

Resource for doctors: interim orders tribunals

This guide will take you through
your interim orders tribunal
hearing step by step.



How to use *Resource for doctors: interim orders tribunals*

We've created *Resource for doctors: interim orders tribunals* to support doctors who have been referred to an interim orders tribunal hearing. Separate information to help doctors referred to a medical practitioners tribunal hearing can be found in [Resources for doctors: medical practitioners tribunals](#).

These resources aim to answer your questions about the interim orders tribunal hearing process, from the initial stages through to after the hearing has ended. We cover the following areas:

Part 1: Overview of interim orders tribunal hearings and the MPTS	Overview of the role of the MPTS and a summary of the interim orders tribunal's powers
Part 2: Representation and support	Options for being represented at the interim orders tribunal hearing and other sources of support
Part 3: Receiving notice of your interim orders tribunal hearing	Information about the notice you will receive, deciding to attend your hearing and how to make a postponement application
Part 4: Preparing for your interim orders tribunal hearing	Suggestions about how to prepare for your hearing, including how to make oral or written submissions
Part 5: During your interim orders tribunal hearing	What to expect on the day of your hearing
Part 6: After your interim orders tribunal hearing	Information about what happens after your hearing, including publication of decisions
Part 7: Reviews of your interim order	Information about when your interim order will be reviewed and the steps to take

Resource for doctors aims to provide basic information to assist doctors and does not constitute legal advice. It is important to urgently seek independent advice from your medical defence organisation or a legal professional if you wish to do so.

All references in *Resources for doctors* to:

- **The Act** are to the [Medical Act 1983 \(as amended\)](#)
- **The Rules** are to the [GMC Fitness to Practise Rules 2004 \(as amended\)](#).

Part 1: Overview of interim orders tribunal hearings and the MPTS

Key points

- You can be referred to an interim orders tribunal at any stage during a GMC investigation
- We arrange the interim order tribunal hearing but play no part in the GMC's investigation
- The interim order tribunal is fully independent in its decision making and usually holds hearings in private

Role of the MPTS

The MPTS is a statutory committee of the GMC but is fully independent in its decision making and accountability to the UK Parliament.

We provide an adjudication service, which means we arrange for our interim orders tribunal to make decisions about doctors whose fitness to practise has been called into question by the GMC.

Why have I been referred to the interim orders tribunal?

The GMC may decide to refer your case to an interim orders tribunal hearing at any point during its investigation of allegations regarding your fitness to practise. The GMC's decision to refer a case to an interim orders tribunal hearing will depend on whether the information gathered during an investigation means that the GMC believes an interim order is needed.

The allegations leading to referral to interim orders tribunal will fall within one or more of the following categories:

- Misconduct
- Deficient professional performance
- Conviction/caution
- Adverse physical or mental health

- Not having the necessary knowledge of English
- Determination by another regulatory authority

What is the purpose of the interim orders tribunal hearing?

At the hearing, the interim orders tribunal must assess whether your registration should be restricted while the GMC investigates the allegations. Interim orders tribunal hearings are usually held in private, although, in exceptional circumstances, they can be held in public at your request or if the interim orders tribunal considers it appropriate.

The interim orders tribunal will not make findings of fact about the allegations and will not decide whether your fitness to practise is impaired. Instead, the interim orders tribunal will assess the risk posed if your practise remains unrestricted during the GMC's investigation.

The interim orders tribunal will consider whether an interim order is:

- Necessary to protect members of the public
- In the public interest – this includes maintaining public confidence in the profession and the upholding of proper standards of behaviour
- In your own interests – for example, where concerns arise due to adverse health

What are the possible outcomes?

If the interim orders tribunal considers it necessary to do so, it may make an interim order either placing conditions on or suspending your registration.

The interim orders tribunal will decide the length of the order, up to a maximum of 18 months. The interim order may be extended beyond the initial length of order by Order of the High Court. Further information about High Court extensions of interim orders can be found in Part 6.

