

Return

See the range of support we can offer you
with the GP Induction and Refresher Scheme

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If you are a qualified GP who is interested in working in the NHS in England, but not currently doing so, we can help you find your route in.

This brochure explains all the routes, with a particular focus on those who want to return to NHS general practice. It explains why returning to practice could be right for you and how we can support you through the Induction and Refresher (I&R) Scheme or Portfolio Route.

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Why return to practice?

Your life may have changed; NHS general practice is changing too.

Perhaps you took a break to raise a family, work abroad or gain experience in a different profession or role. Whatever your reason for taking a break, you'll be coming back to one of the most rewarding, challenging, flexible and diverse careers in medicine.

Investment in primary care has been increasing and the new GP contract from 2019/20, has provided more certainty around funding, while looking to reduce pressure on general practice.

There will be an extra £1 billion a year going into core general practice funding by 2023/24 and many areas are starting to work in primary care networks with growing multi-disciplinary teams. In addition, up to £1.8 billion is being invested by 2023/24 on another 20,000 clinical pharmacists, social prescribing link workers, physiotherapists and physician associates. These developments allow GPs to focus on the most complex patients and will in time mean they can provide longer appointments where needed.

A new state backed indemnity scheme will start from April 2019 for all general practice staff, while additional funding for IT will allow both patients and practices to benefit from the latest digital technologies, cutting down on unnecessary paperwork.

There are also more options available for those wanting a flexible working pattern or a portfolio career, such as the GP retention scheme.



Why the Induction & Refresher scheme?

There is a direct route for you to return to a career in NHS general practice through the GP Induction and Refresher (I&R) Scheme or Portfolio Route.

The I&R Scheme provides a safe and supported route for qualified GPs to return to NHS general practice. It's tailored to meet your needs, experiences and personal commitments – to make things simpler for you. This includes financial and practical support, and access to a dedicated account manager to guide you through the process.

If you are working or living overseas, you can even start the scheme before you move back to England.

I'm absolutely delighted by what I have achieved. It's obviously the right thing for me at my stage in life.

After taking time out of general practice to work in public health, Dr Frances Clement is now working as a salaried GP for Royal Primary



Your route to returning

The Induction & Refresher Scheme

To qualify for the Induction & Refresher (I&R) Scheme you will need to meet all of the following criteria:

- You are medically qualified and have completed formal training as a general practitioner in the UK (CCT or JCPTGP).
- You are on the General Medical Council (GMC) GP Register, without GMC conditions or undertakings (except those relating solely to health matters).
- You hold a current licence to practise as a GP.
- You are **not** currently on the National Performers List - Medical (NMPL).

If you qualified outside the EEA you will also need to hold a Certificate of Eligibility for GP Registration (CEGPR) or hold EU Freedom of Movement rights.

The I&R Scheme is split into three routes:

1. **The Refresher route** is for GPs who either qualified or previously practised in the UK and have been out of NHS practice for over two years. *See page 6*
2. **The Portfolio route** is for GPs who either qualified or previously practised in the UK but have been practising abroad for less than 10 years. *See page 7*
3. **The Induction route** is for GPs who qualified outside the UK and haven't worked in general practice in the UK before. *See page 9*

Return routes for GPs on the National Performers List - Medical

If you have had less than two years break and remain on the National Performers List - Medical, you can apply for positions in general practice via NHS jobs at www.jobs.nhs.uk/doctors

However, if you feel you need help to transition back into practice, a range of support is available locally. Please contact www.england.nhs.uk/medical-revalidation/about-us/contact-us or your local medical committee at: www.bma.org.uk/about-us/how-we-work/local-representation/local-medical-committees

Additional route for international GPs

International GPs that have never practised in England before also have the option of applying for the **International GP Recruitment Programme (IGPR)**, which offers additional training and support, to prepare GPs for the I&R Scheme and its assessments.

For more information, please see page 9.

Joining the National Performers List - Medical

To practise as a GP in the NHS in England you will need to apply and be granted approval by NHS England to be included on the National Performers List – Medical (NMPL). This approval is granted “with conditions”. Once you have completed the I&R Scheme you will be granted full inclusion on the NMPL (without conditions) and allowed to work as a fully independent general practitioner.

