

Know your new MECA



Sabbatical and secondment

The new MECA has brought small but significant changes to secondment and sabbatical leave covering charitable work.

ASMS members have sought wider opportunities for both secondment and sabbatical leave than the previous MECA allowed. In particular they wanted to be able to use this leave to learn from and/or assist charitable organisations such as hospital ships or Médecins Sans Frontières/Doctors Without Borders.

As a result changes have been made to these MECA clauses:

36.4 Secondment Leave

*Employees may apply for a secondment of two weeks every three years to a recognised unit or **posting** for the purpose of professional development and upgrading skills which is relevant to their duties and responsibilities.*

36.5 Sabbatical Leave

*(a) After every six years of service, an employee may apply for sabbatical leave of three months, or other agreed period, on full pay, whether as a continuous period or a series of separate periods, to spend time at other clinical units or centres, universities or research institutes or working (or volunteering) for a **medical charity** for the purposes of strengthening or acquiring clinical knowledge or skills or undertaking an approved course of study or research in matters relevant to their clinical practice.*

As is currently the case, ASMS members seeking secondment or sabbatical leave must meet the other [requirements of the clauses](#) overall but it is now clear that the leave can include postings or working with suitably agreed charitable organisations.

Please contact your [ASMS industrial officer](#) if you need advice about applying for sabbaticals or secondments.