

Role profile

Role title	Regional Support Officer (RSO)
Department and directorate	Member Relations
Grade	BMA Grade 4
Reports to (job title)	Head of Region
Direct reports (job titles)	No direct reports

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

To support the work of the regional team in carrying out the 'Five Pillar's strategy with specific reference to representing members, negotiations, supporting and organising Reps, campaigning and recruitment.

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

- To contribute, as agreed with the line manager, to ensuring the effective implementation of the 'Five Pillars' Regional Plan in the designated area
- To represent and support individual members where appropriate and in line with the 'Five Pillars' approach and the current national/regional protocols
- To work with relevant BMA staff and BMA Reps to ensure effective oversight exists over casework at employer level and that casework and related trends feed into the union's local five pillars strategy
- To advise BMA Reps and local Officers on the handling of individual representation of members and provide advice to members and reps on a range of matters which may include: disciplinary issues, grievance, mediation, dismissal, early retirement, salary placement matters, equality issues and redundancy issues.
- To deputise for Industrial Relations Officers as necessary and in line with national/regional protocols
- To assist, as agreed with the line manager, in the effective implementation of national agreements, national benchmarks and other nationally agreed bargaining objectives at local level
- To conduct and support negotiations with employing institutions in accordance with nationally and regionally agreed bargaining objectives and direction from line manager
- To report regularly to the Line Manager within the region on key developments and the implementation of the Regional Plan, referring matters of significant strategic, financial, or reputational impact to them for consideration and decision
- To contribute to the development of union organisation in the region including the accreditation of BMA representatives
- To contribute to the organisation and effective delivery of regional training in accordance with the national training programme and contribute to ensuring LNC reps are fully trained

Duties and Responsibilities

- To engage in and organise regional and local campaigning activities in accordance with national/regional campaigning objectives
- To advise and support LNC or other local BMA Officers regarding the effective representation of members at employer level, including local bargaining priorities and individual issues and provide oversight and encouragement to allow Reps to take on issues appropriate to their experience and skill level
- To be responsible as agreed with the line manager for the effective dissemination of campaigning, organising and other briefing materials to branches
- To liaise and work collaboratively with colleagues in the regional team and at Head Office as appropriate.
- To attend Regional Committees where appropriate as agreed
- Any other duties as reasonably requested

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.

- Transferrable skills or knowledge which can be applied to negotiating, representing, campaigning, and organising within a membership organisation such as a trade union
- Up to date and in-depth expert knowledge of industrial relations, employment law and human resource policies, procedures and good practice, and ability to learn quickly about the terms and conditions under which NHS doctors work
- Highly developed ability to gather, filter, assimilate and analyse information and develop strategies for dealing with complex negotiations, cases or campaigns under often tight time frames
- Highly IT literate as work is carried out at home & remotely and requires both electronic research and recordkeeping
- Excellent interpersonal skills, facilitating the development of effective relationships at very senior levels with members and with colleagues to ensure consistent collaborative and effective working relationships
- Excellent oral and written communication skills including case presentation and advocacy skills
- Excellent negotiating and dispute and conflict resolution skills
- Ability to motivate self and others, prioritise and manage own caseload and work effectively with minimal supervision
- Ability to be flexible and adaptable in dealing with varying situations, personnel and competing demands
- Excellent planning and organisational skills required to identify economies of scale and deal effectively and efficiently with the issues raised by members and their cases
- Ability to maintain knowledge of employment law, terms and conditions of service plus local and national policies, taking into account frequently occurring changes, so that advice given to BMA Reps and members is appropriate at all times

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).

