

**Dear Doctor,**

Don't we look festive in our Christmas hats! With the weather of late we think we'd probably need some Father Christmas jackets too.

A pretty full newsletter for you at this festive time of year and so whilst you read it we'd like to wish you and yours, family and colleagues, a very Happy Christmas!



## Is it a conflict of interest?

The way healthcare is delivered locally and nationally is changing.

Increasingly, we are seeing GP practices merging, federating, or otherwise working together to deliver more efficient care to patients. This raises the question of conflict in appraisal – if you are a doctor working in a practice which is affiliated in some way to another practice, is there a conflict of interest in your appraising a doctor from that other practice?

Wessex Appraisal Service has always maintained that appraisers are experts in their field and are capable of making sound professional judgments. However, if you consider that the relationship you have with your appraiser, whether professional or personal, is too close or otherwise too difficult for you to be appraised by them, please let us know and we will review the allocation.

Please bear in mind that we can't and won't always be aware of innovative business ventures in primary care and how this might affect appraiser/appraisee match suitability.

However, I would suggest that there are many shades of grey here and I trust your judgment in assessing whether an appraisal should or shouldn't take place.

As always - first, do no harm; and, if in doubt, ask!

Feel free to contact your Lead, [myself](#) or [Susie Caesar](#) to discuss any allocations that you are unsure of.

Best wishes,

Dr. Stephanie Hughes - Deputy Service Lead

B.Sc. (Hons) B.M. B.Ch. (Oxon) F.R.C.G.P. Dip.Med.Ed. M.Acad.M.Ed.

## It's on the website!

A reminder to you all to use our new website [www.wessexappraisal.org](http://www.wessexappraisal.org)

If you have any questions about your appraisal, you should find the answer under the "For Appraisees" tab.

If, however, you find that your question cannot be answered on the website the please do feed this back to us and email [Tara](#).

Also, if you have a twitter account then do follow us at @wessexappraisal and join in the fun! If you don't have a twitter account then set one up and don't be left out! There's no price tag on a hashtag!

# GP Health & Appraisal

A reminder to all that it should not be the responsibility of GPH doctors to deal with any issues around the appraisal process. They should recommend any doctor to contact the Wessex Appraisal Service and explain that they have a personal or medical reason for which they need to apply for a postponed appraisal.

It would be inappropriate for a GP Health doctor to contact our service on behalf of any doctors, except in exceptional circumstances.

Appraisal is a key time to pick up any health issues and to advertise the GP Health service to any GP with a mental health or addiction issue.

For more information on GP Health please visit [www.gphealth.nhs.uk](http://www.gphealth.nhs.uk). The GP Health team advise doctors to call them as the first point of contact on 0300 0303 300.

## WESSEX APPRAISAL SERVICE CHRISTMAS SONG 2017

TO THE TUNE OF "OH CHRISTMAS TREE" by ERNST ANSCHUTZ  
MASSACRED BY DR. STEPHANIE HUGHES FOR ENTERTAINMENT PURPOSES

Oh appraisee, oh appraisee,  
I look forward to our meeting.  
Oh appraisee, oh appraisee,  
I'm as warm as central heating.  
Your challenges throughout the year,  
The achievements that you hold so dear,  
Oh appraisee, oh appraisee,  
My caring takes some beating.

Oh appraisee, oh appraisee,  
Our talk will be amazing!  
Oh appraisee, oh appraisee,  
Let's do some "navel-gazing".  
I'll challenge and support you well,  
I'm confident that we will gel,  
Oh appraisee, oh appraisee,  
I'll ensure I do some praising.

There are five more wonderful verses of this song which can be found on our website [here](#).



# Ottawa ICME Conference 2018 – Abu Dhabi

We're incredibly proud to say that 4 of our appraisal leads will be attending the Ottawa ICME Conference 2018 in Abu Dhabi. Susi will be doing a workshop on Reclaiming Professionalism and Karen Gregory will be giving a presentation on Engagement with Professional Development Plans. Shehla Jamil and Karen Bentley will be providing support. Here is an update from Karen Gregory:

Earlier this year myself and Susi presented at the conference for the International Association of Medical Regulators and I had the privilege to not only listen to Sir Keith Pearson delivering his report on revalidation so far, but also to have him listen to me. It was a very proud moment when I received very positive comments from the man himself!

