

12 September 2018

Professor Russell Viner  
President  
Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health  
5-11 Theobald's Road,  
London WC1X 8SH

Regent's Place  
350 Euston Road  
London NW1 3JN

Email: [gmc@gmc-uk.org](mailto:gmc@gmc-uk.org)  
Website: [www.gmc-uk.org](http://www.gmc-uk.org)  
Telephone: 0161 923 6602

**Chair**  
Professor Sir Terence Stephenson

**Chief Executive and Registrar**  
Charlie Massey

Dear Russell

Thank you for your letter and for drawing your continued concern to our attention. I hope to be able to reassure you.

The guidance issued today has been co-produced by the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, the Conference of Postgraduate Medical Deans, the General Medical Council and the Medical Schools Council. It makes clear to doctors that the GMC does not seek their reflective notes in order to investigate a concern about them. It doesn't explicitly reference third-party data controllers but I can absolutely assure you this is not a 'loophole'.

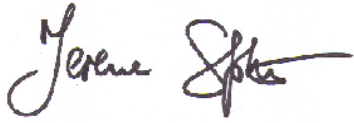
The central question in your letter was '*whether, in the course of its FTP work, the GMC may require third-party data controllers (such as Medical Royal Colleges) to release doctors' reflective notes.*' We are absolutely clear that we do not seek reflective notes from third parties.

When we met with your predecessor, Neena Modi, and representatives of the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health earlier this year, they raised questions about the wording of one of our standard investigation letters which was intended to seek evidence of support for the doctor and / or concerns as part of our fitness to practise work.

Although the letter did not ask colleges to provide reflective statements, we agreed it was not as clear as it should be. As a result of the concerns raised then, we have reviewed all of our fitness to practise documentation to make sure that it is clear we are not seeking doctors' reflective notes. We would be happy to talk through the changes we have made to our template documentation.

Finally, I am very happy for you to share this exchange of letters with members of the RCPCH if that would be helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Terence Stephenson'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end.

Terence Stephenson

cc.

Alastair Henderson, AoMRC  
Professor Carrie McEwen, AoMRC