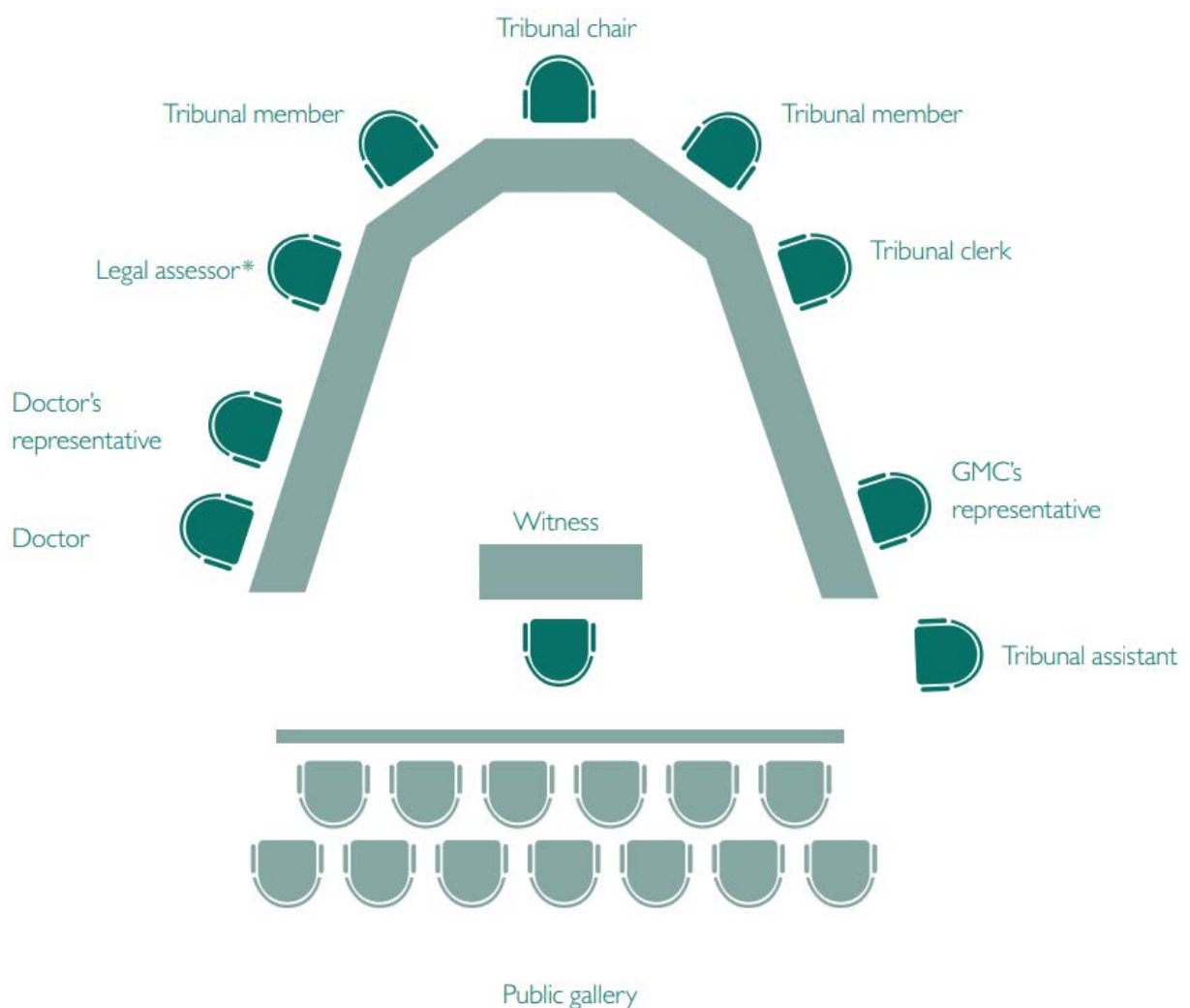
What are the main provisions of the Act and Rules relevant to interim orders tribunal hearings?

The powers of the interim orders tribunal are set out in Section 41A of the Act.

The procedure followed before and at interim orders tribunal hearings is set out in Rules 25 to 27.

Other parts of the Act and Rules also apply to interim orders tribunal hearings (for example, Rule 33 regarding the power to proceed in a practitioner's absence), but are beyond the scope of these resources.

Who will be at the hearing?



Tribunal members

The interim orders tribunal is made up of three tribunal members, appointed and trained by the MPTS. There will be at least one doctor (medically qualified with a licence to practise) and at least one lay person (not medically qualified). One tribunal member will act as chair.

The chair of your hearing may be a legally qualified chair. The legally qualified chair will be either an experienced solicitor or barrister who will advise the interim orders tribunal on questions of law as to evidence and procedure.