Refresher route

The Refresher route within the I&R Scheme is designed for GPs who have previously worked as an NHS GP, have been on the GMC Register and the National Performers List - Medical (NMPL), and would like to return to general practice in England after taking a break of two years or more.

Benefits

Joining the scheme means you will have access to:

- a monthly bursary of up to £3,500 per month
- help with indemnity, GMC and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) fees
- reimbursement of occupational health check fees
- up to four fully funded attempts at the assessments
- a dedicated account manager to help guide you through the entire process
- a range of training and learning opportunities tailored to your needs, including a supervised placement in a GP surgery
- peer support networks, mentoring and coaching
- online support and educational tools
- the option to undertake an observation placement prior to the I&R assessments.

Those relocating from overseas will also be eligible for:

- a relocation package of up to £18,500
- the option to complete some parts of the scheme before moving back to England.

Non-EEA GPs who require a visa will also be:

- linked with practices able to offer visa sponsorship
- entitled to a reimbursement of visa fees for them and their families.

Fact File

Duration

From a few months to a year, depending on your needs and experience.

Location

Some assessments can be completed online and others are held in locations across England. If you are working overseas, parts of the scheme can be completed before you move back to England.

Costs

There are no longer any charges for joining the scheme.

Applications

You can register your interest or submit an application at any time of year. Email landR@hee.nhs.uk to register your interest or visit gprecruitment.hee.nhs.uk/induction-refresher

The Portfolio Route

The Portfolio route is for GPs who trained or previously worked in the UK, and have been working in general practice overseas for less than 10 years. It will be the quickest route back to the NHS for the majority of GPs returning from working abroad.

This route allows you to supply a portfolio of documents from your current place of work, demonstrating how you have maintained your skills while overseas. It should be completed while you are still abroad.

Once you return to the UK, you will also need to complete a one-month placement to help re-orientate yourself. Your educational supervisor will also complete a report to confirm that you are up-to-date with recent changes in general practice.

Benefits

The scheme includes:

- your fees covered (worth £950)
- a bursary (£3,500) while you undertake a short one-month refresher placement
- help with indemnity, GMC and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) fees
- reimbursement of occupational health check fees
- access to training and educational support
- peer support networks, mentoring and coaching.

If you are a non-EEA GP requiring a visa, you will also receive:

- a matching service to help you find practices that have vacancies and can offer sponsorship
- reimbursement of visa fees for you and your family.

Fact File

Duration

It may take roughly three to six months to gather the information you need for your portfolio. Once you have submitted your portfolio, the RCGP will evaluate it within six weeks.

Location

You should complete and submit the portfolio while working overseas, before returning to England.

Costs

There is no application fee for this route if you are returning to work in England; the cost of processing your application will be met by NHS England.

Applications

You can apply through the Portfolio route at any time of year on the RCGP website: www.rcgp.org.uk/training-exams/practice/the-induction-and-refresher-scheme-portfolio-route or you can email gpsa@rcgp.org.uk

The Portfolio Route

How to apply

If you think the Portfolio route could be right for you, you will need to register with the GP National Recruitment Office (GPNRO) indicating you wish to apply via the Portfolio Route.

An I&R Scheme lead will contact you and undertake a formal interview and career review to check you meet the criteria. This can be done remotely.

NHS England is asked to approve your application to the Induction and Refresher Scheme via the Portfolio route.

Once you have NHS England approval and guidance from the GPNRO, you can apply online to the Royal College of General Practitioners and begin collecting evidence for your portfolio.

You can find more information on the Portfolio route and application process on the RCGP website at www.rcgp.org.uk/training-exams/practice/the-induction-and-refresher-scheme-portfolio-route



Induction route

The induction route supports the safe introduction of overseas GPs who have qualified outside the UK and have no previous NHS experience.

Benefits

The support includes:

- up to £18,500 relocation package
- monthly bursary (£3,500 per month) and help with indemnity, GMC and DBS fees
- a dedicated account manager
- access to training and other educational and development support
- peer support networks, mentoring and coaching
- reimbursement of occupational health check fees
- access to a range of online support and educational tools
- options to complete some parts of the scheme before moving back to England.

If you are a non-EEA GP requiring a visa, you will also receive:

- a matching service to help you find practices that have vacancies and can offer sponsorship
- help with the cost of visas and sponsorship for you and your family.

