
| R21 – 1 March 2018 Glasgow, cancelled | 0 | 0 | 0 | *0* | *0* |
| R22 – 2 March 2018, Edinburgh, cancelled | 0 | 0 | 0 | *0* | *0* |
| R23 – 5 March 2018, Glasgow, Cancelled | 0 | 0 | 0 | *0* | *0* |
| **Total** | **8** | **43** | **51** | *2* | *6* |

Interested in becoming an Appraiser?

If you are interested in attending either of our training events then you can find further details via the Medical Appraisal website.

<http://www.appraisal.nes.scot.nhs.uk/>

Training course details follow from this link

<http://www.appraisal.nes.scot.nhs.uk/be-an-appraiser.aspx>

Please then discuss further with your local Appraisal Lead as Appraisal management processes vary across the Health Boards in Scotland and it is important that you understand the requirements of your Board and that they can guide and support you in the Appraiser role.

## Distribution of trained resources across Health Boards

### Secondary Care Appraisers

During Financial Year 2017/18 we have successfully trained 122 Secondary Care doctors; 79 of whom attended the New Appraiser courses, and 43 attended the Refresher courses. The spread across the Health Boards is summarised below:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Health Board** | **New** | **Refresher** |
| Ayrshire & Arran | 3 | 2 |
| Borders | 3 | 4 |
| Dumfries & Galloway | 0 | 0 |
| Fife | 5 | 2 |
| Forth Valley | 2 | 2 |
| GG&C | 11 | 15 |
| Golden Jubilee | 3 | 0 |
| Grampian | 4 | 6 |
| Highland | 5 | 0 |
| Lanarkshire | 9 | 0 |
| Lothian | 19 | 8 |
| NSS / HIS | 0 | 1 |
| Orkney | 0 | 0 |
| Non NHS Bodies | 0 | 0 |
| Shetland | 0 | 0 |
| Tayside | 15 | 2 |
| Western Isles | 0 | 1 |
| **Total** | **79** | **43** |

### Primary Care Appraisers

We trained a total of 27 Primary Care doctors, 19 new GP Appraisers, and 8 GP Appraisers attended a Refresher course this year. The distribution over Health Boards is shown below:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Health Board** | **New** | **Refresher** |
| Ayrshire & Arran | 0 | 1 |
| Borders | 0 | 0 |
| Dumfries & Galloway | 0 | 1 |
| Fife | 4 | 0 |
| Forth Valley | 0 | 1 |
| GG&C | 4 | 0 |
| Golden Jubilee | 0 | 0 |
| Grampian | 4 | 0 |
| Highland | 1 | 1 |
| Lanarkshire | 4 | 1 |
| Lothian | 2 | 3 |
| NSS / HIS | 0 | 0 |
| Orkney | 0 | 0 |
| Non NHS Bodies | 0 | 0 |
| Shetland | 0 | 0 |
| Tayside | 0 | 0 |
| Western Isles | 0 | 0 |
| **Total** | **19** | **8** |

The number of appraisers, appraisees and appraisals undertaken, per Health Board, is summed up for GPs and Secondary Care doctors in tables under Appendix A and B.

### Challenges in the delivery of training

The main challenge to emerge across all the types of courses that we delivered during 2017-18 was the lack of availability of delegates.

This resulted in some courses being deleted from the delivery schedule due to insufficient numbers of applications and others that had to be amended, often at short notice, as service pressures reduced the numbers of planned attendees.

We recognise the pressures and conflict of priorities that can arise within the Service and naturally support the priority of delivering safe and effective patient care, however it would be concerning if the need for Appraisal training and delivery were to become a secondary priority, given its relevance to clinicians and the License to Practice requirements of the GMC that the Appraisal and Revalidation process delivers.

We recognise that the timing of proposed courses may benefit from being reviewed as it may not be practical to aim to deliver courses during the winter months when service demand is at its highest and, from trends analysis work that we have conducted, many appraisers are in their busiest period of appraisal activity.

With this in mind we are looking at a revised course delivery schedule for 2018-19 where the majority of training will be concentrated in periods that we hope will prove to be less conflicting in terms of peaks in demand for Service delivery.