Legal assessor

If the chair is not a legally qualified chair, we will appoint a legal assessor (an experienced barrister or solicitor) to advise the interim orders tribunal on points of law and procedure. The legal assessor does not take part in the interim orders tribunal's decision making.

Other attendees

A legal representative instructed by the GMC will be present and will present the GMC's case.

There will also be an MPTS clerk present, who is responsible for the administration of the hearing, and an MPTS assistant, who provides assistance to both the interim orders tribunal and the clerk.

Where the hearing centre is and what it looks like

Our hearing centre is located in central Manchester.

[Find out how to get to our hearing centre.](#)

If you'd like to provide feedback on *Resource for doctors: interim orders tribunals*, please go to: https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/ResourceforDoctors_IOT_Part1/

Part 2: Representation & support

Key points

- You can be represented by a representative at the interim orders tribunal hearing, or you may represent yourself
- There are different types of representation and sources of support available

Representation and obtaining advice

As soon as you receive notice that the GMC has referred your case to an interim orders tribunal hearing, you should take urgent action to decide how you will be represented at that hearing.

Being represented means that your representative will speak for you at the hearing and (where applicable) will ask questions of witnesses for you. You can be represented at interim orders tribunal hearings in any of the ways explored below.

Legal representation

If you're a member of a medical defence organisation, or if you have already organised your own legal representation, you should inform them urgently about your interim orders tribunal hearing. They will be able to give you information and advice about your hearing. [See contact details for the three main medical defence organisations.](#)

You can also organise your own legal representation by instructing a solicitor, barrister or legal executive to act on your behalf. You will be responsible for paying the fees of your appointed legal representatives:

- Solicitors: You can search for a law firm or solicitor according to geographical and practice area on the [Law Society's website](#)
- Legal executive: You can search for a Chartered Legal Executive on the [Chartered Institute of Legal Executives' \(CILEx\) website](#)
- Barrister (or advocate if working in Scotland): You can find more information about instructing a barrister on the [Bar Council website](#)

If you cannot afford to pay for legal advice and representation, then you may be able to obtain assistance at a reduced fee or for free:

- [Advocate](#) is a charity which assists in finding free legal help from volunteer barristers
- Organisations such as [Citizens Advice](#) and [Law Works](#) can also provide free legal advice

Other representation

You may be represented by someone from any professional organisation of which you are a member. The list of professional organisations we recognise is set out in our [guidance for decision makers on representation](#).

You may decide that you would like a family member or other lay person to represent you. At the beginning of the hearing the interim orders tribunal will decide if they are a suitable person to do this. To help reach this decision, the interim orders tribunal will consider any available information, including the person's criminal record (if any) and history. Our [guidance for decision makers on representation](#) provides further information.

Self-representation

We strongly advise you to seek advice and be legally represented. However, if you represent yourself at your hearing, you should take time to familiarise yourself with the hearing process. Representing yourself will mean that you will prepare your own case, speak on your own behalf at the interim orders tribunal hearing and (where applicable) ask questions of witnesses.

Please let the MPTS know as soon as possible if you have decided to represent yourself by completing the attendance form referred to in Part 3. You should also take time to read these resources, along with other documents provided to you by the GMC and the MPTS before the hearing takes place.

Further information is provided in Part 3 about what to do if you do not appoint a representative and do not wish to attend the interim orders tribunal hearing, but wish to provide written submissions for the interim orders tribunal to consider.

Other sources of support

There are also sources of non-legal support available for you to use during the hearing process.

Doctor support service

The GMC has commissioned the BMA's Doctors for Doctors to provide independent, confidential and emotional support to any doctor involved in a fitness to practise case – you don't have to be a member of the BMA to use it. The service is free and run on a peer support basis so the people you speak to will be doctors themselves. You can contact them on their dedicated telephone line for support and with sufficient notice, your supporter can accompany you to the interim orders tribunal hearing.

[Contact details for the BMA doctor support service](#)

Hearings procedure telephone information service

The telephone information service is run by volunteer post-graduate students from the University of Law, Manchester and BPP Law School, Manchester. The volunteers cannot comment on your case or give legal advice, but they can explain more about the hearing process and what to expect at the hearing centre.

[Contact details for the telephone information service](#)

MPTS doctor contact service

During the hearing a member of MPTS staff unconnected to your hearing are available to offer a friendly, confidential face-to-face support service, signpost useful support materials and services and provide information about the hearing process.

