

To consider

Registration of Doctors for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games

Issue

1. The arrangements for registering doctors accompanying athletes to the 2012 Games.

Recommendation

2. To endorse the arrangements for the registration of team doctors attending the 2012 Games (paragraphs 9-14).

3. To note that Council will be invited to amend the General Medical Council Registration Fees Regulations 2011 to enable the Registrar to waive the registration fee for team doctors who attend the 2012 Games (paragraphs 15-17).

Further information

4.	Anthony Egerton	0161 923 6312	aegerton@gmc-uk.org
	Clare Barton	0161 923 6589	cbarton@gmc-uk.org

Background

5. London will host the Olympic Games during the period 27 July to 12 August 2012. It will also host the Paralympic Games during the period 29 August to 9 September 2012.
6. Athletes attending either of the Games will be accompanied by team doctors who will provide medical services to them and who will therefore require registration with the GMC.
7. We have been in regular consultation with the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG) to determine how to deal with applications from the approximately 1,000 team doctors travelling to the UK for the Games.
8. This paper seeks the Board's endorsement of the arrangements we have developed to ensure that the registration process for these doctors is as simple as possible without compromising the integrity of the register.

Discussion

Registration arrangements

9. It would be unlawful for Olympic or Paralympic team doctors to practise without registration, so we intend to register team doctors under section 27B of the Medical Act (1983 as amended). Section 27B provides for special purpose registration. We introduced this form of registration in 2007 with the Olympics very much in mind.
10. Section 27B stipulates that 'A person who is or intends to be in the United Kingdom temporarily for the purposes of providing particular medical services exclusively to persons who are not nationals of the United Kingdom may apply to the General Council to be registered temporarily as a fully registered medical practitioner'.
11. For Olympic and Paralympic team doctors the temporary period of registration is for the duration of the relevant Games only thus restricting the doctors' practice in terms of duration and whom they may treat. In simple terms, Olympic team doctors visiting the UK next summer will only be permitted to treat their athletes and undertake medical practice relevant to that practice.
12. We have established a process based on our experience of dealing with applications from doctors for the Women's Rugby World Cup which took place in the UK in 2010. The process in 2012 will rely on support from the principal doctors travelling with each team to the Games.
13. This approach has been discussed with, and welcomed by, the International Olympic Committee's Chief Medical Officer and Scientist and LOCOG's Medical Director and Medical Team Manager.

14. As part of the application process for temporary registration we normally give applicants the option of completing an ethnic monitoring form. We have considered whether we should gather information on the ethnicity of the 2012 team doctors. However, we have decided to exclude this form for the following reasons:

- a. This information is not collected by certain countries who will be participating in the Games.
- b. The ethnicity/race classifications used by the UK are not universal. Each country collects this information (or not) using their own classifications. There are not even common ethnicity classifications across Europe.
- c. Even if we were to collect this information, it will not be possible to compare like with like across different countries.
- d. The IOC has informed us that questions concerning race do not accord with their Charter and have asked that we do not include them in our forms.

Recommendation: To endorse the arrangements for the registration of team doctors attending the 2012 Games.

Waiving the registration fee

15. On 19 April 2011 the Resources Committee agreed that doctors applying for registration solely for the purpose of providing medical services to athletes at the Games should not be required to pay a registration fee.

16. In reaching this decision, the Resources Committee took into account that:

- a. For the last two Games in China and Vancouver doctors accompanying athletes were not required to pay a fee when registering with the appropriate local medical authority.
- b. LOCOG has also offered to pay the GMC approximately £24,000 toward the costs of registering the team doctors of each country attending the games.
- c. The registration arrangements for team doctors will reduce the normal costs incurred when processing applications for special purpose registration.
- d. The net costs we expect to incur, after taking into account LOCOG's various contributions, are negligible. Consequently if we do not waive the fee we will generate a significant surplus from the Games, an outcome which would be impossible to justify.
- e. LOCOG has agreed to license our use of the Olympic and Paralympic logos, enabling us, if we choose, to use the logo on our relevant paperwork and on the website to show that we are supporting the games.

f. LOCOG has agreed to translate our documentation into the other official Olympic languages (French and Spanish).

17. Normally applications under section 27B of the Medical Act are subject to a mandatory application fee under Regulation 3(2)(e) of the General Medical Council Registration Fees Regulations 2011. On 19 July 2011 Council will therefore be invited to amend the regulations in order for the fee to be waived.

Recommendation: To note that Council will be invited to amend the General Medical Council Registration Fees Regulations 2011 to enable the Registrar to waive the registration fee for team doctors who attend the 2012 Games.

Resource implications

18. We have already identified the extra resource required to ensure we deal with all applications from team doctors attending either Games in a timely and professional manner so that the applicants have registration in time for the start of the Games. Our current estimates indicate we would require two additional temporary members of staff to deal with applications received for the Games. Additional staff costs will be factored into the 2012 budget.

Equality

19. Subject to the Board's endorsement of the arrangements as described above, we will not collect ethnicity monitoring data from team doctors attending either Games (paragraph 14).

20. As already noted (paragraph 16f), LOCOG has agreed to translate our documentation into the other official Olympic languages.

Communications

21. This paper is not confidential and will be published on our website. Nearer to the time of the Games we will undertake, in concert with colleagues in Communications Directorate, appropriate publicity of our support to both Games.

22. In the meantime we are being supported by LOCOG in our communication with team and principal doctors to ensure that they know what is required of them to gain timely registration before July 2012.