# Training Day

## RO Training Day 5th December 2017

We held another successful RO Training Event at the end of 2017 at Murrayfield Stadium and those in attendance participated in a series of workshops and presentations that this year included:

* The Development of Medical Revalidation in England and its impact on Organisational Performance and Medical Practice
* Update on the revised GMC RO Dashboard, together with experiential feedback from an RO’s perspective
* GMC Strategy Overview 2017/18 and Fitness To Practice Reforms
* Update from NES – Appraiser Training/SOAR
* Patient & Public Involvement – Consideration and Next Steps

This event has now become an established feature in the calendar and plans are started for the 2018 Event which we expect to be held in November or December, at Murrayfield, depending on venue availability.

# Meetings and Other Highlights of 2017-2018

## Annual National Appraisal Conference

***(Incorporated as part of the Scottish Medical Education Conference)***

The annual Scottish Medical Appraisers conference was once again held in parallel with the Scottish Medical Education Conference at the EICC on 26th and 27th of April 2018. As in previous years we aimed to provide a mixture of workshops designed to inform and cascade information relating to issues and challenging scenarios appraisers can encounter, and also to allow discussion on various issues with both the GMC and various Royal College personnel with an active interest and role in the appraisal process.

### SAVE THE DATE!

Next year’s Conference will be held on **9th and 10th May 2019** at the EICC, Edinburgh – make sure you pop these dates in your diary!

## Support for Appraisal Leads and ROs

In a change to previous years we elected to move the six monthly meetings with Appraisal Leads and Appraisal Administration Leads that were traditionally held on the morning ahead of the start of the Annual Conference to separate dates. The rationale for this was based on availability of meeting attendees and that the topics for discussion would not necessarily be able to be fully discussed in the short time slots available.

As a result we held an Appraisal Leads Day at Murrayfield Stadium on Wednesday 30th May, and an Appraisal Administration Leads Day at Stirling on Wednesday 6th June.

The Appraisal Leads day was well attended with 17 Leads from Primary and Secondary Care in attendance.

In addition and with the support of Scottish Government the meeting with Responsible Officers is now an annual event, with the most recent event being held at Murrayfield Stadium on 5th December 2017.

## Responsible Officers Seminar Day

The team facilitated a Responsible Officers Seminar Day on behalf of Scottish Government Health and Social Care Department on 5th December 2017. This was hosted at Murrayfield Stadium Edinburgh and attracted an extended audience of approximately 40 medical professionals with vested interests in appraisal and revalidation, including the Chief Medical Officer, 4 RO’s and several Medical Directors.

The Event was introduced by Dr Catherine Calderwood, the Chief Medical Officer (CMO), and included appraisal and revalidation presentations by Professor Kieran Walshe (Manchester Business School) Dr Don Liu (Royal College of Physicians), and Ms Victoria Carson, Scottish Lead (GMC).

## National Appraisal Administrators Meeting

Medical Appraisal also met with Primary and Secondary Care Appraisal Administrators outwith the Annual Conference, meeting in Stirling on 6th June 2018. The meeting was attended by a limited number of Local Administration team members and 3 NES staff. Work pressures and location were factors in restricting attendance at this meeting and are factors that we will take on board when planning future meetings.

The next meeting will be on 9th November and will be hosted by Forth Valley who are able to offer VC facilities for those who are seeking not to have to travel to the event.

The meetings with these three separate stakeholder groups are valuable interactions to allow the dissemination of information and to allow the Medical Appraisal team to be kept informed of developments and emergent items that could influence future training delivery.

## Tutor Development

Last November we held the second annual 1 day Conference for the Medical Appraisal Tutor cohort at Stirling Court Hotel.

This was well attended and the day was structured to be an interactive and informative process for the tutors with updates on developments, skills training, and active discussion around a series of topics and experiences. Feedback from those who attended was very positive.

**Harry Peat**  
*Training Manager, Medical Appraisal Team*

# Event

## Annual Conference 2018

The Medical Appraisal Conference was held in conjunction with the NES Medical Conference at the EICC Edinburgh and again attracted a healthy number of appraisers and others with a vested interest in appraisal, revalidation, and the challenges and successes of running an appraisal process.

