

General Practice Forward View (GPFV)

International GP Recruitment (IGPR) Programme

Application Process Guidance for Commissioners
(October 2017)



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Document Status

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1. Introduction

The General Practice Forward View (GPFV) included a commitment to deliver a major international recruitment drive to attract up to 500 appropriately trained and qualified GPs from overseas by 2020.

A programme to deliver this commitment commenced in the autumn of 2016 focusing on a number of high priority areas of the country in advance of the planned expansion of the programme to other areas from April 2017.

On 22 August 2017, NHS England announced a major expansion of the International GP Recruitment (IGPR) Programme. The expanded programme will now accelerate the original plans, and aim to recruit 2000 GPs from overseas by 2020.

Detailed information providing more background on the expansion can be downloaded from <https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/expansion-of-the-gp-international-recruitment-programme/>.

NHS England has already confirmed that a number of locations across England will be part of the IGPR Programme. A full list of the locations can be found at <https://www.england.nhs.uk/gp/gpfv/workforce/building-the-general-practice-workforce/international-gp-recruitment/international-recruitment-sites/>.

This document is designed to provide guidance for other areas of England that may wish to join the programme and details the application process that should be followed.

This document replaces an earlier guidance document for commissioners published in March 2017.

2. Overall approach

We will be establishing a GP International Recruitment Office to organise and run the scaled up international recruitment programme. The role of this office will be to coordinate the recruitment, provide support for and relocation of recruited doctors, working closely with regional and local colleagues and partner organisations.

Given the increased scale of recruitment, the role of the Office is likely to include responsibility for a range of tasks such as procurement, recruitment and relocation. These tasks are currently undertaken locally by the recruitment schemes already participating in the programme. Under the expansion, responsibility for these tasks would move to the national Office, while making sure that local practices and commissioners are involved.

We are currently procuring a national framework of approved recruitment, relocation and training companies to support the programme. This framework should be operational by the end of November 2017. It is likely that procurements under the framework will be undertaken nationally with suppliers appointed to deliver services across defined source countries.

Given this change in approach, we will no longer require commissioners wishing to join the programme to develop detailed proposals showing how recruitment, training and relocation will be delivered locally.

3. Future applications to join the programme

We recommend that any future applications to join the programme should set out the recruitment needs of an STP footprint. These applications may however outline why any recruitment scheme should focus on specific areas within an STP footprint where recruitment needs are more acute.

Applications covering a wider geography than an STP footprint are however also encouraged.

Applications to join the programme should focus on the elements below.

3.1 GP vacancies

Applications should include a detailed breakdown of the number of GP vacancies within the footprint/geography that will be filled with the appointment of GPs recruited from overseas as part of the programme.

3.2 Practice engagement

Applications should detail the engagement that has taken place locally with GP practices within the footprint/geography. The application should list all of the practices that have committed to employing an overseas GP recruited as part of the programme.

Practices will be involved in the selection process of overseas GPs.

3.3 Geographical information

The application should provide information on the geography and explain how it could be promoted as a place to live and work to overseas GPs. Any existing promotional materials about the geography should be attached to the application.

3.4 Retention

The application should explain how recruited GPs will be supported and integrated into the local primary care workforce and wider community.

The application should also detail the measures that will be implemented locally to support the long-term retention of recruited GPs.

One key element that applications should consider is how retention incentives can be built into terms and conditions within the contracts of employment that recruited GPs will have with their employing practice – including:

- defined contract lengths and

- clawback measures of training and relocation costs if a recruited GP exits their contract early.

3.5 Supporting the existing workforce

The application should outline the measures that are being undertaken locally to support and retain the existing GP workforce. We are keen to see evidence of how any international GP recruitment schemes locally will complement existing measures to support and retain the existing workforce.

4. Funding

Funding for key elements of the programme (e.g. recruitment, relocation, training, etc.) will be managed at regional and national level by NHS England. Future applications to join the programme do not therefore need to include a request for budget for these elements.

Applications should however include costings for any local measures to support the integration of recruited GPs and their long-term retention. We are currently forecasting that up to £2,500 per GP will be available to support integration and retention measures locally.

We will work in conjunction with NHS England regional teams and STPs to agree staffing requirements for delivery of the programme at local and regional level.

The programme will be fully funded by NHS England. The funding is available to support the process of recruitment, including sourcing and selecting applicants, training, relocation and accommodation costs.

Practices employing international GPs in the programme will remain responsible for all usual employment responsibilities, including salaries.

5. Timeline

Further applications to join the programme should be submitted by the following dates.

Applications deadline	Decision date
30 November 2017	20 December 2017
10 January 2018	7 February 2018
23 March 2018	20 April 2018

Applications may be submitted in advance of these dates and additional dates will be added for the financial year 2018/19 as required.

We do recommend that STPs aim to submit applications for the 30 November deadline as approval of schemes will be dependent on available and remaining funds for the programme.

For areas that are planning to submit applications, we recommend that an expression of interest is submitted to the relevant NHS England regional team so that we are aware that an application is likely to be submitted at a later date.

6. Coordination and prioritisation

In order to coordinate recruitment activities across regions and in overseas countries, it will be necessary to prioritise approved schemes.

Working closely with NHS England regional teams, we will prioritise schemes according to their costs, potential benefits and overall impact, and against available and remaining budget. We will also look for opportunities to reduce administration and procurement costs by linking up activities for approved schemes within the same region.

7. Integration of approved phase 2 schemes

All schemes approved following the application deadline of 30 June 2017 will be integrated into the new model of delivery outlined in this guidance. We are currently working with these schemes to finalise arrangements for how they will be integrated. These schemes will not be able proceed under arrangements that differ from the delivery model outlined in this guidance.

7. Further information

For further information, please contact england.primarycareworkforce@nhs.net.