

International Paediatric Fellowships (IPTS)

Background

The IPTS aims to foster links between the UK and countries overseas. The IPTS Fellowship will provide a variety and depth of UK training and clinical experience such as is likely to complement that obtained in the overseas fellow's home country. Moreover, UK training will give overseas fellows an opportunity to experience a new culture and to see how cultural differences affect the presentation of illnesses. It will also provide exposure to the organisation and management of health care within the NHS.

Early in 2009 the new EWTD regulations will come into force and even now, hospitals in some UK regions are struggling to fill various posts, especially middle grade equivalent ones.. In this situation, the RCPCH has approached Regional Advisers, Heads of School and College Tutors to see if extending the reach of the College's IPTS Fellowship scheme might be beneficial. This report ends with College guidance on "how to set up an IPTS Fellowship".

Fellowships

3. The Fellowship aims to provide a "win-win" situation for hospitals and overseas doctors wishing to train in the UK for a limited period. Fellowship posts are likely to be in addition to the existing service requirements; some service posts might be converted into International Training ones.

4. The only College Fellowship now functioning is one involving Sri Lanka, in Sandwell & City Hospitals. Currently this has four fellows with one awaiting GMC ID clearance.

5. Other Fellowship schemes, involving Pakistan, Libya and Myanmar, haven't been in contact with the IPTS regarding new fellows for their programmes.

Home Office changes to HSMP visa and Training and Work Experience Scheme (TWES) (Medical Training Initiative (MIT)) work permit

6. As of 1st April 2008 the Home Office replaced the HSMP visa for the Tier 1 visa base in the Point Based System (PBS).

7. The MTI should be very beneficial for promoting and expanding College Fellowship schemes. However, the Home Office is planning to change by autumn 2008 the TWES (MTI) to Tier 5 (temporary workers category) government authorised exchange (sub-category), under the PBS. The table below shows how:

Former category for applying to work in the United Kingdom	When does the category close?	Appropriate new category of the points-based system	When can I apply to the new category?
Training and work experience scheme , including medical training initiatives	November 2008	Temporary workers (Tier 5 Government authorised exchange) - requirements will differ from those of the training and work experience scheme	November 2008

8. Once the new system is launched in November 2008, doctors applying will need to score 40 points from the sponsorship and maintenance categories. 'Sponsorship' means hospitals will employ fellows and issue valid certificates of sponsorship. Unlike under the other Tier 5 categories, potential employers will not be able to act as sponsors themselves within the government authorised exchange sub-category. This applies even if the employer or organisation is a sponsor under the other Tiers or other sub-categories of Tier 5.

9. The government authorised exchange sub-category aims to share knowledge, experience and best practice. It cannot be used to fill job vacancies or as a route for unskilled labour. Hospitals will only be issued with a certificate of sponsorship in this category if:

- the applicant will be taking part in a work experience scheme;
- the applicant will not be filling a genuine vacancy;
- the employment will be in addition to the normal staffing requirement;
- the applicant will be undertaking skilled work at NVQ level 3 or above;
- the employment will conform with relevant United Kingdom and European legislation.

10. Certificates of sponsorship for the government authorised exchange sub-category will be issued by an overarching body running and administering the scheme. The body will have the support of a United Kingdom government department. Full details of the requirements for applying for sponsorship will be available before the launch of Tier 5 in November 2008.

GMC Registration

11. The GMC changed its registration procedures as from 19th October 2007. Limited Registration was abolished and overseas doctors' initial registration is "Full Registration in an approved practice setting". After 1 year's satisfactory employment, doctors may apply for Full Registration with no condition.

Part Two: Setting Up An International Paediatric Training Scheme (IPTS) Fellowship

Initial Steps

Step 1: Identify the posts within the 2 year programme

3. You (the UK hospital wishing to set up a fellowship programme) should draft a training programme for up to 2 years. The programme should start with an 'induction' period of 4 to 6 months in which the IPTS fellow will work in a well-supervised post, approximately F2/ST1-2 grade equivalent (first on call), followed by 18 to 20 months in an ST4-6 post (second on call). This advancement will be subject to satisfactory progress i.e. appraisal / assessment, to ensure that the fellow fulfils the requirements for a safe (?) middle grade safety net.

4. The programme should offer a well balanced range of clinical exposure. An assessment (probably a multi-source feedback) will be carried out prior to the trainee progressing to a more senior level. The first part of the training programme should provide the necessary UK neonatal and acute general paediatric training (including resuscitation course training and child protection update / training). The programme should be flexible enough to accommodate the individual's training needs, if he or she is not ready to progress.

5. It is generally useful to arrange a rotation offering a sub-specialty exposure during the last 12 to 18 months, preferably in a tertiary care setting or a large DGH e.g. neonatology, neurology/epilepsy, gastroenterology, respiratory paediatrics, metabolic, diabetes, endocrinology and developmental paediatrics and/or neurodisability, etc.

