Summary of application process

(Guidance notes and application forms included in annexes)

Step 1 (Annex 1&2)

GMC registration and inclusion in GP register.

http://www.gmc-uk.org/doctors/applications.asp

Step 2

Application to Northern Ireland performers list (NIPMPL).

http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/1813.htm

Note step 1 and 2 can run concurrently however NIPMPL applications will not be considered until GMC registration is confirmed.

Step 3

Application to the GP development scheme Induction and returners component.

Approval by the PMPL committee.
Step 4
Registration with Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency NIMDTA. Access to National Recruitment Office (NRO) for MCQ test.

http://www.nimdta.gov.uk/general-practice/other-gp-services/gp-returner-scheme/

Step 5
MCQ test (Annex 3)

*Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) fund 1 successful attempt on satisfactorily completion of the scheme.*

Step 6
If required completion of simulated surgery (Annex 4)

*Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) fund 1 successful attempt on satisfactorily completion of the scheme*

Step 7
Meeting at NIMDTA to plan practice placement.

Conditional inclusion in the PMPL.

Step 8
Successful completion of placement and sign off by NIMDTA.

Full inclusion in the PMPL.

For further information please contact Miss Nicola Scott on nicola.scott@hscni.net

Tel: 028 9536 2056

For inclusion through the portfolio route assessed by the RCGP refer to annex 10.
ANNEX 1

Overview

The GP Induction and Refresher Scheme (I&R Scheme) provides an opportunity for GPs who have previously been on the General Medical Council's (GMC) GP Register and on a UK Performers List, to safely return to General Practice following a career break or time spent working abroad.

It also supports the safe introduction of overseas GPs who have qualified in the European Union and other countries. These doctors require a Certificate of Eligibility for GP Registration (CEGPR) as well as a licence to practice from the General Medical Council (GMC) before they can legally enter UK general practice.

Background

Health Education England (HEE) has a mandate from the UK government to support efforts to improve recruitment and retention of staff; and to support ‘return to practice’ initiatives, with a specific emphasis on general practice.

Northern Ireland are following this lead and reviewing the I&R scheme currently in place in NI to bring it in line with the scheme introduced in England.

Northern Ireland Medical and Dental training Agency (NIMDTA) are responsible for the training and education of NHS staff. The Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) is responsible for managing the performers list in line with the Health and Personal Social Services (Primary Medical Services Performers Lists) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2004 and 2008 Amendment.

The GP National Recruitment Office (NRO) was set up by the Committee of General Practice Education Directors (COGPED), and is the administrative body responsible for co-ordinating the nationally agreed and quality assured process for recruitment to general practice. One of its main roles is to help the LETBs deliver a standard and robust recruitment and selection process that is reliable, valid and fair.
The legislative framework in Northern Ireland set Health and Personal Social Services (Primary Medical Services Performers Lists) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2004 and 2008 Amendment provides a framework for managing medical performers undertaking clinical services.

The Health and Social care Board is required to assure itself that any doctor on the PMPL:

- has a working knowledge of the NHS;
- is both clinically safe and practices in accordance with the values of the NHS;
- is comfortable managing patients’ expectations across the broad curriculum of general practice;
- and in addition, in the case of doctors where English is not their first language, to ensure they have a level of linguistic competency compatible with safe practice.

This duty is discharged through the Responsible Officer (RO) of the Health and Social Care Board.

Any doctor wishing to work as an independent and unsupervised GP in Northern Ireland is required to:

- be on the GMC’s GP Register
- hold a GMC licence to practise
- be on the Northern Ireland Primary Medical Performers List (NI PMPL).

The current length of time a GP may be out of active UK general practice before they are advised by the HSCB RO to have an educational and learning needs review is normally two years. This is the consensus of best practice amongst the different branches of the medical profession. Published evidence indicates that after this period a significant percentage of applicants are judged to fall below the necessary standard for independent practice.

The HSCB RO will take the final decision to support any application to enter/return to practice, or to refer for assessment and possible refresher via NIMDTA.
ANNEX 2

The Induction & Refresher Scheme in Northern Ireland

The scheme is designed to support GPs who have previously been in practice to return to practice in Northern Ireland and to induct GPs to the workforce in N Ireland. It is based on the existing GP training curriculum from the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP), and follows best practice in relation to ensuring patient safety. The educational provision is grounded in accordance with the nine GMC domains that also underpin the quality of speciality training.

