

Becoming a BMA Resident Doctor Representative – The Facts (2024)

Q. What is a Local Negotiating Committee?

- A. The LNC at each Trust is made up of all the accredited BMA reps at that Trust (Resident doctors, SAS doctors, Consultants and other local grades), plus the BMA officer for the Trust. The LNC is chaired by one of the BMA reps. The LNC reps meet with Trust management (at the Joint LNC) to negotiate on terms and conditions, policies and procedures relevant to doctors and to raise collective issues. For example, we might discuss LTFT Work scheduling, carry over of leave, SPA time, mandatory training, negotiate a new policy on Job Planning for consultants; discuss with the Trust whether they will give additional leave to SAS doctors; discuss strike pay issues, Locally Employed Doctor contracts. Further info on our website – <https://www.bma.org.uk/what-we-do/local-negotiating-committees>

LNC/JLNC



LNC – Local Negotiating Committee

This is staff side – BMA reps representing all relevant grades/workplaces. The LNC should have their own constitution. The model constitution is on LNC support hub. The LNC should meet separately for a premeet before joint meetings and at other times.



JLNC – Joint Local Negotiating Committee

This is the joint meeting with management. There will be a separate constitution for this meeting which will be agreed with management side. It will set out how many seats each side has at the meeting and who can attend.

Q. Who can be a BMA rep?

- A. Any BMA member – as long as there are enough seats on the Trust Local Negotiating Committee. Your BMA Industrial Relations Officer or Regional Support Officer (IRO/RSO) will advise on this, and liaise with the Trust if necessary).

Q. What are we looking for in a BMA rep?

- A. Someone who is happy to stand up for colleagues, work with (and sometimes challenge) senior management, who has an ear to the ground, is approachable and interested in developing. We offer training, ongoing support and further opportunities for development.



Q. How do you become a BMA rep?

- A. Tell the BMA that you are interested in becoming a rep. If there are more volunteers than places an election may be held – or the LNC may agree to allow additional BMA reps, consider job share or other arrangements.

Q. What do I have to do to become a rep?

- A. Complete the accreditation form that your IRO/RSO will send you; complete the 30-minute mandatory online training module (see below); meet with your IRO/RSO for an introductory chat and a welcome pack.

Q. What is 'accreditation'?

- A. This is the process where the BMA confirms to the Trust as your employer that the BMA have accredited you as a BMA rep (we check that you are a member, that you have completed the accreditation form, completed the initial online training module, been elected if needed etc.). The BMA then informs the Trust that you are a rep. As a BMA rep you will be a trade union rep at your workplace. Accredited trade union reps are entitled to request reasonable time off with pay to carry out their duties such as attending meetings at the Trust, attending initial or advanced BMA training for reps etc. This time off with pay does not come out of your annual or study leave or any other leave, it is specifically for accredited trade union reps. You are also afforded additional protections allowing you to raise issues with confidence.

Q. What is the role of a BMA Resident Doctor rep? What will I actually have to do?

- A. The key part of the role is to represent your fellow doctors at the Trust. This means:
- communicating with your colleagues;
 - making sure they know you are a BMA rep;
 - asking them to let you know about any problems/issues that they are having – this is collective matters affecting more than one Resident doctor.
 - taking these issues to the most appropriate meeting to try and resolve any problems/improve working arrangements for Resident doctors – this could be the Local Negotiating Committee meetings (see below), or it could be the trust-held Junior Doctor Forum meetings (see below), or some other route. Your IRO/RSO can advise you on how best to raise matters.
 - attending as many as you can of the BMA Local Negotiating Committee meetings at the Trust (usually 4 – 6 per year)
 - attending as many as you can of the 'Junior' Doctor Forum meetings at the Trust (usually 4 per year)
 - Attending the quarterly Regional RDC in your area, when you can.
 - Feeding back to your colleagues about what is being discussed at these meetings

It's quite a flexible role and some of the aspects you might want to get involved with are: helping arrange trust meetings, recently getting the ballot out, recruitment events, attending inductions to promote our campaigns or membership, communications to colleagues, attending the JDF, being the conduit to escalate collective issues, organising/supervising pickets, liaising on strike issues. Some reps lead on local campaigns such as increasing bank rates/MAPs etc.

