



## Circular No. (21/2020)

<b>From</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Department of Healthcare Professions</li></ul>
<b>To</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All Physicians in the State of Qatar</li><li>• All Healthcare facilities/ focal points in the state of Qatar (Governmental &amp; Private sector)</li></ul>
<b>Subject</b>	Developing category "Assistant Specialty" among the approved categories list for physicians in the State of Qatar
<b>Date</b>	27 December 2020

"The Department of Healthcare Professions presents to you its compliments"

In reference to Circular no. (20/2020) related to cancelation of the Associate category from the approved categories list for physicians and in order to support the medical cadre from Qataris and family sponsored physicians, DHP has developed category "**Assistant Specialty**" among the approved categories list for physicians which allows the specialty physicians to practice within specific guidelines under supervision of a licensed specialty physician in the same scope of practice.

**The following points will be emphasized in the developed category:**

1. Only Qatari physicians, offspring of Qatari women or family sponsored physicians can be granted "**Assistant Specialty**" in the following cases: -
  - I. Holding a post-graduate degree that is included in the DHP approved specialty qualifications list for physicians (categories 2 & 2\*\*); however, he/she did not complete the required years of work experience in order to get "Specialty" title.
  - II. Eligible for specialty title; however, he/she has a break from practice for more than two years that requires a supervised practice period based on the "Break from Practice" policy.
2. "Assistant Specialty" will be permitted to practice in the governmental and semi-governmental institutions or private hospital settings only considering that the facility must have licensed operating theatre or day care unit for surgical scopes of practice.
3. The "Assistant Specialty" will undergo periodic assessments to ensure the quality and effectiveness of the services provided as well as to ensure that the he/she has acquired the specialty physician's skills and the basic expertise to practice specialty medical profession.



4. The “Assistant Specialty” can assist the supervisor “Specialty” physician in performing his/her core & advanced surgical procedures as per the scope of practice and the surgical privileges approval granted by the DHP-Registration section.

**Note:**

- Physicians who were registered/ licensed as Associate before this category and they fulfill the aforementioned criteria to get “Assistant Specialty” will remain as “Associate” and there is no need to change to the new developed category. They can change directly to “Specialty” after they complete the requirements.

**Attachments:**

- The Registration/licensing requirements for “Specialty (assistant)” category along with the “Supervision Framework”

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**Thank you for your cooperation**

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## The registration/ licensing requirements for the “Assistant Specialty” Category

### **Background:**

As per the DHP approved policies, a specialty physician shall hold a post-graduate degree from the DHP approved specialty qualifications list for physicians and complete the required years of work experience in addition to the other requirements.

### **Definition:**

“Assistant Specialty” is a new category that will be granted to Qataris, offspring of Qatari women or family sponsored physicians who have a post-graduate degree from the DHP approved specialty qualifications list for physicians (category 2 & 2 \*\*); however, they didn't compete the required a period of experience to get “Specialty” title.

Qataris, offspring of Qatari women or family sponsored physicians can be granted “Assistant Specialty” in the following cases:

- I. Holding a post-graduate degree that is included in the DHP approved specialty qualifications list for physicians; however, he/she did not complete the required years of work experience in order to get “Specialty” title.
- II. Holding a post-graduate degree that is included in the DHP approved specialty qualifications list for physicians and completed the required years of work experience in order to get specialty title; however, he/she has a break from practice and should complete a supervised practice period based on the “Break from Practice” policy.

### **Registration/licensing requirements as assistant specialty:**

All physicians under **Assistant Specialty** category can apply for evaluation and licensing through the electronic system with all the Registration/ licensing requirements as per the DHP approved policies and procedures in addition to the following: -

1. QID with family sponsorship.
2. Supervision letter signed and stamped by the medical director and the supervisor showing the supervisor name, scope of practice and license number. (Please refer to the supervision framework)
3. Undertaking letter signed and stamped by the medical director and the supervisor stating that the supervisor shall hold full responsibility of supervising the supervisee as well as ensure not to supervise more than one supervisee at one time.

### **Change scope of practice requirements**

Once the physician under “Assistant Specialty” category completes the required supervised practice period, he/she shall submit a “change scope of practice” application to change from “Assistant Specialty” into “Specialty” along with all the requirements as per the DHP approved policies and procedures in addition to the following:



1. The assessment reports that shall be done every 6 months signed and stamped by the medical director and the supervisor. (Please refer to the supervision framework)
2. Logbook signed and stamped by the medical director and supervisor that includes the clinical cases seen/ surgical procedures assisted by the assistant specialist. (Please refer to the supervision framework)
3. Recommendation letter from the supervisor.

### **Surgical Privileges requirements**

Once the "Assistant Specialty" physician changes to "Specialty", he/she is entitled to the Core Privileges as per his/her scope of practice. Additionally, he/she can submit a request for Advanced Privileges that will be assessed by the specialized committee after fulfilling all the requirements as per the DHP approved policies and procedures in addition to the following: -

1. Logbook signed and stamped by the medical director and supervisor that includes the surgical procedures assisted by the "Assistant Specialty" physician.
2. Recommendation letter from the supervisor.

### **Supervision Framework:**

#### **Introduction:**

DHP has a duty to ensure that patients' safety is always safeguarded and this is achieved through its implementation of a supervisory framework which is a tool used to monitor "Specialty (assistant)". The objective of "Assistant Specialty" supervisory framework is to ensure that there is indirect supervision while they are at work, so that patient's safety is not compromised.

#### **Guidelines:**

1. Supervisee is a licensed "**Assistant Specialty**" and supervisor is a licensed "**Specialty**" Physician in the same scope of practice.
2. "Assistant Specialty" will be subjected to practice under supervision in a licensed governmental /semi- governmental institutions or private hospital settings only considering that the facility must have a theatre or day care unit for surgical scopes of practice.
3. The Supervisors must be working as a full time.
4. The level of supervision will be Indirect Supervision.
5. A Supervisory physician may not supervise more than one "Assistant Specialty" at one time.
6. Supervision letter - signed and stamped by the medical director and the supervisor showing the supervisor name, scope of practice and license number - shall be submitted in the evaluation, temporary license, licensing, renewal and change place of work applications.
7. "Assistant Specialty" physician must maintain a logbook signed and stamped by the supervisor and medical director that includes the clinical cases seen/ procedures assisted. The log book shall be submitted in renewal, change place of work and change scope of practice applications.



8. There must be a proper system of assessment, monitoring and feedback regarding the performance of "Assistant Specialty" physician. He/she will be assessed every 6 months and the assessment reports shall be signed and stamped by the medical director and the supervisor. Assessment reports shall be ready for submission upon request and in each renewal, change place of work and change scope of practice applications.
9. In case the supervisor physician has been changed, DHP shall be notified through update profile application and the former supervisor shall write his/her final report.
10. Depending on circumstances, "Assistant Specialty" may be subjected to multi-rate assessment report (Physicians, nurses and other healthcare practitioners) to provide with a holistic view of the supervisee's performance whilst practicing under supervision.

#### **Related Policies and circulars**

1. Circular no. (23/2020) regarding DHP approved specialty qualifications list for physicians.
2. Break from practice policy.
3. Core and advanced privileges policy.
4. Circular number (20/2020) regarding cancelation of associate category.