

THE STATES OF DELIBERATION
of the
ISLAND OF GUERNSEY

COMMITTEE *for* HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE

A NEW RESPONSIBLE OFFICER FOR GUERNSEY AND ALDERNEY

The States are asked to decide:-

Whether, after consideration of the Policy Letter titled 'A new Responsible Officer for Guernsey and Alderney,' dated 5th October 2026 they are of the opinion:-

1. To appoint Dr Matthew Dorrian as Responsible Officer for both classes of medical practitioners in Guernsey and Alderney (the UK Connected Practitioners class and Local Practitioners class) under section 10 of The Regulation of Health Professions (Medical Practitioners) (Guernsey and Alderney) Ordinance, 2015, such appointment to take effect from 1st December 2026 for a period of 5 years.

The above Proposition has been submitted to His Majesty's Procureur for advice on any legal or constitutional implications in accordance with Rule 4(1) of the Rules of Procedure of the States of Deliberation and their Committees.

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The Presiding Officer
States of Deliberation
Royal Court House
St Peter Port

5th October 2026

Dear Madame

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The statutory office of Responsible Officer (RO) was established under the Regulation of Health Professions (Medical Practitioners) (Guernsey and Alderney) Ordinance, 2015 ('the Ordinance') as part of a framework to regulate doctors in the Bailiwick. Appointment to the office is made by the States of Deliberation ('the States') on the recommendation of the Committee *for* Health & Social Care ('the Committee') under section 10(1) of the Ordinance.
- 1.2 Revalidation was introduced by the General Medical Council (GMC) in 2012 to strengthen public confidence in the medical profession by ensuring that doctors maintain the knowledge, skills and behaviours for safe and effective practice throughout their careers. Doctors are required to revalidate every five years, supported by annual appraisals that consider continuing professional development, a review of significant events, feedback from patients and colleagues, and any complaints and compliments received. The RO reviews this information and makes a recommendation to the GMC as to whether the doctor's licence to practise should be renewed, deferred or not renewed.
- 1.3 Prior to the revalidation regime, there was no formal system requiring doctors to demonstrate that they remained fit to practise throughout their career unless concerns were raised about their ongoing professional capability. Recognising the high degree of professional autonomy afforded to doctors and the complex clinical decision making required of them, and the potentially profound consequences of those decisions for patient safety, the Committee welcomes the presence of the revalidation system locally. Medical practitioners are the most highly regulated health professional group in the Bailiwick.

- 1.4 Since its introduction, the office has been held by Dr Peter Rabey, Health and Social Care's Medical Director. Dr Rabey is due to retire in November of this year and Dr Matthew Dorrian has been confirmed as his successor as Medical Director. Medical Directors are often appointed as Responsible Officers due to their senior clinical experience and the executive leadership and organisational oversight afforded to the role.
- 1.5 At its meeting on 19th August 2026, the Committee agreed to nominate Dr Dorrian to the office of Responsible Officer and recommends his appointment to the States for a term of five years. In making this recommendation, the Committee confirms that Dr Dorrian meets the criteria for appointment under section 10(6) of the Ordinance.
- 1.6 The Regulation of Health Professions (Medical Practitioners) (Sark) Ordinance, 2017 provides, at sections 29(1) and (2), that the RO for Guernsey and Alderney is also the RO for Sark.

2 A new Responsible Officer for Guernsey and Alderney

- 2.1 Health and Social Care's (HSC) Medical Director and Responsible Officer, Dr Rabey, is due to retire later this year. The Committee wishes to place on record its sincere thanks to Dr Rabey for his dedicated service, leadership and invaluable advice provided as the Committee's most senior medical advisor, as well as his commitment to the care and wellbeing of patients.
- 2.2 Dr Matthew Dorrian MBE has been appointed as the next Medical Director and is due to take up this role on 1st December 2026. Dr Dorrian is a senior medical practitioner, who has worked for many years in Guernsey as a General Practitioner. Having developed a particular interest in emergency medicine, he subsequently divided his clinical practice between primary care and HSC's Emergency Department, where he has worked as a Consultant in Emergency Medicine. For the important role he played during the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic in facilitating a co-ordinated response between the island's health care organisations, Dr Dorrian was awarded an MBE in the late Queen's Birthday Honours list.
- 2.3 It is commonplace across the United Kingdom for Medical Directors to be appointed as Responsible Officers due to their senior clinical experience and the executive leadership and organisational oversight afforded to the role. On this basis, as was the case with Dr Rabey, the Committee recommends to the States that Dr Dorrian is appointed as RO from 1st December 2026 to coincide with the date he is due to commence his appointment as Medical Director.
- 2.4 The Committee can confirm that Dr Dorrian meets the legal criteria for appointment, as set out in section 10(6) of the Ordinance. The criteria requires