[MPTS doctor contact service](#)

Bringing a McKenzie friend

A McKenzie friend is someone who assists you in preparing your case by helping with paper work and statements and also going with you to the hearing. They cannot represent you at the hearing, but they can take notes and suggest questions for you to ask.

While McKenzie friends may be knowledgeable about the hearing process, they are generally not legally qualified and there is no requirement for them to be. But you can use a legally qualified person to act for you in this capacity, if you wish.

Anyone can act as a McKenzie friend, apart from someone who is to be a witness in the hearing. You will be responsible for paying any expenses that they may have.

If you intend to bring a McKenzie friend to your hearing, please inform us as soon as possible and complete the [McKenzie friend form](#). Your McKenzie friend will be expected to agree to the code of conduct attached to the form.

Bringing a note taker

You can bring a note taker to attend your hearing with you if you wish. The note taker can keep a record for you of what is said during the hearing – you may find this useful when you are speaking to the interim orders tribunal.

The note taker does not need to be legally qualified and you can ask a friend or family member to take notes for you if you wish. Please note that MPTS staff will not be able to take notes for you.

If you'd like to provide feedback on *Resource for doctors: interim orders tribunals*, please go to: https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/ResourceforDoctors_IOT_Part2/

Part 3: Receiving notice of the interim orders tribunal hearing

Key points

- You will receive notice of your interim orders tribunal hearing at least 7 days in advance of the hearing, unless in exceptional circumstances
- It is for you to decide whether to attend your interim orders tribunal hearing. If you choose not to attend, the hearing may proceed in your absence. You may submit written submissions instead if you wish to do so
- If you think it isn't possible for your interim orders tribunal hearing to go ahead on the scheduled date, you may apply for a postponement. It is important you set out the reasoning for your application clearly, along with any evidence

Receiving notice of referral to interim orders tribunal hearing

If the GMC chooses to refer you to an interim orders tribunal, the GMC will write to inform you of this and the reasons for the referral. For further information about how and why cases are referred to the interim orders tribunal, see Part 1.

The GMC letter will also include a copy of any documents the GMC intends to present to the interim orders tribunal. This is referred to as the interim orders tribunal hearing bundle.

When you receive your hearing bundle, you should carefully consider the documents included within it. If you have any questions concerning the documents in the bundle you can communicate this to your contact at the GMC.

Receiving notice of your hearing

You will then receive a written Notice of Hearing from the MPTS which will:

- Give the date, time and venue of the hearing
- Confirm that you have the right to attend the hearing and be represented
- Confirm that the hearing can proceed in your absence if the interim orders tribunal is satisfied that you have been given notice of the hearing

- Explain the interim orders tribunal's powers.

You will usually receive the Notice of Hearing at least seven days before your hearing is due to take place. In exceptional cases, the notice period may be shorter.

Deciding to come to your hearing

You don't have to come to the interim orders tribunal hearing, but it is usually in your best interests to do so. For example, questions might arise that only you can answer and you will be able to give the interim orders tribunal your comments about the GMC's application to impose an interim order.

Along with the Notice of Hearing, you'll also find enclosed an attendance confirmation form to complete to let us know if you will be attending the interim orders tribunal hearing, if you will be represented and, if so, whom your representative is. You should return your completed attendance form by email to IOTAdmin@mpts-uk.org or by post or fax using the contact details in the letter.

Please also let us know as soon as possible if you have any additional needs that affect whether you can come to the hearing (eg because of a disability or communication difficulty) and provide details of any reasonable adjustments required. The MPTS hearing centre has wheelchair access and a loop system for people with hearing loss.

The hearing may go ahead without you or your representative being present if the interim orders tribunal is satisfied that you have been given notice of the hearing and it is appropriate to proceed in your absence. It is your responsibility to keep your contact details up to date so we can contact you.

Children in hearings

Please note that if you are attending the hearing we ask that you do not bring children, as they are not permitted in the hearing room. If you really have no alternative option and they do attend the hearing centre, you must ensure the children will be supervised by an adult at all times. MPTS staff are unable to take responsibility for them.

Asking to postpone your hearing

If you think that it isn't possible for your interim orders tribunal hearing to go ahead on the scheduled date, please apply in writing or email to us to postpone your hearing. Applications must be sent at the earliest opportunity to IOTAdmin@mpts-

[uk.org](http://www.gmc-uk.org). You can also discuss how to make your application with our IOT team on 0161 240 7260, although MPTS staff cannot advise you about your case.

