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CORRIGENDUM TO EL(96)92

Guide to the NHS Consultants' Distinction Awards Scheme: 1997 Awards Round

EL(96)92 issued on 7 November 1996 attached a copy of the Guide to the NHS Consultants' Distinction Awards Scheme for the 1997 awards round.

The table on page 5 of the Guide contained errors in the value of awards at 1 April 1996 shown for A and B awards.

A replacement page with the correct values is attached.

Enquiries

Any enquiries concerning this Corrigendum should be addressed to Mr S Kirwan, Secretariat to the Advisory Committee on Distinction Awards, Room 76, B Block, 40 Eastbourne Terrace, London, W2 3QR, Tel 0171 725 3433.

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE SCHEME

General Introduction

1. This Guide explains how the NHS consultants' distinction awards scheme operates in England and Wales. It is a revision of the Guide to the NHS Consultants' Distinction Awards Scheme (England and Wales) first issued on 4 October 1995 (EL(95)109). Information about the organisation of the scheme in Scotland is contained in a separate guide which is available from the Secretariat to the Scottish Sub-Committee (see **Annex F** for address).

Framework for current Distinction Awards Scheme

2. The framework for the current Distinction Awards scheme was announced by the Minister for Health on 26 July 1995, and followed a review of the scheme initiated in November 1993. This review was carried forward by a Working Party chaired by Dr R E Kendell, Chief Medical Officer for Scotland, and in subsequent discussions with the medical and dental professions. The review resulted in the C award element of the former distinction awards scheme being replaced by a separate system of discretionary points decided by employers with professional input. Various changes to the former arrangements for B, A and A+ awards were also agreed, based on the recommendations of the Kendell Working Party Report, including greater employer input and central funding for all existing and new awards from 1 April 1996. This Guide describes the arrangements for B, A and A+ distinction awards. It has been slightly revised as a result of experience in the 1996 awards round, and this revised version will form the basis of the operation of the scheme for 1997.

Discretionary Points and Awards

Separate arrangements for the Discretionary Points Scheme

3. Discretionary points and distinction awards are separate payments, decided under separate arrangements (some illustrative information about the value of discretionary points is however included under "Value of Awards" below).

Purpose of Awards Scheme

To reward outstanding professional work of wider benefit to patient care in the NHS

4. The basic purpose of the distinction awards scheme is to reward outstanding professional work - often of national and international significance - which involves consultants devoting a substantial part of their time to activities of wider benefit to patient care in the NHS as a whole, including work carried out in the local setting which has application nationally.

Number of Awards

Number of awards in payment

5. There is a fixed number of awards in three grades of ascending value, B, A and A+. The number of awards in each category lessens as the grade rises. At 30 September 1997 a total of 3,126 B, A and A+ awards were held by consultants in Great Britain. Around 13% of all eligible consultants hold such an award. The scheme is highly competitive, with many more

nominations than awards. By retirement, around 25% of consultants will hold such an award.

Number of awards available for allocation

6. The number of awards available for allocation by ACDA each year depends on:

- additions to the total number of awards, taking account of changes in total consultant numbers, decided in the light of recommendations by the Review Body on Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration. The Chairman and Medical Director of the ACDA give evidence annually to the DDRB on the numbers of awards required and the justification for these.
- resignations, retirements and deaths.
- elevation of existing award-holders to a higher award, thus freeing the previously held award for re-allocation.

Value of Awards

Value of B, A and A+ awards

7. The value of awards is decided in the light of the recommendations by the Review Body on Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration. Awards are paid with salary and are pensionable. The estimated total expenditure on B, A and A+ awards in Great Britain in 1995/6 was around £78 million.

8. The numbers, values and estimated percentages of B, A and A+ awards in payment in Great Britain at 30 October 1996 is set out in the table below:

GRADE	NUMBER OF AWARDS	% OF TOTAL CONSULTANTS	VALUE 1.4.96
A+	258	1.1%	£51,215
A	891	3.7%	£37,740
B	1,977	8.1%	£21,560

Consultants salary scale and value of Discretionary Points

9. The basic salary scale range for consultants as at 1 April 1996 is £41,760 - £53,900. The Discretionary Points scheme, which was introduced on 1 April 1996 in place of C awards - and is entirely separate from the Distinction Awards scheme - extends the consultants' salary scale range by five steps of roughly £2,160 each up to a maximum of £64,690. Please note, however, that the value of consultants' distinction awards, salaries and discretionary points will be updated on 1 December 1996 (see Annex J for updated value of each).

MPT/PT Consultants

10. Consultants employed on maximum part-time contracts will be paid 10/11ths of the full value of the award. Consultants employed on other part-time contracts will be paid on a pro rata basis.