As with previous years we held a mix of workshops and plenary sessions around a range of topics.

The sections below show the topic, post-event delegate evaluation feedback of the session, and a small selection of free-text comments where available

**Quality Assurance of Appraisal in Primary and Secondary Care**

**Challenging and Tricky Appraisals**

“Excellent insight into this thorny area and some good soft skills learnt”

“Relevant, important and well presented - with useful, frank discussion”

“Excellent group session with realistic scenarios and ability for all to have an open and honest discussion”

**Recognition of Trainers and Appraisal**

“Clarified multiple problem points that apparently many of us were having.”

**Persuasion and negotiation Skills for Appraisers**

**GMC Updates on Appraisal and revalidation**

”Addressed a number of concerns regarding reflection and Bawa-Garba case and what the GMC were doing to address concerns from doctors.”

**Transactional Analysis in Appraisal**

“Found it very useful to apply principles of TA to Appraiser / Appraisee relationship”

**Improving Supporting information – Quality not Quantity**

Preparing a Conference programme is always at risk of not having all the relevant sessions that a delegate may want, however we feel relatively satisfied that the feedback received, both formally and anecdotally, has suggested that this year’s event has met with approval for the majority of those in attendance.

The dates for next year are set and the planning process starts in earnest next month as we look forward to another successful event in 2019.

# Plans for 2018/2019

## Course Delivery and promotion

At time of writing it is now approximately 2 and a half years since I took up the post of Training Manager for Medical Appraisal and it has been an eventful period.

During that time we have seen extremes in the level of demand for delivery of our courses, from creating and delivering additional courses during 2016 and 2017 to meet the operational needs of the Health Boards, to the more recent period where demand from primary and Secondary Care has dropped off resulting in either course cancellations or downsizing the number of delegates being accommodated. The latter aspect has also been affected by Service Pressures in the Boards as we have seen an increase in the number of delegate cancellations in order that they can meet the demands of their regular role and operating environment.

This drop in demand has, however, allowed us to explore new potential professional user groups who may require our services in terms of training for appraisal and the use of the SOAR system as a method of reflecting appraisal, CPD, and other documentary evidence requirements that may be relevant to their particular regulator.

In this context we have continued to provide Appraiser training courses for Public Service Dentists employed by the health Boards, the most recent phase of this successfully training 30 PDS clinicians.

We are continuing dialogue around a potential further tranche of training with a view to adding relevant courses to the training schedule – see link for this later in this article.

We are also in negotiations with Public Health clinicians in Scotland as their regulator is moving to a formal appraisal and revalidation process later this year and we anticipate that we will be developing courses for late 2018/2019.

We have transitioned the course training venues into NES premises over the last year to 18 months and this has been relatively successful, however we are still open to facilitating an event on Board premises or Board sourced commercial venues if the need and opportunity arises, as this may enable us to reach those located further out from the Central Belt/Aberdeen/Inverness areas of Scotland.

The current schedule of courses is advertised on the Medical Appraisal Scotland website under Events

<http://www.appraisal.nes.scot.nhs.uk/events.aspx>

Going forward, the plan is to have training delivery schedules that mirror the appraisal year and run from April to March.

## Forecasting potential Course Demand

Forecasting potential course demand and developing an appropriate course delivery schedule remains the biggest challenge that we face, and we recognise that it is not necessarily an easy task for Board Leads and Appraisal Admin Leads/teams to readily know if or when an existing appraiser may no longer be willing or able to continue in that role.

We remain committed to meeting any emergent demand as soon as we can however as our course tutors are clinicians themselves then they too are subject to service demands in their regular roles so it usually takes around 3 months from identification of a course being required to being able to secure all the resources (venue, tutors, support staff etc) in order to run the training event.

We would ask that the above be taken into consideration when looking to source additional training events.

