Doctors Defence Service (DDS) provides legal defence representation in GMC proceedings in the UK. The lawyers at Doctors Defence Service are highly experienced in representing doctors who face allegations of professional misconduct (which must be “serious”), seriously deficient performance (a lack of competence), or being professionally compromised through ill-health. Our lawyers also represent doctors who have been convicted of a criminal offence. Our lawyers also represent doctors on appeal and in relation to registration applications.

We represent medical doctors at the GMC / MPTS in the following specialist areas of GMC law:

**GMC Provisional Enquiries** are a pre-cursor to a full investigation, a kind of preliminary enquiry. Many cases are closed at this stage of scrutiny, if the right evidence is presented to the GMC. Doctors at this stage should therefore take careful steps to provide evidence to the GMC that explains the history or events from the doctor’s perspective. A lot can be done at the preliminary enquiry stage. For more information about the steps that can be taken at this stage, see our [GMC Provisional Enquiry Procedure](#) page.

**GMC Investigations** into allegations of impaired fitness to practise have become numerous in the last few years. Not all cases proceed to the fitness to practise (FTP) stage, and those doctors who are proactive in responding to allegations in a constructive way usually fair better than those who “wait and see”. Doctors Defence Service lawyers can assist doctors with written submissions, in response to GMC Rule 4 Letters
(the initial letter a doctor receives from the GMC) and GMC Rule 7 Letter (when the GMC has perfected its case, following an investigation into a doctor’s conduct) and advise on the evidence that should be obtained and submitted to the GMC Case Examiners (a lay person and a medical person, who consider the doctor’s submissions and evidence in order to determine the most appropriate disposal of the case). For more information on the legal assistance we can provide and for more detail about the GMC investigatory processes, see our GMC Investigations page.

GMC Fitness to Practise (FTP) Hearings / Medical Practitioners Tribunal Service (MPTS) hearings are now generally held in Manchester (as of the Summer 2011) but they are occasionally held in London and elsewhere in the UK. Doctors Defence Service lawyers represent doctors who practise anywhere in the UK, at any fitness to practise hearing, wherever they are held. To read more about our legal defence services in fitness to practise law, view our GMC / MPTS FTP Representation page.

GMC interim orders tribunal (IOT) Hearings are held where the GMC has received information that a doctor’s fitness to practise may be impaired and where the doctor’s continuing unrestricted practice may not be in the public interest (on grounds of public safety, public confidence, or in the doctor’s interest). The GMC / MPTS IOT panel may impose Conditions of Practice (restrictions) on a doctor, or suspend the doctor from the register. Doctors Defence Service provides legal advice and legal representation to doctors who are facing GMC / MPTS interim orders hearings. To read more about our legal defence services in IOT matters, see our GMC / MPTS
Restorations to the GMC Register: Doctors may apply for restoration to the register after their registration has lapsed or after the minimum statutory period following erasure. See our GMC Restorations page for more information.

GMC Registration Applications are generally made by newly qualified doctors as part of the deanery educational process and also by doctors who have trained overseas. Some overseas doctors may be highly experienced, highly trained individuals, while others may be fairly junior with only a short period of experience under their belt. Our registration law lawyers regularly advise and represent doctors who wish to register with the General Medical Council (GMC) in the UK. View our Registrations Law page for more information about our GMC registration law representation services.

Revalidation Legal Advice and Appeals from Licensing Decisions: Revalidation is straightforward for many doctors who have had the right support and guidance from their employers or colleges, but for a significant number the process has been problematic. There have been problems in identifying a suitable Responsible Officer, or in arranging appraisals, or the Registrar has decided to cancel the licence, leading to a long appeal process. For more information, see our page on Revalidation for Doctors.

Appeals from GMC and MPTS Decisions: see our page on: Appeals

The GMC provides a summary guide to each of the principle rules which govern the GMC’s legal process: GMC Guide

Does the GMC Protect Doctors?

In a footnote to editors, accompanying 2016 Chief Executive Niall Dickson’s letter to the Daily Mail, on 7 March 2016, the GMC asserted:
‘We are not here to protect doctors – their interests are protected by others. Our job is to protect the public.’

It is clear from that quote that the GMC is not there to protect doctors, in any circumstances. Doctors would therefore be mistaken to believe that the GMC will be of much assistance to them, when responding to concerns. The GMC is there to bring proceedings against doctors, in order to protect the public and uphold confidence in the profession, as well as to raise standards. By contrast, Doctors Defence Service is here to help doctors who are facing GMC proceedings. DDS has helped and advised many hundreds of doctors over the years. Doctors Defence Service is an organisation that aims to protect the various interests of UK doctors.

**DDS Representation** is provided by lawyers who are qualified barristers. Some of our lawyers are also clinically qualified, which is of particular assistance where a doctor is facing allegations that touch on clinical practice. Representation can be provided to doctors at all grades, in all general and specialist areas of medicine. The lawyers at Doctors Defence Service have represented many hundreds of doctors of all grades in GMC / MPTS cases over the last decade. Doctors Defence Service lawyers and can arrange to see a doctor anywhere in the UK, at a time to fit in with the doctor’s busy schedule.

To discuss Doctors Defence Service representation in any type of GMC proceedings, call us in confidence on: **0800 10 88 739**

**GMC Law / MPTS Law Defence Lawyers**