that a person must not be appointed as a Responsible Officer unless the person –

- a) Is a registered practitioner;
- b) Has been allocated an off-island Responsible Officer to oversee their own medical revalidation; and
- c) Has been fully registered with the General Medical Council throughout the preceding five years.

2.5 Dr Dorrian will retain a limited clinical commitment to maintain his medical registration with the GMC and first-hand insight into the operational and professional issues affecting clinicians and patient care, ensuring that advice and recommendations made to the Committee as Medical Director are informed by current practice and the realities of frontline care.

2.6 While it is not a direct matter for the Committee or the States, the Regulation of Health Professions (Medical Practitioners) (Sark) Ordinance, 2017 provides, at sections 29(1) and (2), that the RO for Guernsey and Alderney is also the RO for Sark.

3 Managing conflicts of interest or an appearance of bias

3.1 The Ordinance provides a mechanism whereby the Policy & Resources Committee ('P&RC') may appoint a second (or subsequent) RO where it considers that a conflict of interest, or an appearance of bias, exists in relation to the Responsible Officer. The Committee has previously requested such an appointment, most recently in November 2025 following a retirement, that enable a second RO to manage the revalidation of another doctor practising in Guernsey who is a member of Dr Rabey's family.

3.2 According to the Ordinance, the determination of whether a conflict of interest or an appearance or bias exists is a matter of judgement for the P&RC, having regard to the circumstances of the case, and is not a decision for the Committee. As described above, it remains appropriate for the Committee to request consideration of the appointment of an additional RO if it is made aware of an apparent conflict or an appearance of bias, but it is for the P&RC to determine whether such a conflict or appearance of bias exists.

3.3 The P&RC has indicated that its primary concern is to support the effective administration and integrity of the Responsible Officer regime. In doing so, it has noted that the statutory test is not confined to cases where an actual conflict of interest can be demonstrated. Rather, the Ordinance expressly recognises circumstances where there may be an appearance of bias, reflecting the wider public law principle that confidence in regulatory and governance arrangements depends not only upon impartiality being exercised, but also upon it being seen to be exercised.

- 3.4 The P&RC recognises that, in some cases, an appearance of bias may be clear cut. In others, the assessment will be more fact-specific, having regard to the established test of whether a fair-minded and informed observer, having considered the relevant facts, would conclude that there was a real possibility of bias. The P&RC has confirmed that it will work with the Responsible Officer and the Committee to ensure that the requirements of the Ordinance are applied in a manner that is transparent and consistent with the purpose of the legislation. It recognises the importance of a second RO being in place – as is currently the case – to provide appropriate operational resilience and intends to ensure that this remains the case in future.

4 Compliance with Rule 4

- 4.1 Rule 4 of the Rules of Procedure of the States of Deliberation and their Committees sets out the information which must be included in, or appended to, motions laid before the States.
- 4.2 The Propositions contained within this Policy Letter do not relate to the States' objectives and policy plans but rather to the Committee's responsibility to ensure the proper administration of legislation regulating medical practitioners, the primary practitioners involved in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of acute and chronic disease, illnesses and conditions. There are no financial implications associated with the appointment of Dr Dorrian.
- 4.3 In accordance with Rule 4(1)(c), the Proposition has been submitted to His Majesty's Procureur for advice on any legal or constitutional implications. It is confirmed that the proposition has the unanimous support of the Committee.

Yours faithfully

G A Oswald
President

A D S Matthews
Vice-President

M Malik
S J Rochester
J D Strachan

E Freestone
M Read
Non-States Members