## Responsible Officers Event – November/December 2018

We are currently in the process of organising another Responsible Officer Event for Quarter 4 of 2018 with the plan being to hold the event at Murrayfield Stadium, subject to its availability on the potential dates identified. More details will follow on this once the venue has been secured.

## Acknowledgement and Thanks

As I write these closing paragraphs I would like to take the opportunity to thank everyone within NES and the extended network of staff in the Health Boards for their support and insight during my time as Training Manager for Medical Appraisal and SOAR.

I am moving to a new post in NES Dental in August to develop and implement a Quality Management Framework for undergraduate and post-graduate speciality training. My time, experience, and knowledge gained from the Training Manager role will help me with my new opportunity.

**Harry Peat**  
*Training Manager, Medical Appraisal Team*

# SOARing through 2017/2018 and beyond

*SOAR Team re-training / planning*

*SOAR Development brought inhouse*

**Significant Milestones**

## Supporting SOAR Users

During 2017/2018, the SOAR helpdesk resolved 6895 enquiries[[1]](#footnote-1) – about a hundred less compared to the year before. Of the queries we dealt with, nearly half (49%) were from Secondary Care users (Consultants and Secondary Care Admin teams); a third (30%) were from Primary Care users (including Admin teams); and Trainee queries came to 16%; and queries from MSF Raters, Pharmacists, Receptionists, GP Practice Managers, and DMEs (Directors of Medical Education) and EOs (Educational Organisations) and Others make up the rest (5%).

There was a significant number of MSF queries this year (1869 / 27%), mostly from folks who wished to repeat their MSF in preparation for their next Revalidation. 1038 tickets revolved around helping users log in to SOAR (15%); and 775 tickets (11%) were submitted to help with the appraisal form queries (submission, Form 4, uploading queries).

*Please review the graphical version of the annual report for chart breakdown.*

Attendance in the live SOAR demos continued to drop in 2017/2018. As such, a decision was made to cease the provision of these sessions as of December 2017. User guidance for SOAR is available on the Medical Appraisal Scotland website, and the helpdesk is always there for anyone with questions around SOAR. Plans are in place to provide short video guides to SOAR in early 2018/2019 in addition to the existing guidance.

## Review of MSF Options

SOAR continues the provision of MSF via our 3rd party provider, WASP Software. This arrangement has been extended through to the end of March 2019, covering the 2018/2019 period.

As had been reported last year, NES had just commissioned a 360 tool for those in Leadership role. We contacted the development company responsible for this project and initiated a feasibility study to determine options to extend this tool for wider multi-disciplinaries. Due to technical complications with the way Leadership360 was initially built, we decided not to pursue this in 2017/2018; but hope to explore this further in 2018/2019 for a one 360 tool approach for all disciplines.

### Repeat MSF

Originally NES was funded to only provide MSF for the first cycle of Revalidation; and this was how the WASP system was set up with SOAR. To help facilitate those who wished to do a second MSF via WASP, we would have needed to go in to WASP to manually delete the report to enable the repeat MSF.

To help ease the burden of manually deleting MSFs on WASP, a clear down of completed and downloaded MSF reports (pre-March 2015) was scheduled for December. Additionally, a new protocol has been set up (to ensure GDPR compliance) where WASP will run a scheduled data clear down annually.

## SOAR team changes

In September, after 3 ½ year with the SOAR team, **Kris Wright** joined the wider Turas team within NES. Kris is dedicated, hardworking and an important part of the team – SOAR’s loss is Turas’ immense gain. We wish Kris the best of luck in this new step in his career.

In November, **Michael Teasdale** joined the SOAR development team from the Scottish Medical Training Recruitment Team within NES, where he was the Recruitment Manager. Prior to this Michael fulfilled various web development roles within the SMT team including Junior Developer and Application Support. Michael attained academic qualifications in computing (BEng Hons Computing 2:1) and has built up experience in web development, data administration and data analysis.

## SOAR inhouse development

Although the team change did bring a degree of interruption to our progress, Michael was quick to pick up the pace and we were able to get back on track quickly. We consolidated our learning and began our first significant development project in January (CPD Log refinement, and various misc fixes) which we hope to deploy in April / May 2018.