Going forward, in March next year, a few of us from the appraisal lead team are off to Abu Dhabi to take part in the International Medical Educators (Ottawa) Conference. We are all very excited to have this opportunity and hope to learn from others as well as sharing our own experiences. I will be presenting my diploma research on engagement with Professional Development Plans (PDPs). This demonstrated that engagement is most likely to occur if, during the appraisal, high stake goals are identified along with characteristics such as persistence, enthusiasm and an attraction towards the goal. Barriers such as mismatched transactions have a detrimental effect. These elements can be linked to form Gregory's framework. By engaging doctors in PDP objectives, appraisers can encourage them to think about putting their learning into practice. Consideration can be given to quality improvement activities ultimately improving patient care and safety. We all know that the PDP should arise from the appraisal discussion, be facilitated by the appraiser but owned by the appraisee.

I will share my theory that engagement in the PDP is essential for it to have a meaningful outcome. I believe that high quality PDPs can lead to improvements in patient care and safety if the impact on patient management is considered. My aim is to educate appraisers about engagement factors in order to help them to facilitate the PDP discussion more easily.

- Karen Gregory

[@OTTAWAICME2018](#)



Cartoon by Dr Will Liddell

# 10 years, 10 questions

Sarah Lang is our longest serving member of the administration team, having started working at Wessex Appraisal Service in September 2008. To (nearly) quote Earth, Wind and Fire; "Ba de ya – hired in September". Sarah's passion for our service is second to none. She's an innovative member of the team and one of the reasons that this service continues to grow so successfully.

In September this year, Wessex Appraisal Service celebrated its 10th birthday and to mark the occasion we've presented Sarah with 10 questions:



1. You've been working for the appraisal service for nearly 10 years now, how big was the team when you started?

Only six team members, one 1/3 of the team we have now. Two administrators, one Programme Manager, one clinical lead. One Pilot SLA with two locality leads.

2. Who was the first person you met?

It was Dr Steve Scott! He and Beryl Hodgson (programme manager at that time) interviewed me.

3. What's been the biggest change?

Not very exciting for most people I know but, developing our integrated appraisal management tool. This work is one of the reasons we have the additional capacity to work on our educational activity.

4. How many appraisers did WAS start with in 2007?

Just under 60 covering Dorset in its entirety.

5. What's been the biggest highlight over the 10 years? Expanding from NHS GP appraisal to non-NHS GP appraisal, private practice and secondary care appraisal.

6. Why do you think this team has been so successful? The cornerstone of the service has always been education. The core principle of the service is that appraisal is an educational activity and should be firmly rooted in the development of the doctor. We invest heavily in training and the continued development of its appraisers considering them ambassadors, delivering high-quality appraisals to the doctors. The importance of adding value is central to the ethos of Wessex Appraisal Service "Keeping it Personal and Making it Real". With appraisal being personal to the individual and facilitated reflection on the reality of their practice.

7. What would you love to see in the future of the Wessex Appraisal Service?

I would like to see us invest more in the training arm of our business model.

8. What's the most cringe worthy conversation that you've had with an appraisee that has led to something helpful for others... *i.e. I've sat on the cat and BBQ'd the dog, lit the fire with my pre-appraisal documentation by accident... is there any way that I can recover my past appraisal documentation and how do I do this?*

I have had many an emotional conversation with doctors over the years. With everything from marriage break down, sick family members to deaths and deportation to the rebellion of just not wanting to be dictated to. Essentially when you get past the perceived hoop jumping and bureaucracy of appraisal, the value in having that protected time to really think about you, can be immeasurable. Appraisal is that one moment of stillness in our ever increasing lives. Cathartic to those of us that have had or are having a bad year. Empowering those that want to make a change. Supportive to those that are flying in their career or personal lives.

9. What is your favourite thing about Christmas?

Twinkling lights.

10. Sarah, which would you rather fight: one horse-sized duck, or 100 duck-sized horses?

100 duck-sized horses.

## Team News



Appraisal Administrator, Chris Davis, is directing the Mountbatten Players panto: Beauty and the Beast. Bursting with magic, fabulous costumes, lavish sets and laugh out loud comedy, this panto guarantees to be a traditional family pantomime promising fun for all. There are still tickets left – book [here!](#)

Please note that the Wessex Appraisal Office will close at lunchtime on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December and reopen for business as usual on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> January. If you have any urgent enquiries, please call 01962 718574.



### Contact Details

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### Useful Contacts for NHS England South Wessex:

#### RO:

Liz Mearns [englandwessexpcp@nhs.net](mailto:englandwessexpcp@nhs.net)

#### Performance Concerns:

Teresa Hobbs [teresahobbs@nhs.net](mailto:teresahobbs@nhs.net) 0113 824 9948

Moira Philpott [moiraphilpott@nhs.net](mailto:moiraphilpott@nhs.net) 0113 824 9905

Please find a link to Raising a concern – advice for GPs from NHS England South [here](#).