1. Patient safety
2. Quality assurance, review and evaluation
3. Equality, diversity and opportunity
4. Recruitment, selection and appointment
5. Delivery of the curriculum including assessment
6. Support and development of trainees, trainers and local faculty
7. Management of education and training
8. Educational resources and capacity
9. Outcomes

Anyone who wishes to practice as a GP in N Ireland and who has not practised as such for 24 months, or has no previous general practice experience in the UK, will need to firstly apply to the Northern Ireland Performers List.

They will then be considered for entry to the I&R Scheme.
ANNEX 3

Entry to the NIPMPL

To practice as a GP in N Ireland it is a requirement to be registered with the GMC and on the NIPMPL.

The application procedure and initial assessment procedure will be designed to:

- Assess if a doctor can be added directly to the PMPL without further assessment or induction.
- If an I&R is required establish the length of time that the doctor is likely to require to be in the scheme part-time up to a funded maximum of six months full-time or equivalent part-time.
- Screen out any GP with retraining or induction needs but who do not have the necessary level of knowledge and skill to practice safely in a clinical setting.
- Establish that the GP has not previously been part of a returner, induction or remedial training scheme. Where this is the case, the doctor will not be funded for inclusion in the NI GP Induction and Refresher Scheme.

Application process

Application form to NIPMPL initially.

The form will require provision of full details of qualifications, employment history including their reason for leaving general practice previously, reasons for training need including any conditions on practice, two references, details of English language and any other circumstances which may impact on the ability to work as a GP in NI.

Application to the NIPMPL is initially approved subject to completion of the I and R scheme. The applicant will be invited to apply and complete the application form for the scheme.

Shortlisting will be based on the standard application form and CV. It will be based on meeting specified criteria in terms of qualifications and inclusion in, or eligibility for inclusion in the I & R scheme.
The applicant will be required to submit written evidence in relation to the following:

- The applicant must be able to work at least half time (4 clinical sessions and 1 peer support or CPD session in each week) during the period of training. Exceptions to this will be made rarely and at the discretion of the PMPL committee at the time of consideration of the initial application to the scheme. The weekly support/CPD session will form part of the funded sessions.

- The applicant should not have any conditions or undertakings with the General Medical Council that would impact on their ability to work without restriction on completion of the GP I&R scheme.

- The applicant undertakes not to work as a locum in primary care or in out of hours provision during the period of training.

- The applicant should be prepared to have transport appropriate to the requirements of the practice placement and to commute to an identified practice. Since the number of practice placements available is limited, it is not guaranteed that a practice in the desired location will be available.

- The applicant is not required to be resident in NI at the time of application but should have a stated commitment to providing GMS in a substantive GP post in NI following completion of their training.

- The applicant has the necessary references for inclusion in the scheme. These will be the references submitted on application to the performers list.

This application will be considered by the PMPL committee and if approved the applicant will register with NIMDTA to gain access to the MCQ test through the NRO.
ANNEX 4

MCQ test and Simulated Surgery

https://gprecruitment.hee.nhs.uk/Induction-Refresher/MCQ
https://gprecruitment.hee.nhs.uk/Induction-Refresher/Simulated-Surgery

The applicant is required to undertake a more formalised assessment of their knowledge and skills. They will be invited to sit a validated multiple choice question (MCQ) paper which assesses knowledge and values. This will be delivered through the NRO.

The aim of the I&R scheme is to provide a period of supervised practice that seeks to support applicants and bridge any gaps in their knowledge or skills relating to general practice in Northern Ireland. Depending on the outcome of their MCQ scores, applicants may be required to complete the simulated surgery and this will help determine the required length of the placement in practice.

Costs of the MCQ and simulated surgery will be borne by the applicant however subject to successful completion of the I&R scheme. The cost of one attempt at the MCQ and simulated surgery will be reimbursed.

The workplace based assessment (WBA) will inform NIMDTA of the applicant’s suitability for inclusion on the NIPMPL. NIMDTA will notify the RO of satisfactory completion of the placement.

The decision to include the applicant onto the NIPMPL with or without any conditions applied will be taken by the HSCB RO.