Step 2: RCPCH will comment on programme

6. The draft programme for training (Step 1 above) including duration and level of training, rotation, supervision, mentoring, speciality training and appraisal/assessment details should be sent to the IPTS Liaison Officer/Administrator (see address below). It will be accepted or modifications will be suggested. In the latter case, you will need to confirm the agreed new programme with the College Training Department.

Step 3: Obtain educational approval

7. Once the programme details and rotations are mutually agreed (Steps 1 and 2), you should obtain the following approvals:

- the Regional Advisor should confirm in writing that the post will provide training equivalent to that being undertaken by those in equivalent 'recognised' posts;
- the Postgraduate Dean (PGD) or Head of School (subject to the understanding between PGD and Head of School) will confirm that he or she is aware of the post, and that the training won't compromise the training of those in recognised posts. In addition, the PGD or Head of School will also complete the form for the MTI work permit, available from the IPTS administrator.

Step 4: Send all the information to the RCPCH

8. Once approval from Regional Adviser and the PGD is obtained, all the information (Step 1-3 above) should be sent to the IPTS administrator at the RCPCH.

Step 5: Overseas linkage will begin

9. The IPTS will ask you which overseas institute/hospital/consultant you wish to have as your overseas link. If you do not have the overseas link, the IPTS will put you in touch with an overseas institute / hospital/ consultant wishing to send doctors to the UK.

10. In the meantime, if a delay is likely in establishing overseas links (and hence a delay in progressing to Steps 6 to 7), but someone is already awaiting a post who has completed all the necessary documentation and for whom the post will be suitable, we will give you his or her details.

Step 6: Interview and selection process for overseas fellows

11. Step 6 to 7 will continue to take place on a regular basis as follows:

The overseas institute/hospital/consultant will be responsible for advertising the post in their country (7 to 8 months prior to the start date for the IPTS fellowship rotation), including the eligibility criteria for the sponsorship. The latter are as follows:

12. The candidate should:

- (i) hold a primary medical qualification accepted by the GMC. The GMC accepts most primary medical qualifications awarded at universities listed in the World Directory of Medical Schools, published by the WHO;

- (ii) have an acceptable internship of not less than twelve months (or equivalent as per the GMC);
- (iii) bear a record of satisfactory training (a minimum of three years of paediatric clinical training overseas including general paediatrics, neonatology, paediatric sub-specialities and no more than 6 months of a non-paediatric specialty);
- (iv) have an appropriate postgraduate paediatric qualification* (preferably, within the last 3 years) which might allow the doctor to work safely in a UK paediatric unit;
- (v) produce a certificate of good standing from each country where training was completed. The certificate of last employment needs to have been issued within the last three months of employment;
- (vi) have passed IELTS with an overall score of 7 and 7 in the speaking sub-section, and a minimum score of 6 in each of the remaining subsections (listening, reading and writing) within the last 2 years. If, however, the first language of the overseas Fellow is English and all the training has been in English, he or she needs to contact GMC for possible grant of exemption from IELTS;
- (vii) not hold EU citizenship.

**Please check with the IPTS Administrator/Liaison Officer about a postgraduate qualification of the overseas country (where you are establishing links) which is deemed satisfactory.*

13. The short listing and interview process (including time frame) will be agreed between you and the overseas institute/hospital/consultant. The interview and selection is jointly undertaken by tele or video link. The interview panel usually consists of representatives from the overseas institute/hospital/consultant and you (or your representatives in UK).

14. The IPTS administrator should immediately be informed about the selected overseas fellow in order to move quickly to Step 7.

Step 7: Complete IPTS application pack and obtain visa and GMC registration

15. The 'selected overseas fellow' will complete the IPTS application pack. Once this is approved by the IPTS Liaison Officer, the RCPCH will issue the necessary documentation for him or her to register with the GMC.

16. In the mean time, your Human Resources department will issue the offer letter / letter of appointment and other necessary documentation including the deanery form, and apply for the appropriate work permit i.e. MTI category of TWES. Once the Home Office issues the work permit, it is sent to the overseas fellow to enable him or her to apply for the appropriate visa at the British High Commission in the relevant country.

17. Step 7 should be accomplished (including GMC registration and visa etc) at least 6 to 8 weeks before the start date of fellowship rotation. The candidate is encouraged to come to the UK two to three weeks before the start date, to complete the obligatory requirements like the occupational health check and CRB (?) clearance well in advance. This is in addition to familiarising himself or herself with the department / staff and arranging accommodation etc. An induction pack for the overseas fellow may be useful to post in advance or hand over on arrival.

Funding

18. Funding for IPTS fellowship posts must be made available by your NHS Trust in the UK and should not come from the doctor. It is required to be above national minimum wage. In exceptional circumstances, funding may be available through grants and scholarships provided by an overseas fellow's own country.

Contact Details

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