

## **Allocation of Placements for Doctors in Training**

### **1.0 Purpose**

The purpose of this paper is to describe the policy for allocating doctors in training to placements within Trusts in Northern Ireland.

### **2.0 Background**

2.1 Doctors in training are recruited into posts which may form part of a training programme or may be in a stand-alone capacity for a period of 6 or 12 months. The process of allocation to programmes and posts will vary between specialties but follow the principles detailed below.

### **3.0 Foundation Trainees**

- 3.1 The Northern Ireland Foundation School (NIFS) participates in the foundation national recruitment process and follows the guidance from the United Kingdom Foundation Programme Office (UKFPO).
- 3.2 NIFS Applicants are asked to rank foundation schools during the application process. They are scored in their first choice foundation school on the basis of their 'white space' answers on their application form. The score determines their foundation school allocation.
- 3.3 Medical students who wish to remain in a geographical area for specific family, caring or health reasons to undertake their F1 training can apply to their medical school to be considered for pre-allocation to a specific foundation school on the grounds of special circumstances.
- 3.4 NIFS use the online 'auto match' facility to allocate successful applicants to programmes within the school. This is an automatic allocation to programme based on score obtained and applicants' ranked order of posts.
- 3.5 Applicants are allocated to their highest available preference taking the applicants in score order (starting with the highest). This is a simple match in score order with no special treatment for first preferences.
- 3.6 Where two or more applicants have the same score 'auto match' will use random selection to decide which applicant to take first.
- 3.7 Where 'auto match' runs out of preferences it will simply use random allocation. Applicants should make their preferences in time and give sufficient preferences to avoid this arising. Applicants are advised to rank all programmes within the NIFS.

### **4.0 Specialty Trainees**

- 4.1 Post allocation will be managed by Head / Deputy Head of School / Training Programme Directors in conjunction with the relevant Specialty Training Committee or School Board.
- 4.2 Appointment is to a Northern Ireland Training Programme and all core trainees should spend a minimum of 6 months outside the greater Belfast area. In General Practice appointments are made to a geographical area and trainees may not spend part of the 18 month hospital rotations in Belfast.

- 4.3 In most Schools the rotation is drawn up annually, taking into account the training needs and preferences of the trainee. Specialty trainees normally rotate every 6 months or 12 months dependent on specialty.
- 4.4 Trainees within the training programme will have the opportunity to discuss training needs at ARCP. They are advised to identify any special circumstances which may need to be considered when allocating placements. Supporting documentation may be required and will be treated confidentially.
- 4.5 Newly appointed trainees are required to complete placement preference forms. In some specialties this will take place at time of interview and other specialties request this information on receipt of acceptance of post.
- 4.6 Trainees are allocated to their specialty based on their preferences and final score at interview.
- 4.7 All trainees are given the opportunity to identify any special circumstances which may need to be considered when allocating placements.
- 4.8 Where possible, allocation of post will take into account personal or special circumstances.

## **5.0 Opportunity to Review Allocation**

- 5.1 If a trainee is unhappy with their allocation, they may contact the Head of School, Deputy Head of School or Training Programme Director, as appropriate, to discuss their individual case NO LATER than 30 June for placements due to commence in August or 30 November for placements due to commence in February.
- 5.2 If this issue is not satisfactorily resolved following this, an appeal may be made to the Postgraduate Dean or Associate Dean for Secondary Care. The Head/Deputy Head will be kept informed of progress.
- 5.3 Foundation placements cannot be appealed.