

**NI Retention Scheme**  
**For International Medical Graduates who have trained in**  
**the UK**

**Updated September 2022**

## **NI Retention Scheme**

This element of the General practice development scheme has been revised to address future workload issues that may arrive in primary care.

In order to address primary care workforce issues, NHS England, Health Education England (HEE), the General Practitioners Committee (GPC) and the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) have produced a collaborative, ten point GP workforce action plan.

Focusing on three main areas of improvement – recruitment, doctor retention, and support for returning doctors.

This component is to facilitate international medical graduates (IMGs) who have recently completed training in General practice in the UK.

This scheme is designed to assist in retention of GPs in primary care in Northern Ireland. It will provide stable work in a practice and include some out of hours sessions with a mandatory funded CPD programme to assist with appraisal and revalidation. It is proposed to offer 25 places although this number may increase if additional funding becomes available.

## **Eligibility for and Assessment Criteria for Inclusion**

- GP must be included on the NIPMPL.
- GP must be resident in N Ireland.
- GP must be able to work without supervision and not be subject to any conditions or undertakings imposed by the GMC.
- GP must have a demonstrable commitment to primary care in N Ireland

## **Exclusions**

Updated April 2022

The purpose of the scheme is to enhance capacity in general practice therefore:

Doctors are not eligible for the scheme if:

- They are party to a contract for general medical services provision.
- Receiving share of profits from a practice.
- Are contracted to work for in a Trust or other body for more than 20 hours per week.

### **Funding Arrangements**

Payment to the practice will be in line with paragraph 14 of the Statement of Financial Entitlements, (currently £59.18 in respect of each full session that the retainer undertakes for the contractor).

### **General Operating Arrangements including Sessional Commitment**

- The scheme will **end 3 years from when the doctor starts the scheme, irrespective of any absence due to illness, parental leave etc.**
- The doctor is required to do 4 sessions in general practice per week. A session is defined as 4 hours.
- **The doctor is required to do 1 session in out of hours per month if permitted by their visa arrangements.**
- The scheme GP can do other work within general practice or outside general practice but they are required to do the 4 sessions per week and 1 out of hours per month.
- The scheme GP should ensure they work within the requirements of their visa.
- Sessions should include clinical work (surgery, visits, on call, telephone consultations and directly related administration) less allocated CPD and educational supervision/mentoring time.

- Daytime on call duties must be included in the clinical sessions.
- GPs and practices cannot enter into a contract before approval by NIMDTA and formal confirmation of funding from the HSCB. The start date must be no later than three months after approval. If the start date cannot be accommodated the place will be offered to another doctor.
- GP practices must hold a sponsorship licence and provide an eligible contract to the trainee.
- Practices who are already employing a salaried GP cannot convert the salaried GP's post to a retention post under the NI GP Development Scheme as the funding is designed to create additional posts.
- Eligibility and funding availability and number of places will be reviewed annually.
- Salary is to be negotiated between the GP and practice this must meet the minimum requirement for the GPs visa. The GP will fund their own professional expenses.
- The practice should provide the GP with a contract of employment, and this should be signed and agreed by both parties. The BMA provides model contracts which the practice may wish to use.
- The GP will receive a £300 fee for completing satisfactory appraisal.
- The scheme GP must complete the mandatory CPD programme, and meet the requirements for appraisal and revalidation.
- The scheme GP must meet all the undertakings that are part of inclusion in the performers list.
- The scheme GP will have an identified mentor within the practice who will attend annual training.

## **Out of Hours Commitment**

- 1 session per month will be guaranteed by the out of hours provider.
- The scheme GP must complete 1 OOH session per month if permitted to do so in line with their visa restrictions.

### **Educational/Clinical Development Sessions**

- The scheme should provide protected time of one hour per week with the mentor.
- NIMDTA will ensure the mentor completes the appropriate training.
- There should be a system to enable the scheme GP to attend practice meetings and also be involved in practice clinical governance and quality improvement activity. This will assist the scheme GP with meeting the requirements of revalidation as outlined by the GMC.
- There should be a commitment by the practice to develop the scheme GP so they are able to take on a more substantive role in general practice at the end of the scheme.

### **General Educational Support**

Dr Louise Sands, Associate Director for GP Career Development at NIMDTA will provide educational support to the scheme GPs and review their placements annually.

### **Shortlisting Criteria for Applicant GPs**

Applicants at the time of application to the scheme must meet the following criteria:

- They must be included on the NI Primary Medical Services Performers List (NIPMPL).
- They must be resident in N Ireland.
- They must be able to work without supervision not be subject to any conditions imposed by the GMC.

- They must have a demonstrable commitment to primary care in N Ireland.

Applications will be considered on a 'first come, first served' basis, starting on the scheme, as soon as possible.

### **Criteria for Practice Participation in the Scheme and Practice Responsibilities**

In order for approval to funding for a doctor on the retention to be given a practice must;

1 Be currently approved by NIMDTA as a training practice

**OR**

2 Be a practice with an interest in mentoring a doctor on the retention scheme and in a position to provide a supportive environment which is conducive to the retention of a GP in primary care. The practice should not be the subject of an investigation by the HSC Board or other body, or one for which special arrangements are in place with the HSC Board in relation to its GMS contract.

Practices involved in the scheme also should:

- Be prepared to commit to the full length of the GP retention programme.
- Use any additional consulting time capacity gained to improve access and managed workload within the practice.
- Provide an email address for the scheme GP.
- Undertake to support the GP in collecting evidence for appraisal and revalidation (MSF, audits, PSQ, etc).
- Hold a sponsorship licence and meet all the eligible criteria set by the home office.
- Undertake to cascade to the GP information about local education, appraisal and clinical services etc.

- Undertake to participate in the annual monitoring of the scheme by NIMDTA to ensure the scheme GP has adequate educational support.
- Demonstrate that their premises are adequate to accommodate a scheme GP. (See practice application process).
- Undertake to provide an induction period, enabling their scheme GP to become familiar with the personnel, policies, procedures and computer system of the practice.
- Provide an appropriate re-induction after any extended absence, e.g. maternity or long term sick leave.
- Pay any employer's costs above the stated funding limit. This will include any statutory leave payment e.g. maternity, paternity, sick leave. This will be reimbursed under the terms of the SFE.
- Offer a sufficiently wide range of GMS services to enable the scheme GP to maintain skills across the full spectrum of GP work.
- Ensure that practice mentors attend 2 mandatory half day training sessions per year.