Fact File

Duration

The induction route typically takes 9-12 months to complete, although this varies from person to person as it's tailored to meet your needs and experience.

Location

Some assessments can be completed online and others are held in locations across England. If you are working overseas, parts of the scheme can be completed before you move back to England.

Costs

There is no cost to you as these are covered by NHS England.

Applications

You can register your interest or submit an application at any time of year. You can email iandr@hee.nhs.uk to register your interest or visit the GPNRO website gprecruitment.hee.nhs.uk/induction-refresher

International GP Recruitment Programme

If you are an international GP that has never practised in England before you can also apply for the International GP Recruitment Programme (IGPR).

The IGPR offers comprehensive training to help GPs prepare for the I&R Scheme and its assessments. This includes language, communications and clinical skills training and the opportunity to observe and learn within a practice before commencing the I&R Scheme.

IGPR may be more suitable for GPs who need additional English language support and/or have no or limited experience of living and working in an English speaking country.

To find out more about the international GP recruitment programme (IGPR), visit: www.england.nhs.uk/igpr

What does the scheme involve?

The I&R Scheme includes a range of assessments, learning and support. The assessments help us support you on your journey, and check that your skills and knowledge are up-to-date before you return to practice.

What is the assessment process?

Once you register for the scheme you will be contacted by a member of staff from the GP National Recruitment Office (GPNRO). Your application will be shared with your dedicated account manager, who will be in touch to help support you through the process.

Your local I&R lead will review your qualifications and work experience and will usually invite you to take a learning needs assessment. (The I&R lead is usually someone from the local Health Education England office in the area in which you are planning to practise.)

Depending on your needs and experience, the learning needs assessment will include a career review interview and multiple choice questions (MCQ). You might also be asked to complete a simulated surgery assessment and a supervised placement in a GP surgery with work-based assessments.

Career review interview

Your career review interview can be done by phone or Skype if it is more convenient for you. If you are working or living overseas your career review interview can be completed before you return to England. As part of the I&R scheme, you are funded for four attempts at the assessments.

Multiple choice questions (MCQs)

This can be completed online and there are sittings every six weeks throughout the year. These are in venues across the UK and in approved sites worldwide. This means if you are currently living or working overseas you can complete this part of the scheme before you make the move back to England. The MCQs are designed to assess some of the essential competences outlined in the national person specification and are based around clinical scenarios. The assessment is in two parts: a professional dilemmas paper followed by a clinical problem-solving paper.

Simulated surgeries

Depending on the outcome of your MCQ you might be required to complete simulated surgeries. These are designed to be like an everyday surgery in any general practice and are aimed at testing your consulting and communication skills. They are held in London and set in a consulting room with actors playing the role of patients, who will come in for 10 minute appointments.



Placements and workplace based assessments

As part of the scheme you will be given a placement within a GP surgery. While on placement you will have work-based assessments. These include teamwork, clinical and communication skills based around observed consultations, discussions about cases and observations of clinical procedures. This assessment also includes 360 degree feedback from patients and colleagues. Placements can be full-time or part-time to fit in with your needs and personal commitments. You will also have a named educational supervisor to support you while on your placement.

Observational placements

As part of the scheme you will be offered the opportunity to take part in observational placements before sitting the MCQ. These are not mandatory but many doctors find them very helpful. They are one-week placements which allow you to spend time with a GP to find out more about their role and the work of an NHS GP in today's rapidly changing service.

The placement is designed to be a supportive and informative process and is not used to make selection decisions about you. Instead these placements are about giving you the opportunity to see first-hand what you can expect from your workplace, the role of an NHS GP and to reflect on potential learning needs in a future placement. GPs usually start these placements at the beginning of the process and before the MCQ.

Mandatory e-learning modules

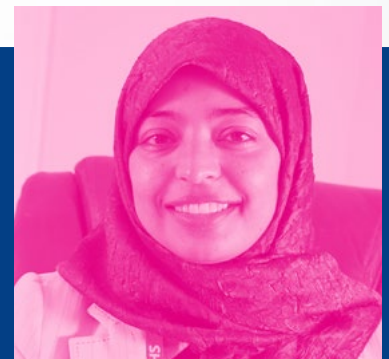
You will be required to complete three mandatory modules as part of your application to join National Performers List - Medical (NMPL) and successfully complete the refresher scheme. These are on the e-Learning for Health (e-LFH) website. Guidance for accessing the mandatory e-learning modules is available on the website at: gprecruitment.hee.nhs.uk/induction-refresher

The three modules are:

- an induction for international and returning GPs
- Safeguarding children level 3 (if you have not already completed this)
- Safeguarding for adults.

