



Department
of Health &
Social Care

Dr Vish Sharma
BMA Consultants Committee Chair

29 November 2023

Dear Vish

Clarification relating to the 'Offer for the consultant workforce in England'

We agreed that we would write to further clarify the intention behind the SPA section of the current offer.

The Government and NHS Employers, together with BMA and HCSA, recognise the importance of SPA time and the vital role that consultants play in service re-design and improving the quality of care that patients receive. The wording in the document is designed to take the current language regarding SPA time and offer a small expansion to make it clear that SPA time can, with agreement, be used to support service and quality improvement work in key NHS priority areas. We have provided some examples within the offer of the type of work that this can include.

However, we have been clear throughout that this is not a means for employers to seek to reduce SPA time for consultants and it does not permit employers to convert SPA into Direct Clinical Care.

We have also been clear that current usages of SPA time, as per the definition within the contract, remain valid. There is no intention to ignore or reduce these other priorities.

This proposal would not change the current contractual provisions in relation to SPA time and, if the offer is accepted, we will instead work together with you and HCSA to develop appropriate guidance.

We have, as requested, clarified the content on this element of the offer on the NHS Employers website as you made us aware this has caused concern amongst your members. We are sorry for this confusion.

Yours sincerely

DHCS and NHS Employers