Intellectual demands (complexity and challenge)

- Organises and prioritises own workload, balancing competing priorities and managing peaks and troughs in demand. Manages range of complex projects at any one time. Often workload management will be done while away from the office as may be travelling and representing the BMA out of the office
- Required to recognise and adhere to specific critical timescales as part of representational/case handling process or bargaining procedures arising from employment law requirements and local employer procedures
- Whilst procedures and guidance notes are available to support the role, the RSO utilises these intelligently and works on personal initiative to resolve issues. This involves ability to frequently adapt to new information as cases develop
- Required to think on their feet and respond to the unexpected in highly charged situations
- Required to be sensitive to and assist members to manage conflict and changes in their workplace and workload
- Required to advise and support very assertive, highly intelligent members with extremely high expectations and demands. The advice may sometimes be met with resistance and necessitates additional explanation of the rationale for the strategy and advice given
- There is a requirement to balance members' needs and expectations with the maintenance of long-term relationships with employers and other health professionals
- Work across a range of employers and need to be familiar with policies, procedures and local issues for typically a range of NHS employers (Trusts and PCTs) and other non-NHS employers as well as with the skills required for bargaining, campaigning and negotiation

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)?

- Has the freedom to act with significant individual responsibility for providing expert advice in response to queries and in the way in which cases are managed
- Performance, final outcomes and the extent to which objectives are achieved determines the degree of member satisfaction and the way in which the Association is perceived by members and external organisations
- Will seek guidance from the Line Manager on decisions which have significant strategic, financial or organisational risk
- Decisions taken and advice given have a high impact on members (including potentially employment / career ending issues) and the credibility of the Association and therefore must be correct
- It is expected that RSO will on occasions deputise for IROs and be required to chair LNC, craft group meetings, Deanery liaison groups outside their existing remit
- RSOs are required to keep other staff groups within their region or area of specialism) informed of developments of interest to them. Judgement (independence and level and impact limitations)
- RSO are expected to participate in planned cover arrangements for relevant colleagues in the regional team

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?

- Whilst RSOs have no direct reports they are involved in the training and development of more junior staff within the regional team
- Must be aware of relevant budgets and are required to ensure that events and activities are conducted within them
- Active participation in induction, training and buddying of colleagues
- Maintain strict confidentiality of represented members, and BMA-sensitive information, at all times
- Whilst acknowledging that support is available to members via Doctors for Doctors and Counselling line, RSOs should have an awareness of members' welfare issues, supporting and signposting them to other appropriate sources of help such as when there are financial problems or problems that are potentially employment or even career ending

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?

- Required to develop excellent contacts and close working relationships with BMA Reps and members (including members at director level such as Medical and Public Health Directors), senior managers and directors of NHS organisations, solicitors, representatives of medical defence organisations (such as the MPS and the MDU), NCAS and Deaneries, university personnel, directors, and managers of private companies
- Required to exhibit effective, persuasion and influencing skills in communications with members, Reps and employers. (for example formal grievance letters, appearances at external hearings, etc.)
- Must develop and maintain good relationships with national secretariats and other expert departments within the Association (e.g. Legal, Ethics and Pensions) including membership of specific liaison groups
- Must develop and maintain supportive relationships between colleagues to facilitate organisational aims and members' cases being progressed effectively and efficiently
- Requires well developed interpersonal skills and must be able to obtain case history from and build working relationships with members, who are often extremely distressed and occasionally mentally unwell, then manage expectations which are often unrealistic to reach agreement on objectives
- Presentation requires well developed influencing and negotiating skills. In many cases, these have to be displayed in formal hearings or meetings where advocacy and persuasive skills are vital

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?

Physical demands & coordination (physical effort and mental strain)

- There will be normal physical demands typically associated with an 'at home' office environment and there will be very limited requirement to engage in lifting/carrying or other exertion. There will be a requirement to use office technology and systems as provided or recommended by the BMA
- The role holder will be required to travel in order to carry out the role, in line with national/regional BMA policy. Attendance at meetings at a variety of locations (e.g. hospitals & trusts) is required
- There are internal health & safety policies and guidance to be followed and adhered by the role holder and their direct reports (if line management is part of the role). These policies apply both in the normal office environment and also when visiting other locations in the execution of duties

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 typically conducted either in a normal office (including home office) environment or external location as required to carry out the role and is not considered to be exposed to hazardous conditions or extreme anti-social behaviour (which should be reported through the appropriate internal channels).
- There may be times where the role holder is involved with a case that involves an emotionally charged situation. This can be raised through the appropriate internal channels to ensure support is given to the role holder as required

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: