

Role profile

Role title	Head of Member Relations – Northern Ireland
Department and directorate	BMA Northern Ireland
Grade	Guide
Reports to (job title)	National Director – Northern Ireland
Direct reports (job titles)	Assistant secretary, Senior Employment Advisors, Regional Organiser

Job Overview– purpose of the role

Describe as concisely as possible the overall purpose of the job and what success looks like. Please limit this to a maximum of four or five sentences

The BMA is the leading recognised trade union and professional association for doctors and medical students in Northern Ireland. BMA Northern Ireland supports members in a fight for fair terms and conditions, including pay, provides collective bargaining in workplaces, and individual representation.

Member relations is the expert function within the BMA Northern Ireland that has oversight of employment, terms and conditions for doctors, providing individual employment support and representing the BMA on relevant employer / employee stakeholder groups (including with HSC employers, medical training agencies and the Department of Health). The Head of Member Relations is the key senior postholder and team leader delivering services and functions relating to the employment, workplace representation and wider support needs of BMA members in Northern Ireland

Duties and Responsibilities

What are the core duties/responsibilities required to be performed in the role. (e.g., to provide a full range of administrative support services to the department including x,y,z)

Please provide a bullet point list

- A leadership role as part of the BMA Northern Ireland senior management team, contributing to the strategic direction of BMA Northern Ireland. Contributes at senior level to the development and coordination of UK member relations services, policies and standards, working closely with UK-wide colleagues
- Contribution to the Northern Ireland national objectives, and responsibility for the delivery of the Member Relations objectives from these.
- Provides support and guidance to an experienced team of industrial relations experts, with accountability for the work of the team.
- Developing standards and protocols to support the delivery and measurement of the Member Relations service in Northern Ireland.
- Liaise with the teams taking the initial member queries, currently the First Point of Contact team, to ensure needs of Northern Ireland members are being met.
- Support recruitment and retention in Northern Ireland to meet relevant targets, and support the strategy for delivery of local and national initiatives and campaigns relating to membership.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Establishing effective working relationships with senior personnel and health professionals in health trusts , the departments of the Northern Ireland Executive , and where appropriate with Agenda for Change trade unions, royal colleges and universities. Having regular formal and informal contact with senior decision-makers within government departments/agencies/partnerships in Northern Ireland. Negotiating with key stakeholders in support of national/local employment issues. Dealing with the escalation of issues that have not been resolved at team level
- Representing BMA Northern Ireland externally on employment issues with Northern Ireland Executive departments and health trust employers
- Engage with Northern Ireland government, employers, other unions and organisations as required, on employment and member relations issues
- Coordinate the provision of collective negotiating advice to BMA Northern Ireland committees, elected officers, and senior medico-politicians, including position formulation and negotiating advice and co-ordination of cross-committee issues and projects. Working with senior colleagues, develop and propose strategies to guide the direction of work on matters affecting terms and conditions of service for members in Northern Ireland
- Provide expert employment and other advice to Northern Ireland Council and branch of practice committees and support sub-committees or local groups related to this as necessary
- Provide support (resources, advice, material and technology) for Local Negotiating Committees (LNC). Establish, develop and lead the work of LNCs within Northern Ireland and through work with the Northern Ireland LNC Forum. Negotiate collective terms and conditions and other employment related matters at local level with employers
- Approve appropriate cases to be passed to external legal services providers. Handle feedback and complaints from members as appropriate. Initiate and maintain an appropriate system of case reviews to ensure timely responses to members
- To provide advice and guidance on more complex cases, taking responsibility for these where appropriate; representing BMA members, preparing cases and presenting as required
- Oversee and quality assure the provision of an advice and support service to GPs and Practice Managers, providing this where appropriate. This includes mediation/ facilitated discussions on behalf of GPs, both as partner employers and as employees. Engage with Local Medical Committees (LMCs) as appropriate to provide advice and support to GP members
- As professional head of function, ensure the consistent quality and professionalism of team members, their activities and all related outputs, by effective management and appraisal, to ensure that team members have suitable opportunity for learning and development, coaching and mentoring
- Establish and maintain effective relationships between the Member Relations functions and all BMA Northern Ireland teams, appropriately sharing information to ensure that our policy/operational objectives are taken forward. Ensuring effective relationships with BMA committee staff and committee members. Leading effective input of issues raised at employer level to the workplans developed by committees to reflect member concerns
- Produce guidance, briefings and other materials to support members in taking forward and discussing our positions. Ensuring the preparation of reports, reviews and responses on Member Relations work
- Liaise with other internal departments as necessary to ensure that the best service is provided to individual members. Have responsibility for the Northern Ireland aspects of UK-wide member relations matters. Ensure that individual cases which create precedent or may otherwise have wider effects are handled appropriately
- Undertake recruitment and retention activities through liaison with local representatives, other team members and the membership department and by leading on behalf of the BMA at appropriate meetings, facilitating and participating in seminars, training events and other recruitment and retention activities.
- Consider methods of support for doctors at critical times in their careers and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions
- As a member of the BMA Northern Ireland leadership team, support the National Director on relevant work areas including corporate risk management , planning, finance, well-being and wider staff engagement
- Day to day line management of roles such as: Assistant secretary, Senior Employment Advisors, Regional Organiser
- Any other duties as reasonably directed