If there are a few reps at a trust, then we can divide out the responsibilities and workload. It isn't an overly onerous role but there are opportunities to get more involved.

Q. What is a 'Junior Doctor Forum'?

- A. Each Trust has a JDF – run and (sometimes) chaired by the Guardian of Safe Working Hours. These forums are required under the new 2016 'Junior' doctor contract. The Guardian will look to meet with 'Junior' doctors at the Trust and identify any rota/exception reported/other issues which may need looking into. The JDF also decides how any fines from exception reporting will be spent. It's a more informal meeting where issues can be discussed, however you may escalate issues to the LNC and JLNC if they are not resolved.

Q. What support does the BMA provide to their reps?

- A. Your first line for any support is your IRO/RSO – they will provide you with their contact details. There is also a hub page on the BMA website which contains lots of the information LNC reps need – including our LNC Handbook, copies of model policies, details of the training we provide for reps, a link to order merchandise to promote the BMA at work and lots of other useful information. <https://www.bma.org.uk/LNC>

Your LNC Chair and colleagues will also help you and generally have a wealth of experience.

We also offer a face-to-face training course for all BMA reps, which you can also book onto via the hub page. You can claim your travel expenses and the Trust is legally obliged to give you paid time off to attend. This course is currently being reviewed for 2025.

Q. How to I book 'time off for trade union duties'?

- A. Usually in the same way you book any other leave – sometimes your manager will not know what time off for trade union duties is – if so, please point them to HR, or speak to your IRO/RSO

Q. What happens when I rotate or move Trusts?

- A. We are keen to retain your skills and experience when you move trusts. If you would like to continue as a rep, let your BMA officer know and they will request that your accreditation is transferred. This is subject to there being further rep vacancies in your new trust.

Q. What is the RDC?

- A. The UK Resident Doctors Committee (RDC) of the BMA (previously known as 'Junior Doctors Committee') represents doctors in training in national negotiations and helps set BMA policy for Resident doctors. It is made up of Resident doctors predominantly elected by members of the BMA via 11 regional Resident Doctors Committees. <https://www.bma.org.uk/what-we-do/committees/junior-doctors-committee/junior-doctors-committee-uk-overview>

Q. What are the Regional RDCs?

- A. Regional Resident Doctors Committees (RDC) provide a forum to share updates, issues and solutions across regions, represent doctors in training in regional negotiations, nominates representatives to the national committee and helps set BMA policy for Resident doctors. Each region will have one or more RDCs covering a specific area.

LNC reps are entitled to attend and participate in their RDC which provides valuable networking opportunities and allows reps from the area to liaise with each other and share good practice.

The committees meet quarterly either by Teams or face to face and holds annual elections for the RDC executive committee members. The Chair and Deputy Chair of the regional committee will also sit on the UK RD Committee, some RDCs have additional UK JDC seats depending on their size.

If you would like to be on the RDC email group (known as a listserver) please email your region or supporting BMA officer. This is the forum used to circulate papers as well as relevant regional updates and discussions. We also have several WhatsApp Groups for reps and interested BMA members in the area.

<https://www.bma.org.uk/RJDC>

ANY OTHER QUESTIONS?

**Please directly ask your IRO/RSO who will be happy to help.
Or contact your BMA region:**

MR Admin Northwest	mr-admin-northwest@bma.org.uk
MR Admin Southwest	mr-admin-southwest@bma.org.uk
MR Admin Southeast	mr-admin-southeast@bma.org.uk
MR Admin London	mr-admin-London@bma.org.uk
MR Admin Midlands	mr-admin-midlands@bma.org.uk
MR Admin East of England	mr-admin-east-of-england@bma.org.uk
MR Admin Yorkshire and Northeast	mr-admin-yorkshire-and-northeast@bma.org.uk

BMA

British Medical Association, BMA House,
Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JP
bma.org.uk

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