20.4.15

**Dear Doctor**

As you may be aware the future of the Severn Appraisal Toolkit (SAT) has been in doubt since NHS England clarified the position on the funding of toolkits for GP Appraisal by Area Teams.

“NHS England will not procure an appraisal vehicle for doctors connected to it, nor will it seek to further extend existing contracts once they expire.”

Up to now the Area Team (and before that Somerset PCT) commissioned a Quality Assurance of Appraisal Process from Health Education England (formerly the Severn Deanery) which also included free access to SAT for GPs in the area. This was initially only commissioned by Somerset PCT (so the majority of GPs using SAT in our area are based in Somerset).

We have negotiated an approval, and have funded, to continue the current arrangements until end of March 2016 to enable all those GPs using SAT to complete their first revalidation cycle before changing to another toolkit.

SAT is based on, and commissioned from, the Wales Deanery toolkit (where its use is mandatory) and there is no system or process where a new personal fee paying structure can be implemented for users outside Wales. The Deanery have no alternative but to close SAT from 1.4.16

**Therefore this is to confirm that after March 2016 SAT will no longer be available for use by GPs in Somerset.**

You will need to preserve all the supporting information from your previous years **before the closedown** and there will of course be a mechanism for you to download all your previous appraisals and documents to another toolkit (probably as pdf files) or to store them within your own IT systems. Details of how to do so will be available on SAT in the near future.

Other commercial toolkits, and the MAG MAF form (an interactive pdf file created by the old Revalidation Support Team), are available for GPs to use. MAG MAF is free and is widely used in the Devon and Cornwall area of our patch. Details of the toolkits are on the BNSSSG appraisal website and a link to download MAG MAF with a couple of user guides also.

**Your appraiser will raise this issue during your appraisal this year if you are a SAT user, and discuss the alternatives if you would like to do so.**

Further information about the closure and how to download your previous years’ portfolios will be available on SAT and from the SAT help desk at the “Deanery”.

**Ian Kelham and Peter Saunders**

**Clinical Appraisal Leads**