To make an application, please complete a [postponement application form](#) or set your application out in writing. You should clearly explain your reasons for seeking a postponement, identify the length of postponement you wish to request and include any supporting documentation, such as copies of documents confirming prior travel arrangements or medical appointment.

Your application will be considered by a legally qualified MPTS case manager. The MPTS case manager will balance your interests with the public interest, as well as fairness to both sides, when making their decision. The MPTS case manager will also take into account our [guidance for decision makers on postponements](#) – you may find it useful to consider this document before making your application. In practice the circumstances where a postponement will be permitted are limited. Any postponement is likely to be very short as the interim orders tribunal must assess whether your registration should be restricted on an interim basis as soon as possible.

Both you and the GMC will be notified of the decision in writing as soon as possible. If the postponement is agreed, your hearing will be rescheduled for a later date. If it is not agreed, your hearing will proceed as scheduled. If new issues arise after your postponement application has been decided, you can submit a further postponement application.

If the GMC or MPTS applies to postpone your interim orders tribunal hearing, the same procedure will apply – you will be asked to submit written comments which will be considered by the MPTS case manager and will then be notified of the outcome.

If you'd like to provide feedback on *Resource for doctors: interim orders tribunals*, please go to: https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/ResourceforDoctors_IOT_Part3/

Part 4: Preparing for the interim orders tribunal hearing

Key points

- If you attend the hearing, you may make oral and/or written submissions. Witness evidence is not usually received at interim orders tribunal hearings
- If you will not attend the hearing, you may provide written submissions
- Whether you intend to provide oral or written submissions, it is important you prepare your submissions carefully and in advance of the hearing
- Any documents should be provided as soon as possible prior to the hearing

Reviewing the hearing bundle

You will have received the hearing bundle with the GMC letter notifying you of your referral to the interim orders tribunal. If you have not received a copy of the bundle, or require it in a different format, you should urgently notify your GMC contact.

The hearing bundle will contain the documents the GMC intends to present to the interim orders tribunal to explain why the GMC believes an interim order is required. You should carefully consider the documents included within it.

If you want to refer to material that is not in the hearing bundle, you need to send this to MPTS without delay before the hearing. The MPTS will make this information available to the interim orders tribunal. If you can't send the documents in advance, you can submit them on the day of the hearing. If your bundle of additional documents is large, you should highlight key documents for the interim orders tribunal to consider, with page numbers for ease of reference.

If you plan to produce any patient identifiable information at the hearing we would remind you of the GMC guidance on [Confidentiality: good practice in handling patient information](#). It's important to ensure that documents you disclose comply with your responsibilities under data protection legislation. The party relying on a document is responsible for ensuring that any personal data appearing in that document is appropriately redacted.

Issues to be considered

At the hearing the IOT will consider whether to restrict your registration on an interim basis, either by placing conditions on or suspending your registration. The interim orders tribunal will apply our [guidance for interim orders tribunal decision makers](#). You may find it helpful to refer to this guidance to understand the issues the interim orders tribunal will consider, which will include:

- The seriousness of risk to members of the public if a doctor continues to hold unrestricted registration. In assessing this risk the interim orders tribunal will consider the seriousness of the allegations and the weight of the information, including information about the likelihood of a further incident or incidents occurring during the relevant period
- Whether public confidence in the medical profession is likely to be seriously damaged if a doctor continues to hold unrestricted registration during the relevant period
- Whether it is in the doctor's interests to hold unrestricted registration. For example, where a doctor may clearly lack insight into the seriousness of a health condition and needs to be protected from him or herself.

In weighing up these factors, the interim orders tribunal will carefully consider the proportionality of their response in dealing with the risk to the public interest (including patient safety and public confidence) and the adverse consequences of any action on a doctor's own interests. It is worth noting that the interim orders tribunal cannot accept any undertakings offered by a doctor as it has no power to accept them and they are unenforceable.

Types of submissions

During the interim orders tribunal hearing, you will be given the opportunity to present your case for consideration by the interim orders tribunal: this is called a submission. The GMC representative will make submissions on behalf of the GMC and then you will be invited to present your case. There are two types of submission you can make, which are explained below.

Oral or verbal submissions

Oral submissions are when you make your arguments to the interim orders tribunal by speaking at the hearing in person. If you are represented at the hearing (see Part 2 for further information about representation), your representative will make submissions on your behalf.