The local HEE office and my chosen training practice were extremely accommodating allowing me to work school-friendly hours and have school holidays off too. It felt like my retraining was being presented on a silver platter. Having the monthly bursary was the icing on the cake. The I&R Scheme is certainly something I would recommend to anyone considering coming back to practice after having taken time out, like did. I'm glad I took the plunge, as I am thoroughly enjoying the second phase of my career, and long may it continue!

Dr Nazia Kausar, a GP in Southampton, completed the I&R Scheme in 2016, having taken six years out to raise her family.



Financial support

Some GPs fear the costs associated with coming back to general practice. But now there is a range of financial support available.

Depending on which route you take and your personal circumstances, you may be entitled to:

- a bursary payment of up to £3,500 per month (full-time) while on a placement
- a one-off payment to assist with indemnity costs while on the scheme
- a one-off payment towards the costs of GMC membership and DBS fees
- no application fees for the Portfolio Route (worth £950)
- one year's free membership to the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP)
- reimbursement of occupational health check fees
- up to four fully funded attempts at the assessments
- relocation package of up to £18,500
- reimbursement of visa fees for non-EEA GPs and their dependents
- help with finding a practice that can sponsor your visa if you are non-EEA national.

Once you've registered for the I&R Scheme your dedicated account manager will advise you on the financial support available to you.

Any applicant accessing relocation support will need to sign an agreement with NHS England indicating a commitment to complete the I&R Scheme and work as a GP. Note that if you do not meet the terms of the agreement you may have to repay some or all of the relocation package.

I enjoy supporting GPs to come back to a career they have spent many years training for and which they enjoyed. My role is about supporting them while they refresh their skills, competencies and confidence so they are ready to make a safe return back to general practice.

GP educational supervisor, Dr Helen Rainsford is an enthusiastic advocate of the scheme.

Practical support

When you register for the I&R Scheme you will be contacted by your dedicated account manager who will guide you through the entire process. Support from your account manager includes:

- advice on completing forms and paperwork
- assistance with arranging occupational health assessments
- advice on arranging indemnity
- co-ordinating assessments and placements on your behalf
- Support to complete your NMPL application.

How to apply

Register your interest

If you're interested in joining the scheme, the first step is to register your interest by either:

- emailing iandr@hee.nhs.uk
- completing the registration form online at gprecruitment.hee.nhs.uk/induction-refresher
- contacting your local Health Education England I&R lead for an informal discussion- see gprecruitment.hee.nhs.uk/induction-refresher/contact

Assessment of your learning needs

Once your registration for the I&R Scheme has been processed, your details will be passed to the HEE local I&R lead in the area in which you intend to practise. They will arrange your career review interview appointment to discuss your previous training and experience, and advise on the next steps. You will also be given a dedicated account manager from our national support team to help guide you through the I&R process.

In the meantime you can start to:

- Renew your GMC registrations and obtain licences: Qualified GPs with previous GP experience will need to renew their GMC registration and licence.
- Start your application for inclusion on the National Performers List - Medical (NMPL): To practise as an NHS GP in England you have to be on the NMPL. If you are returning to practice after two years or more you have to complete the I&R Scheme to be included on the NMPL. There is an NHS England team to help you manage your initial application www.performer.england.nhs.uk/at/

I love being a GP – it's the one-on-one interaction. You really get to know your patients. You see the mother, the grandmother, the child. It's very much about getting to know the family and helping them. And most importantly, it allows you to work but also be at home and spend lots of time with your family if that's what is important to you.

Dr Mansi Shah, a GP in London who came back to practice after having children.



Further information or support

- Email **iandr@hee.nhs.uk**
- Visit our website and watch our short animated film that explains what's involved: **gprecruitment.hee.nhs.uk/induction-refresher**
- Contact your local Health Education England I&R lead for an informal discussion about the scheme: **gprecruitment.hee.nhs.uk/induction-refresher/contact**
- To find out more about the international GP recruitment programme (IGPR), visit: **www.england.nhs.uk/igpr**