Skill (level and breadth of application)

What relevant experience is necessary to undertake this role? What specialist, technical or professional qualifications are required to be able to perform the job?

How far does the role extend out across the organisation, eg confined to own team, involves co-ordination with another department or requires regular negotiation with many other parts of the organisation. Why is this necessary? Describe the range of issues that are involved in this, eg resolving people's IT problems, collecting information on key research items or advising members on a particular issue.

- Leadership experience in a similar organisation, working as part of a team and managing high performing colleagues working in a challenging environment
- Established industrial relations/trade union/human resources and/or employment law background
- Knowledge of medical political issues, and the political and healthcare landscapes in Northern Ireland
- Advanced negotiation/influencing experience (internal and external)
- Ability to influence highly articulate and challenging individuals, using tact, expertise and diplomacy
- Significant experience in partnership working/stakeholder management ability to build productive relationships and manage difficult conversations
- A flexible and positive approach to problem solving, finding a solution that is not always apparent/compromise where appropriate
- Excellent communication skills both written and verbal

Intellectual demands (complexity and challenge)

What sorts of problems, situations or issues are typically dealt with? Give any illustrative examples. How are the problems, situations or issues dealt with (eg undertaking original research and analysis or seeking specialist advice)?

To what extent are standard procedures and processes followed when undertaking typical tasks, and how is personal initiative used when solving problems? To what extent is creativity used in solving the problems (eg adopting different approaches, trying things that have not been done before within the organisation or improving/changing previous approaches).

- The post holder will need to work as part of a collaborative management team working to advance the performance of BMA Northern Ireland as a whole, balancing the needs of the organisation with those of the Member Relations team
- The post holder will need to provide support and guidance to an experienced team of Industrial Relations experts. They will need to display the relevant experience required to gain the confidence of, and credibility with, their peers, colleagues, doctors, decision makers and key stakeholders
- Developing new solutions to issues, providing clarity for others to make decisions
- Balancing priorities and simultaneously managing a range of complex issues and projects
- Considerable responsiveness and mental agility are required in order to react to the changing agendas and complex policy developments
- An adaptable approach is often required, whereby for much of the time the post-holder has to take a high-level, broad view of multiple policy agendas and activities, but where any one (or more) reaches a critical point in negotiation or development, there is a requirement to ensure that sufficient detail has been grasped to master the debate and gain control of the situation
- Required to effectively operate where standard procedures have either been exhausted or do not exist
- Creativity and innovation are required to ensure that our policies, plans and procedures are fresh and relevant to the needs of BMA members in the nation

Judgement (independence and level and impact limitations)

What are the typical decisions that are made in the job without reference to any higher authority? What informs/constrains the decisions (eg expenditure limits, have to follow clearly laid down procedures or working within broad objectives). What influence upon policy, procedures or resources is there (eg giving advice to others)?

Who (or what) is next to be affected by the decisions that are made – for example, supervisor sees them before they leave the team or the whole department sees and has to respond to the change that is made. Give typical example(s) of the consequences of the decisions (eg what impact does the decision-making have on the performance of the team/section/department/organisation)?

- Operates with a very high degree of autonomy in area of responsibility, which could have a significant impact on the views of members at a local and national level. Will refer to the National Director on major issues and work closely with UK wide Member Relations colleagues to share good practice
- Autonomous decision making within the Association's strategic priorities and business plan
- Uses professional judgement to determine whether issues/activities are Northern Ireland-only, UK-wide, or UK-wide with a devolved nation aspect, to ensure that appropriate resources are supplied and/or deployed, as required. Where appropriate, work with colleagues across the UK to address this
- Accountability for the strategy for the Member Relations team
- Conceives, describes and promotes policies and processes that better integrate the organisation's activities.
- Provides advice and guidance to National Director and Committees on a broad range of issues often with intangible, long-term and/or multi-stakeholder implications
- Uses judgement and experience to influence senior external and internal stakeholders
- Substantial political awareness, discretion and risk awareness in order to manage the external perception of the organisation

Use of resources (supervision of resources and influence)

What responsibility is there for managing people, equipment, budgets, resources, customer's welfare or confidential information? If this is a staff management role describe what is involved, eg staff reporting, staff development, appraisal, leading a department or the allocation of work.