All GPs who have undergone I&R will be recommended to have their first appraisal within six months of entry to the NIPMPL.
Annex 5

Assessments

The assessments enable the Health and Social Care Board to:

- Identify those GPs who could benefit from the scheme and successfully contribute to general practice in N Ireland.
- Decide on the length of workplace experience and clinical supervision required on the scheme, from a short induction up to a maximum of six months full-time or equivalent part-time.
- Identify those GPs where six months of full-time equivalent clinical experience on the scheme would be insufficient for them to work as an independent practitioner in the UK; for example, those with poor language skills or doctors who may not embrace the values of the NHS; four attempts at the knowledge assessment are permitted.

Multiple Choice Questions: The Clinical Knowledge Test and Situational Judgement Test form the two parts of this exam. There are eight sittings per year in agreed venues across the UK and in approved sites worldwide.

Simulated Surgery: including contextualised linguistic assessment and formal feedback if English is not the applicant’s first language. Simulated surgeries are held quarterly at the RCGP exam centre in London.

Workplace Based Assessments: Regular WBAs are undertaken and recorded in the NHS Induction Logbook (Annex C) during placements. These assessments include assessments of clinical skills, communication skills, teamwork, etc. and are based around observed consultations, case based discussions and observations of clinical procedures. 360 degree feedback from patients and colleagues is also collated.
Annex 6

Placements

Placements will be in a GMC approved training practice.

Practices will be paid an agreed (nationally determined FTE) fee for the supervision of doctors on the I&R scheme and this will include for the compilation of educational supervisory reports.

Each placement will have a named GP Educational Supervisor (usually a trainer) and will be for an agreed period.

The nature of I&R placements will vary based on the educational needs of each individual and the local availability of training places.

The placement will commence within 3 months of approval for inclusion onto the scheme by the Performers List Committee. It is anticipated the scheme will last 12 weeks maximum. If it is not completed satisfactorily within 6 months the doctor’s name will be removed from the performers list.
Annex 7

Funding Arrangements – Induction and Refresher Programme

Payments to Participating GP

Salary payments are to be negotiated between the GP and the practice. Payments to the GP are made by the providing practice. Reimbursement up to the maximum budget for the scheme will be claimed from BSO on the relevant claim forms.

Payments to Participating Practice

A trainer grant of £7,500 per annum pro rata to the duration of training up to a maximum of 26 weeks will be payable by HSCB.

In exceptional circumstances additional supervised sessions for specified activities (e.g. additional English language assessment) can be funded at £170 per session up to a maximum of 5 Sessions. These will be payable by the HSCB, provided that they are agreed in advance by both HSCB and NIMDTA.

Reimbursement of 50% of a standard GMS clinical session (£170) will be made by HSCB which are worked by the scheme doctor up to the maximum agreed weekly number. Funding will be provided for up to a maximum of 26 weeks for up to 8 sessions each week. A minimum of 4 clinical sessions and 1 peer support or CPD session are required in each week.
Annex 8

Identity Checks

Formal identify checks will be undertaken in person (using passports and original documentation) at the following stages:

- Registration with the GMC
- Application to the performers list.
- At interview and educational review at NIMDTA
- At all NRO assessment centres
Annex 9

Entry to the performers list via “Portfolio Route”

Northern Ireland process

Revised July 2016

The portfolio route is open to general practitioners who have worked in general practice in the previous 5 years and wish to return to practice following a period of working in general practice abroad.

Application process:

Step 1
GMC registration and inclusion in GP register.
http://www.gmc-uk.org/doctors/applications.asp

Step 2
Application to Northern Ireland performers list (NIPMPL).
http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/1813.htm

Note step 1 and 2 can run concurrently however NIPMPL applications will not be considered until GMC registration is confirmed.

Doctor indicates on application form that they wish to be considered for the portfolio route.

Step 3
Eligibility for the portfolio route and checks/interview assessed and approval sought from performers list committee.

Step 4
Registration with Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency NIMDTA. Access to National Recruitment Office (NRO) for access to the RCGP for portfolio assessment.

Step 5
Recommendation made to Responsible Officer, Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Board regarding inclusion in the list.
Step 6

Applicant meets Director of Postgraduate General Practice Education at NIMDTA (Northern Ireland Medical and Dental training Agency) to plan short practice induction.

Conditional inclusion in the performers list.

Step 7

Successful completion of induction and sign off by NIMDTA.

Full inclusion in the PMPL.

Possible reimbursement of fee for portfolio assessment.