A note of all development efforts can be found on the Medical Appraisal Scotland website once they have been deployed.

<http://www.appraisal.nes.scot.nhs.uk/help-me-with/soar/about-soar/deployhistory.aspx>

## Other developments

### Reporting Tools on SOAR

Following a thorough review of existing reports on SOAR in collaboration with the Local Admin teams, we determined that a number of the required reports are slight variations of each other. An Export to Spreadsheet function was created in the User Search, Appraisee, Appraiser, and Interview pages to facilitate this so that Admins can download the data and remove what columns they don’t need from the spreadsheet.

This reduced the number of proposed reports significantly, and most of them have been worked on in the last quarter of 2017/2018. Pending internal testing, finalised reports should be deployed in April / May 2018.

### Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Developers

A new Service Level Agreement (SLA) was agreed with our developers for 2017/2018, initially for 6 months. This ensured that SOAR is properly supported during our training period. This was extended to the full year following team change in September.

On the face of it, 2017/2018 has been a relatively quiet year for SOAR due to the lack of significant achievements. This is far from the truth. Over the past 12 months, the SOAR team has undergone significant training to ensure the team is skilled up to a level where we can take on development work inhouse. The team’s growth and capacity are reflected in the SLA that has recently been renewed for 2018/2019 – this was renewed (at reduced support days) at £13,200 (+VAT), nearly £20k less than previous year.

## Future projects and Impacts

### SOAR Helpdesk

The proposed change in SOAR’s helpdesk support software remains in the pipeline as further refinements are added to the new system. In the interim SOAR will continue to use its existing setup (with Zendesk), and the move to the new software (ServiceNow) delayed until early 2019.

From a user’s point of view, there is no change or impact on them. All SOAR queries will continue to be sent to [SOAR@nes.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:SOAR@nes.scot.nhs.uk) and they will be picked up and actioned as per normal.

### Recognition of Trainer (RoT) Quality Assurance

In collaboration with the five Medical Universities in Scotland, NES is working on a QA process for ROT.

There are some minor functions that would help the process on SOAR and we hope to work on this in 2018/2019.

A notable change is that the Scottish Trainer Framework website is now hosted by the Scottish Deanery website: <http://www.scotlanddeanery.nhs.scot/trainer-information/scottish-trainer-framework/> - please update your bookmarks.

### Multi-Disciplines on SOAR?

We reported last year of interests from Dental colleagues in the use of SOAR for their appraisal process. Due to limited resources and capacity, this was not carried out in 2017/2018.

Interest in the use of SOAR from other disciplines has increased, with noted interests from Public Heath Doctors and Physician Assistants. We hope to explore options to expand SOAR to cater for multiple medical professional groups in 2018/2019, rather than just tagging on another specialty on to SOAR. We will keep colleagues updated on progress of this if and as it happens.

### Web hosting and platform changes

As part of SOAR’s move into the NES Digital directorate, it is envisaged that SOAR will be moving to the Turas platform in the future. The first step of this is to move the web hosting, which we have initiated in March 2018. We hope to have this complete in April/May, which will set up the foundations for the move to the Turas platform when the time comes.

## SOAR and GDPR

Following user feedback, a “News Alert” function was introduced on SOAR in 2014 – as a means to communicate with all system users, advising of any potential system downtime for maintenance or deployment etc.

Use of this function extended (as the situation arose) to notifying Appraisers and/or Appraisees of significant changes to Appraisal and Revalidation. We have also used it to alert Appraisers to our annual conference and to book their place etc.

We also extended the function so that Local health board admin teams can send messages out to their doctors to flag any significant local issues.

To ensure GDPR compliance, which was rolled out on 25 May 2018, a thorough review of the SOAR data policies took place, supported by the NES Information Governance team. Minimal changes were made to the policies as SOAR does not share any of its data with other systems. However, changes were made on the News Alert function.

All messages are now tagged in a category, which users are invited to opt-in to. Users will only receive email notifications regarding these messages if they have opted in to these categories:

* Local Health Board Updates
* Appraisal and Revalidation
* NES run Events
* Non-NES run Events
* Other

System Notifications and Reminder emails - e.g. reminders to sign off Form 4 - will remain and cannot be opted out of.

