



Royal College of
General Practitioners



NHS England and
Health Education England

Building the Workforce – the New Deal for General Practice

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Introduction

NHS England, HEE, RCGP and the BMA GPs committee (GPC) are working closely together to ensure that we have a skilled, trained and motivated workforce in general practice. We have jointly produced a ten point action plan to address immediate issues, and to take the initial steps in building the workforce for the future and new models of care.

It is part of the implementation of the Five Year Forward View and the New Deal for primary care, which set out a specific commitment to tackle workforce issues, alongside a range of other proposals. These actions are designed to complement some of the local initiatives already underway, which will also be accelerated through the development of co-commissioning of primary care by CCGs and NHS England.

There are three key strands to this work:

- Improving recruitment into general practice
- Retaining doctors within general practice
- Supporting those who wish to return to general practice

Recruit

1 Promoting general practice

The four organisations will collaborate on a marketing campaign, including a letter to all newly qualified doctors, setting out the positive aspects and future careers in general practice.

2 Improving the breadth of training

HEE will work with partners to resource an additional year of post CCT training to candidates seeking to work in geographies, where it is hard to recruit trainees. The aim is to encourage new GP training applicants to those areas. The additional year would be flexible and could be:

- a. in a related clinical specialty of interest such as paediatrics, psychiatry, dermatology, emergency medicine and public health;
- b. in leadership development, including the acquisition of business skills through undertaking a MBA;
- c. on an academic programme of activity; or
- d. an aspect of medical education and training related to the primary and community care agenda.

3 Training Hubs

NHS England will invest in the development of pilot training hubs, where groups of GP practices can offer inter-professional training to primary care staff, extending the skills base within general practice and developing a workforce which can meet the challenge of new ways of working.

4 Targeted support

NHS England will work with the BMA GP Committee and the RCGP to explore a time-limited incentive scheme to offer additional financial support to GP trainees committed to working in specific areas for 3 years.

Retain

5 Investment in retainer schemes

NHS England will review the use of current retainer schemes and invest in a new national scheme, making sure it meets the needs of both GPs and practices.

6 Improving the training capacity in general practice

The Government's recent announcement that there will be an extra £1 billion for investment in new primary care infrastructure will enable increased training capacity and a more positive experience for medical students and foundation year doctors within general practice. More broadly, NHS England will work with the BMA's GPs committee and the RCGP on the strategic direction of the primary care estate, including to support the transfer of care into community settings.

7 Incentives to remain in practice

NHS England and partners will conduct a detailed review to identify the most effective measures to encourage experienced GPs to remain within practice. Options may include a funded mentorship scheme, opportunities to develop a portfolio career towards the end of your working life, and a clearer range of career pathways

8 New ways of working

NHS England, HEE and others will work together to identify key workforce initiatives that are known to support general practice - including e.g. physician associates, medical assistants, clinical pharmacists, advanced practitioners (including nursing staff), healthcare assistants and care navigators. We will agree a shared programme of key pilots at scale in primary care, to invest in and trial new ways of working for these roles, demonstrating how they work across community, hospitals and within GP surgeries to support safe and effective clinical services for patients. This will support current GPs in managing their workload, as well as piloting new ways of working for the future.

Return

9 Easy return to practice

HEE and NHS England will publish a new induction and returner scheme, recognising the different needs of those returning from work overseas or from a career break, and work with the RCGP will take place to agree safe, and proportionate standards. This will be done in close collaboration with the BMA GPs committee.

10 Targeted investment in returners

NHS England will make available additional investment to attract GPs back into practice, increasing over time. Targeted at the areas of greatest need, the scheme will offer resources to help with both the costs of returning and the cost of employing these staff. A review of the performers list in its current state and its value will be undertaken. This scheme will be developed in collaboration with the BMA GP committee and the RCGP.

In addition, HEE has established an independent Primary Care Workforce Commission, which is chaired by Professor Martin Roland. The Commission will identify models of primary care to meet the needs of the future NHS. This will inform priorities for HEE investment in education and training to deliver a primary care workforce that is fit for purpose, flexible and able to adapt to new models of primary care. The commission will highlight good examples of integrated, patient-focussed out of hospital care - which will influence service commissioners and regulators and will report at the end of June 2015.