It is strongly advisable to prepare your oral submissions in advance. To do this, you may wish to prepare an outline or bullet point list to help you remember the points you want to make.

Written submissions

If you do not intend to attend or be represented at the hearing, you may send written submissions instead. You may also find it helpful to make written submissions if you plan to attend the hearing but are concerned about public speaking or to make sure that you make all the points you want to.

It is essential to prepare and send your written submissions to the MPTS in advance, ideally by email to our interim orders tribunal team at IOTAdmin@mpts-uk.org. This will allow us to ensure that your written submissions are provided to the interim orders tribunal.

Preparing and making submissions

When planning your submissions you may find it helpful to consider:

- The reasons why the GMC has referred you to an interim orders tribunal hearing
- Whether or not you agree that an interim order is required, and why.

Always adopt an organised approach to planning your submissions:

- Organise your points in a logical order, using clear headings
- Think about how to break down the points you want to make, so that you can present your argument in manageable chunks. For example, if you have four reasons which support your view, say so and refer to each reason by number ('my first reason is...my second reason is...' etc.)
- Be prepared to tell the interim orders tribunal where to find each piece of evidence that supports your position (for example, by referring to the page number in the hearing bundle). This way you can be confident that they are reading the information you want to draw to their attention while you are making the points you want to about it.

Use plain English and aim to be as concise as possible, using short sentences. While you will be given the opportunity to make the points you wish to, the interim orders tribunal often has several cases to consider on the same day and will expect your submissions to be focused.

Practical points for oral submissions

- Before the hearing, practise what you want to say by saying it out loud to a friend or family. This way you can check if it is easy to follow and understand and you can get a feel of the flow of your argument
- At the hearing:
 - Turn on the microphone in front of you, by pressing the button on the base. When you have finished speaking, remember to turn your microphone off
 - Make sure you speak clearly and slowly so that the interim orders tribunal can take notes, which it will refer to throughout the hearing and in making its decisions
 - When you finish your sentence, if the interim orders tribunal is still writing, wait. When the interim orders tribunal stops writing, start speaking again
 - Don't interrupt the GMC representative when they are speaking to the interim orders tribunal. You will be given a chance to speak when it is your turn. If, however, you think that you need to interrupt, make sure you do it in the right way: address the Chair when the GMC representative comes to the end of their sentence and explain the reason for your interruption
 - Listen carefully to any questions asked by the interim orders tribunal and answer them clearly
 - Try to stay calm and avoid using strongly emotional language.

Practical points for written submissions

- Typed written submissions are preferable to hand written notes
- Use a large font like Arial 14. It makes it clear to read
- Use headings to signpost each point you are making, and use bullet points or numbered points to make your arguments clear.

If you'd like to provide feedback on *Resource for doctors: interim orders tribunals*, please go to: https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/ResourceforDoctors_IOT_Part4/

Part 5: During your interim orders tribunal hearing

Key points

- If you are attending your hearing, arrive at the MPTS hearing centre in good time to avoid delays
- You will be given the opportunity to present your case to the interim orders tribunal and will receive a written decision regarding the outcome
- If you believe your hearing cannot proceed for some reason, you can apply to the interim orders tribunal for an adjournment. If the adjournment is refused, then the hearing will continue as planned

Arriving for your hearing

On the day of your hearing, you should aim to arrive at the MPTS hearing centre at least half an hour before your hearing is due to start. [Find out further information about our hearing centre.](#)

Please report to the MPTS reception desk on the 7th floor of St James's Building, where you will be greeted by MPTS staff. They will direct you to your private waiting room. The waiting room will be available to you throughout the hearing. Free hot drinks and water are available.

Because several cases usually take place on the same day, there may be some waiting time. As the length of hearings can vary quite considerably, please be aware that this can have an impact on the actual start time of hearings.

Before your hearing starts

A MPTS tribunal assistant will provide you with updates on when the interim orders tribunal will be ready to start your hearing.

If you are self-represented, the MPTS tribunal assistant will also ask if you would like any pastoral support during the day from the MPTS doctor contact service. This service is provided by a member of MPTS staff unconnected to your hearing, to help lessen any isolation and stress, signpost useful support materials and services and provide information about the hearing process. The MPTS staff member will not be able to discuss your case or provide legal advice.

Where possible, the GMC's legal representative may also introduce themselves to you or your representative before the hearing.

