



# Ministry of Justice

The Government is committed to the implementation of a system of independent, randomly allocated medical reporting through the introduction of MedCo and its IT portal. The intention is to ensure the independence of medical experts from those who instruct them and improve the quality of reporting through the introduction next year of a robust accreditation scheme for experts.

The Ministry of Justice is of the view that the system of allocation introduced on 6 April will, if given the opportunity to operate as intended, succeed in delivering greater independence whilst maintaining consumer choice, with sufficient flexibility built into the system so as not to prevent MROs from developing their practice and/or moving between tiers.

Concerns have arisen relating to the behaviours exhibited by some MROs which have the potential to undermine both the Government's policy objectives and public confidence in MedCo. Examples include:

- established high volume MROs registering multiple new smaller MROs; such actions have the potential to put at risk the chances of existing MROs to compete for selection, and also runs contrary to the policy objective of providing users with a range of 7 'different' – i.e. unconnected – MROs to choose from;
- a significant number of Tier 2 MROs are affiliated with a central IT hub, whereby each MRO is a separate corporate entity but shares a number of centralised services and resources as part of a collective entity.

The system was neither designed nor intended to permit this type of behaviour, but the Ministry of Justice is clear that MedCo, through the application of the qualifying criteria, its user agreements and ethics policy, has the requisite tools to address it.

In addition, the issue of MROs overstating their capabilities in order to be in tier 1 will shortly begin to be addressed by MedCo through a programme of detailed audits.

The Ministry will follow developments closely and will conduct a review, based on evidence, of how the new system is operating with a view to making adjustments if necessary.

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