Additionally, the function to send messages is now restricted to System and Local Admin teams only; and Local Admins can only send out “Local Health Board updates”.

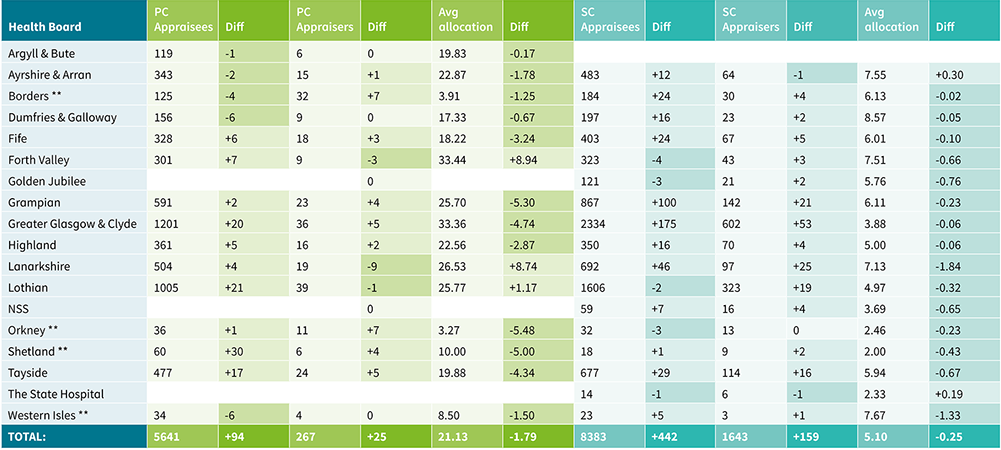
If you have not already done so, please login to SOAR to select the categories you wish to opt in to, to receive notifications as and when messages are sent.

**We strongly recommend that you opt-in to "Local Health Board Update" messages so that you are notified when your Health Board Admins circulate any important messages.**

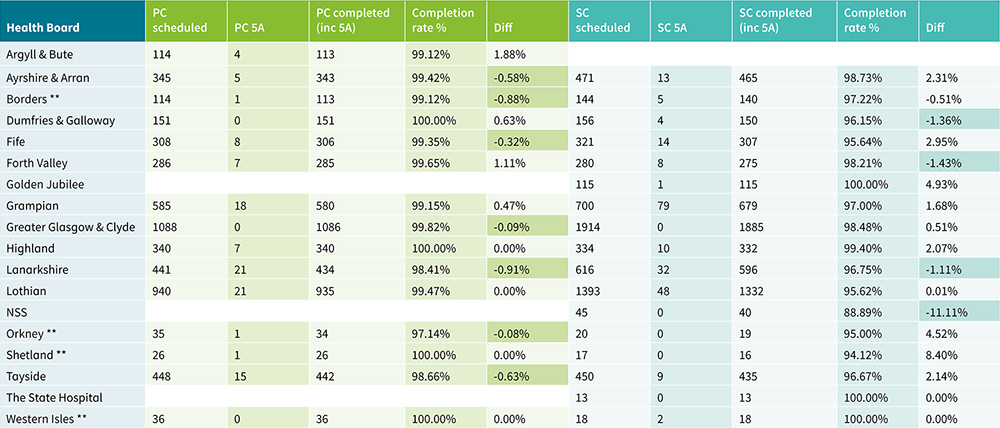
If you are an **Appraiser**, please consider opting in to the **NES-run events** so that you are kept informed about the Annual Medical Appraisers conference.

# Appendices

### Appraisees and Appraisers counts from SOAR (using “User Search” function on SOAR)



### Appraisal counts from SOAR – interview dates set between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2018 (PC) and 1 April 2017 and 1 April 2018 (SC)



\*\* These health boards have more Primary Care (GP) Appraisers on SOAR, but only those assigned to Appraisees have been counted. (Data taken on 19 July 2018)

1. Figures taken from Zendesk support system [↑](#footnote-ref-1)