In the hearing room

At the beginning of the hearing, the interim orders tribunal Chair will introduce the tribunal members and open the hearing by asking you to confirm your full name and GMC number.

The GMC's barrister will present the GMC's case first. Listen carefully to their oral submissions. You may wish to make notes as they are speaking, noting down anything you want to add to your submissions in light of the GMC's comments.

You (or your representative, if you have one) will then be given the opportunity to present your case. You must make sure that your submissions are limited to the question of whether, given the circumstances of the case, it is necessary to impose an interim order and, if so, what type of order. The interim orders tribunal may also ask questions if they need any further information.

After submissions from both sides, the interim orders tribunal will make their decision. This is done in private session (also known as 'in camera' discussions) without the parties to the proceedings being present. During this time, the interim orders tribunal will make its decision and produce a written determination.

Once this has been completed, the MPTS tribunal assistant will ask you and the GMC's representative to return to the hearing room. The interim orders tribunal Chair will then announce the decision and copies of the written determination will be handed out. At this point the hearing will end.

If you have chosen not to come to the hearing, we will send you written notification of the hearing outcome by registered post and by email if you have given us an email address to use.

Hearing outcomes

The outcome of your hearing will be one of the following:

- No order made
- Interim order of conditions – this means that you must comply with the conditions specified by the interim orders tribunal in their decision until the order expires or is otherwise revoked or varied by the interim orders tribunal. Interim conditions take effect immediately. The conditions the interim orders tribunal put in place will be based on the [conditions bank](#) available on the MPTS website

- Interim order of suspension – this means that your registration is suspended and you will not be able to practice until the order expires or is otherwise revoked or varied by the interim orders tribunal. Interim suspension takes effect immediately.

Length of your interim order

The length of your interim order will be specified in the interim orders tribunal's written decision. The interim orders tribunal may make an interim order for up to 18 months.

In deciding the length of order the interim orders tribunal will consider the time that is reasonably needed to complete the GMC's investigation into the allegations. This may include the time required for the GMC to obtain assessments of health and or/performance and for the case to be listed for hearing by a medical practitioners tribunal.

Adjourning your hearing

Both you and the GMC can apply to have your hearing adjourned. An adjournment application can be made to the interim orders tribunal in person for the hearing to be temporarily stopped for a period of time (for example, 30 minutes or more) or adjourned to another day. The interim orders tribunal can also decide to adjourn the hearing without receiving an application if it feels it appropriate to do so.

You can apply to adjourn the hearing at any stage once it has begun, as set out in Rule 29(2). Before deciding whether to adjourn, the interim orders tribunal will hear submissions from you and the GMC about the application. If you are requesting an adjournment you should be prepared to explain why an adjournment is necessary and the length of adjournment required.

The legally qualified chair or the Legal Assessor (as applicable) may advise on any issues of law or procedure that the interim orders tribunal must consider in making its decision. If the legally qualified chair or Legal Assessor gives advice before the interim orders tribunal begins deciding the application, you and the GMC will hear it and be able to respond.

The interim orders tribunal will then consider the application and make a decision in private session. It will then announce its decision to the parties.

If an application for an adjournment is refused, you and the GMC will be expected to be ready to continue with the hearing. If the interim orders tribunal accepts the application, or if it decides on its own motion to adjourn, the hearing will be adjourned for an agreed period or to a date to be fixed by us.

If you'd like to provide feedback on *Resource for doctors: interim orders tribunals*, please go to: https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/ResourceforDoctors_IOT_Part5/

Part 6: After your interim orders tribunal hearing

Key points

- Only the outcome of your interim orders tribunal hearing will be published. Matters discussed at the hearing and the reasons set out in the determination will not be published
- If you gained your primary medical qualification outside of the UK, the GMC will contact the medical regulator of that country and inform them of your hearing outcome

Notification of the hearing outcome

The MPTS will send you written confirmation of the interim orders tribunal's full written determination shortly after the end of the hearing. This will be sent by post and by email, if you have agreed to receive emails about your hearing. The notification will inform you of the outcome and what will happen next. The notification letter will also explain that you may apply to court for the interim order to be revoked or varied.

Publishing decisions

We have a statutory duty to publish a range of decisions including those made by the interim orders tribunal. We also have a discretionary power to withhold any information concerning the physical or mental health of a person which is considered to be confidential. Detailed information on how and when we publish decisions can be found in our [Guidance on publishing hearing decisions](#).

Overseas regulators

The GMC has a commitment to exchange information between medical regulators. Therefore, if you gained your primary medical qualification outside the UK, or your registered address is outside the UK, the GMC will contact the medical regulator in that country at the end of your hearing, if the interim orders tribunal directs that conditions be imposed on your registration or that your registration be suspended.

European alerts mechanism

The GMC is legally required to inform European medical regulators about restrictions or prohibitions on a doctor's registration, including doctors who have conditions that

affect their practice, or have been suspended. The GMC will send this information within three days of the hearing.

You have the right to:

- appeal against the decision to send this information
- apply for inaccurate information to be corrected
- seek remedies for damage caused by an incorrect alert.

If you have any questions about this, you should email imialerts@gmc-uk.org.

The GMC may also give further information about the case in response to specific requests from a European regulator. If further information is disclosed, you will be informed of this.

Reviewing your interim order

The interim orders tribunal will review your interim order periodically to check whether the order remains necessary and sufficient.

For more information regarding interim orders tribunal review hearings, see Part 7: Reviews of your interim order.

Extending your interim order

The interim orders tribunal will have specified the length of your interim order, which will be a maximum of up to 18 months, although it may be less. The interim orders tribunal has no power to extend an interim order.

If the GMC has not completed its investigation and believes the interim order is required beyond the time specified by the interim orders tribunal, the Act allows the GMC to apply to the relevant court for the interim order to be extended by up to 12 months at a time. The relevant court will depend on your registered address but will be either the Court of Session in Scotland, the High Court in Northern Ireland, or the High Court in England and Wales. Applications must be made in compliance with the procedural rules of the relevant court.

We have no involvement in the decision to apply for or to allow an extension to an interim order. All queries regarding the extension process should be addressed to your GMC contact.

If the relevant court decides to extend your interim order, the GMC will send us a copy of the sealed court order. We will then arrange for your interim order to be reviewed by the interim orders tribunal within three months. For more information regarding interim orders tribunal review hearings, see Part 7: Reviews of your interim order.

If you'd like to provide feedback on *Resource for doctors: interim orders tribunals*, please go to: https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/ResourceforDoctors_IOT_Part6/

Part 7: Reviews of your interim order

Key points

- Your interim order will be reviewed periodically by the interim orders tribunal to check whether the order remains necessary and sufficient
- In certain circumstances, reviews on the papers can be available as an alternative to attending a review hearing where there is agreement on the outcome

Review of the interim order

A decision to impose an interim order takes effect immediately. If the interim orders tribunal decides to impose an interim order, the order must be reviewed within the first six months of it coming into force and then at intervals of at least every six months. This is to ensure that it remains necessary and appropriate for the interim order to remain in place.

A review hearing must take place within three months where:

- An order for interim conditions has been replaced with an order for interim suspension
- An order for interim suspension has been replaced with an order for interim conditions
- The High Court has extended an interim order beyond the period initially set.

At review hearings, the interim orders tribunal can:

- Maintain the existing interim order
- Replace an existing interim order of conditions with one of suspension (and vice versa)
- Vary conditions imposed
- Revoke the existing interim order.

The interim orders tribunal will consider the information previously presented at earlier hearings and any other new information which has been received since. It will use all of this information to decide whether an interim order ought to remain in place and what type.

You will be notified of an interim orders tribunal review hearing at least seven days in advance of your hearing, unless there are exceptional circumstances. The steps to take before your interim orders tribunal review hearing are all the same regardless of the type of hearing, except in the case of reviews on paper, which are explained below.

Early review of the interim order

The order may also be reviewed earlier when new evidence relevant to the current interim order becomes available, which could mean the current interim order is no longer appropriate. For example, the GMC may have received information that suggests your registration needs be further restricted. Or alternatively, you may have provided the GMC with information to suggest the interim order is not required or should be less restrictive. You or the GMC can both apply for an early review hearing in these circumstances.

Review on the papers

Interim orders can also be reviewed 'on the papers'. This means a review would take place without you or the GMC needing to attend a hearing. All cases that are due for a review will be considered, but a review on the papers won't always be possible.

Further detailed guidance about reviews on the papers, including the steps you need to take, can be found in our [Guidance on reviews on the papers](#).

If you'd like to provide feedback on *Resource for doctors: interim orders tribunals*, please go to: https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/ResourceforDoctors_IOT_Part7/