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# Statement Regarding the Inclusion of Practice Managers in NHS England’s New to Partnership Scheme

Despite assurances that Practice Managers were being considered for inclusion in the new-to-partnership scheme, this has not yet materialised. One of the key sticking points was that applicants need to be registered with an appropriate professional body. The IGPM was set up partially in response to this requirement, and now has c.600 registered members. Our accreditation process is near completion. It is disappointing however, that this particular criterion seems only to apply to non-clinicians as Physicians’ Associates were soon added to the list of eligible staff groups, despite *their* registration being only voluntary at the stage they were included. This inclusion came as a surprise to the IGPM and our members as the role itself is very new to General Practice, whereas Practice Managers have been running practices on behalf of their partners since their inception.

Despite conversations with NHS England, the GPC and BMA, who have all appeared supportive of Practice Managers’ inclusion onto this scheme, it appears the clock is being allowed to run out on us. Our members, who have made applications on behalf of clinicians joining their partnerships, have been told that the scheme is ending in March 2022, and that applicants must be in receipt of an equity share role at the time of applying. For many practices, a 6 month probationary period is included in any new partnership offer to ensure that the new partner is a good fit, and is often not paid on an equity basis. This would mean Practice Managers would need to have been offered and started their probation by October 2021 to meet the deadline. This is less than two months away.

Practice Managers are frequently referred to by their staff and Partners as the backbone of General Practice. We are told frequently that practices could not run without us. When over 55% of respondents to our survey stated that they were thinking about leaving the profession, and with what is a very real succession crisis on the horizon, we are very disappointed that our role does not appear to be valued by the powers-that-be and we are being excluded from this scheme.

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Kay Keane, Robyn Clark, Nicola Davies and Jo Wadey  
Directors of the Institute of General Practice Management 13th August 2021