



Service user feedback guidance: AG-003 for Forensic Pathologists

The GMC expects doctors who hold a Licence to Practise to collect and reflect on feedback from patients or those they provide medical services to as part of the revalidation process. This feedback is separate to that collected and reflected upon from colleagues.

This guidance is for forensic pathologists on the Home Office Register of Forensic Pathologists and also to be used by forensic pathologists employed by the Department of Justice, Northern Ireland for appraisal and revalidation purposes; and can be read in conjunction with:

- Service User Feedback Form: [AF-006](#).
- GMC guidance - Supporting information for revalidation 2024: <https://www.gmc-uk.org/registration-and-licensing/managing-your-registration/revalidation/guidance-on-supporting-information-for-revalidation>.
- Academy of Medical Royal Colleges. Medical Appraisal Guide 2022. A guide to professional medical appraisal, page 16. https://www.aomrc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Medical_Appraisal_Guide_2022_0622.pdf.
- GMC guidance on feedback is available at: <https://www.gmc-uk.org/registration-and-licensing/managing-your-registration/revalidation/guidance-on-supporting-information-for-revalidation/patient-feedback---or-feedback-from-those-you-provide-medical-services-to>.

This feedback must be collected at least once per revalidation cycle using a formal feedback exercise. When you do this, is up to you, but the exercise should be completed within a single appraisal year. The feedback should be from the whole scope of your practice and must be sufficient to allow you to effectively reflect upon your practice. The feedback should be submitted to and reflected upon at your appraisal. As a guide you should aim to gain feedback from 15 individuals.

The Service User Feedback Form: AF-006 has been designed to assist you to collect feedback for this purpose. It should NOT be used to collect feedback from colleagues (where a “colleague” is defined by the GMC as a peer, people you supervise, individuals who support your work or those you interact or liaise with, from other professions).

For the purpose of service user feedback:

- feedback should be gained where possible from live patients you have contact with for example if you examine or provide any treatment or advice to a live patient as part of your medical practice.
- if you do not have live patients, feedback should be gained from a range of those you provide medical services to. The GMC suggests this could be from students, clients or those who rely upon your expert opinion. Examples of consumers of forensic pathology services could include coroners, coroner’s officers, police officers, scene of crime officers, solicitors, barristers, judges, members of the CPS or National Crime Agency, chairs of boards, committees, or tribunals. Feedback could be gained from relatives, carers or advocates.

You are provided with an electronic version of the form. The form can thus be emailed to a service user, incorporated into a case file booklet or printed out and carried for use with a case file.

When ready to use the form, it should be given to the patient or service user. Prior to doing this the GMC advises that the individual should be told; how they can give feedback, what the feedback will be used for, that the feedback will be confidential or anonymous at the appraisal discussion, and that they do not have to take part. It should be explained that the form is returned to you and thus you will see the feedback. Depending how this is provided to you then they should be made aware that you will likely know who has sent it.

The top part of the form should have your name on it along with the date the feedback is being gathered on.

The box on the front of the form should be used to provide an email address to which the form can be scanned and sent back to or a postal address to which it should be posted to. The form can also be completed and handed to you at the time. It is recommended as the form contains feedback on your practice that the form is provided to you direct and not collated for example by a practice manager. However, how this is done is up to you.

The individual should then indicate with a “x” or “✓” the most appropriate response for each of the questions within the two tables.

They then have the opportunity to provide free text feedback in the last box.

Once completed and returned you should collate all the responses and submit them all to your appraiser along with your other supporting evidence ahead of your appraisal. These forms should not be submitted to your responsible officer.

At your appraisal you should reflect upon the responses. You should discuss and agree with your appraiser any change of practice that arises as a consequence of this reflection. If change is required, the GMC advise that this should be enacted in a timely manner. The outcome of this feedback exercise will be recorded within the appraisal documentation.

Although this form has been designed for the purpose of patient and service user feedback the GMC advise that this need not be the sole form of feedback and reflection from patients or service users. Other forms of feedback suggested by the GMC include:

- structured interviews
- focus groups
- formal comment cards
- remote feedback tools such as apps
- unsolicited feedback such as cards or letters

If for some reason you feel unable to access or collect feedback using this form, you are unsure who is a colleague and who is a service user or feel there is a conflict of interest when asking certain individuals to provide feedback then please seek further advice from either your responsible officer or the clinical lead appraiser.

END OF DOCUMENT

This guidance document has been created and is managed by the Home Office Forensic Pathology Unit within the Home Office Science Directorate.

Any suggestions for improvements or comments should be directed to the team at: pathology@homeoffice.gov.uk.

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