How does the role fit within the organisation, eg support role, team member, team leader, specialist policy adviser, or leading major areas of core business?

- Will work closely with other Member Relations teams on a UK wide basis to ensure a consistent service is delivered to members in Northern Ireland
- Responsible for the team's contribution to the achievement of strategic goals and directorate business plan.
- Leadership, performance management and development of direct reports
- Responsible for work allocation and balancing of priorities
- Handles confidential and sensitive information
- The role has considerable scope to develop an extensive network of high-level key contacts
- Requires liaison, influencing and negotiation with committees and departments and other nations at a senior level and securing input from UK resources as appropriate. Inputs to whole organisation corporate decision making through participation in projects, working groups, meetings and conferences at a senior level

Communication (level, internal and external demands and significance)

*What people are typically contacted (regardless of the medium) **inside** the Association, eg immediate colleagues, senior managers or administrators? Committee members are the only members classed as internal communication. Normal non-committee membership and doctors are external (see below)*

*Who is in regularly contact with the role holder **outside** of the Association, eg members who are not committee members, suppliers, members of the public? Approximately what percentage of the time is spent on external communications?*

What is the purpose of these contacts, eg conveying information, gathering data?

- Liaises frequently with National Director and managers in BMA Northern Ireland, to ensure an effective interchange of information relating to ongoing and upcoming activities. Additionally, regularly liaise with counterparts in other BMA UK offices to promote effective joint working and shared information as required
- Inside (regularly): Directors and Heads of function at UK - and nation-level Chairs and members of national Council and national BoP committees
- Inside (occasionally): Chairs and Members of UK Council and UK BoP committees
- Outside (regularly): BMA members, employers, and officials in Northern Ireland Executive departments
- Internal communication to advance national BMA propositions, seek assistance, collaborate on specific projects and service development, information exchange and relationship-building
- External communication to influence/persuade government/employers/other trade unions/medical royal colleges/regulators/medical educators to our point of view. May involve formal and informal negotiation as well as joint problem-solving/collaborative working
- Sensitivity to the public image of the association and profession
- Reputational risk issues for the organisation to be managed as they arise

Physical demands & coordination (physical effort and mental strain)

Are there any unusual physical or mental demands of the role; for example, lifting heavy objects, standing for long periods, using VDUs extensively or high levels of concentration?

- Normal co-ordination or physical demands associated with an office environment, limited requirement to engage in lifting/carrying/other exertion
- Extensive use of VDU/Laptop/PC
- Travel as required to deliver the functions of the role

Working conditions and emotional demands)

What are the environmental conditions in which the work is conducted, the social and emotional demands faced by the role and the pressures resulting from these?

- The job is conducted in a normal office environment and is not exposed to hazardous physical conditions
- The post holder is responsible for investigating and responding to members complaining about aspects of both service provision and/or policy. This can at times be highly emotionally charged
- The public-facing nature of the role may expose the post holder to some emotionally distressing situations, as they will occasionally encounter doctors/patients who may have had an adverse interaction with the HSC in Northern Ireland
- Requires a degree of personal resilience and ability to withstand challenge from stakeholders, colleagues or members with differing viewpoints

Values and behaviours

The post-holder is expected to execute their role in line with our five organisational values.

The following examples illustrate how we are using our values to inform how we act:

We are **leaders** because:

- We strive to always improve
- We take responsibility for our actions
- We collaborate with each other and work as one BMA for the good of our members
- We are proactive and prepared to guide our members and each other

We are **experts** because:

- We understand our members
- We draw on our collective experience and knowledge to solve problems
- We use our insights and research to make decisions
- We provide accurate, credible, relevant and engaging information
- We recognise our strengths and act upon them

We are **committed** because:

- We listen to our members and put them at the heart of everything we do
- We are respectful, inclusive, open and honest with our members and each other
- We approach everything we do with confidence and sensitivity

We are **reliable** because:

- We deliver on what we say we will do
- We are accessible and approachable
- We build trust by being consistent and supportive
- We are positive and decisive whatever the situation

We are **challenging** because:

- We fight, ethically and fearlessly, for the interests of all our members
- We work as a brave, assertive and effective champion for high quality health services and the advancement of the profession

Sign-off

Manager:

Date:

Role holder:

Date: