



Herefordshire & Worcestershire Integrated Care System

AHP Faculty

A Guide to Allied Health Professions International Recruitment

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Introduction

This guide has been developed to support staff who are looking to or who are recruiting allied health professions (AHP) international recruits. It should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

<https://www.nhsemployers.org/publications/international-recruitment-toolkit>

<https://www.hee.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/documents/AHP%20-%20Quick%20guide%20to%20internati.pdf>

Getting the process right and following all immigration and professional registration requirements is essential, but don't lose sight of the person behind the process. International AHP staff will require a great deal of personal and professional support to get settled into a new country and to adjust to the cultural and working differences of the NHS.

International recruitment contacts across the ICS:

Wye Valley Trust

Lead AHP: Sue Moody

International Recruitment Lead: Karen Miller

Herefordshire & Worcestershire Health and Care Trust

Lead AHP: Miriam De Almeida Santos

International Recruitment Lead: Simon Kerslake

Worcestershire Acute Hospital NHS Trust

Lead AHP:

International Recruitment Lead: Kate Knight

1. Ethical Practices

The World Health Organization Code of Practice on ethical international recruitment is available on the NHS Employers website. The revised Code of Practice was released in February 2021. Planning and managing recruitment in an ethical way should be a priority for all organisations. This includes no active recruitment from developing countries on the 'WHO' list.

<https://www.nhsemployers.org/articles/code-practice-red-and-amber-list-countries>

2. Timescales

International recruitment is not always a quick fix to recruitment challenges. It can take up to 6-12 months to follow the process all the way through and this needs to be factored into workforce and recruitment plans. Flexibility through the process is essential.

3. Health care Professions Council (HCPC)

All AHPs must be registered with the HCPC to be able to work in the UK under their protected title. Applicants who have qualified abroad follow the International Application Route.

- Applicants pay a £539.65 upfront scrutiny fee to process their application. The assessment should take less than 60 days from initial application. This process involves verification of the information given with respect to the education provider, professional bodies and professional referees. All international documents are translated into English and certified by an interpreter. Assessment of the education, training and experience is completed by 2 assessors. The evidence is compared to the HCPC standards of proficiency. The recruit is informed of the final decision.
- Unsuccessful applicants may be entitled to an aptitude test or a period of adaptation to allow them to reach the standards required.
- HCPC international registrants are required to demonstrate a minimum level of English as part of the assessment process. However, recruiting managers are encouraged to assess this during the formal interview process

4. Immigration and Visa Requirements

Certificate of Sponsorship (COS) (£199): This is paid once a recruit has been offered a job offer. If using an agency, they may do the initial paperwork and then this can be sent to the recruitment department for application of the COS.

Immigration Skills Charge (£3000): This is paid when a Certificate of Sponsorship is assigned when someone applies for a Skilled Worker Visa from outside of the UK to work inside the UK for more than 6 months.

Skilled Worker Visa: Health care Visa (£464): All citizens from outside the UK need to apply for a work visa. Recruits need to apply for a Skilled Worker Visa once they have secured an offer of a job. The earliest they can apply is 3 months before they are due to start work with the agreed sponsor.

A Points Based Immigration System will apply for all skilled workers.

Workers need to be paid a minimum of £25600 to qualify (Band 5 salary £27,055)

Health Care Visa are processed in 3 weeks

5. Recruitment via an Agency or NHS Jobs

There are two main ways to attract and recruit AHP staff to work across the ICS.

Recruitment Agencies: There are many advantages of using an expert agency to do the recruitment, especially if a service or team has not recruited this way before. We have, to date, used Global Medical and Yeovil NHS Trust International Recruitment team to recruit internationally. They charge on average £2000 per recruit. This is in addition to all the standard international recruitment charges.

Global Medical link: Stephanie Thunder

stephanie@global-medical-pro.com

Yeovil Head of International Recruitment: Helen Stobbs

Helen.stobbs@YDH.NHS.UK

It is essential that any agencies used follow the Workforce Alliance Framework for International Recruitment. This will ensure the agency is recruiting and supplying staff ethically.

Recruiting via NHSJobs: You can choose not to use a recruitment agency and recruit via an NHSJobs advert. This has the advantage of keeping costs down, but it is essential that all the required processes are followed. Many teams will only shortlist where candidates have existing HCPC registration.

6. Costs

The upfront costs are significant and must be considered ahead of deciding to move forward with international recruitment. Services and teams must either have these funds available to use (e.g., through existing staffing underspends) or plan to put forward a business case to cover the costs.

Example Costs to the organisation based on a 3 year health & Care Visa 2022/2023	
Agency fee	£2000
Certificate of sponsorship	£199
Immigration Skills Charge	£3000
Visa	£464
Flight	£600
Airport transfer	£100
Welcome package	£100
2 months accommodation contribution	£1200
Costs to the candidate	
HCPC registration application	£539.65

7. Interviews

Interview questions will need to be thought about in advance. It is a good idea to plan questions that will gauge the applicant's skills and knowledge as well as finding out what they know about working in the UK and the NHS.

2 Pastoral Support

It is essential to ensure that comprehensive pastoral care support is in place from the start of the recruitment process through the candidates first six months in post. As their employer you might be the only link to their new country of residence until they become more established. Helping overseas recruits settle in well from the start will encourage them to stay longer term. Candidates should have a named pastoral care contact who they can link with as and when is required. Each of the 3 trusts across the ICS has a pastoral care team and it is essential that all AHP recruits are linked into these teams.

Areas to consider:

- Welcome booklet: A booklet about the trust and the local area which is sent to the recruit prior to their arrival in the UK. This could also include a photograph of the team.
- Webinar or virtual meetings prior to arrival: It is a good idea for the new recruit to virtually meet the team and run through any practical advice, especially about what they can bring with them. It is advisable that the recruit has a dentist check-up before arriving and has 2 months of any prescription medication to bring before they register with a UK dentist or GP.
- Airport pick up: Meeting overseas recruit at the airport when they first arrive and transporting them to their accommodation is a vital part of pastoral care. This will help to settle the individual and orientate them to their new surroundings. It is good practice to have someone who they have met before during the recruitment process to welcome them. Transport should be arranged and booked rather than using public transport.
- Accommodation: Recruits should have funding for 2 months accommodation provided if required. Accommodation should be organised by the trust and might include hospital accommodation, renting a room in a member of staff's home, renting accommodation via an agency. The new recruit should be taken to collect the keys and sign any relevant paperwork. Staff offering a room to rent in their home would be paid £450 a month and staff should be told this can be used under the governments 'Rent a Room' scheme, so they have a tax-free allowance of up to £7500. They need to register here for the scheme. <https://www.gov.uk/rent-room-in-your-home/the-rent-a-room-scheme> Individuals or agencies renting accommodation should invoice the respective trust for reimbursement of the rent.
- Banking and post office support: On their day of arrival consider visiting the post office to pick up the Biometric Residence Permits and making them an appointment to set up a bank account.
- Getting a footprint in the UK: Encourage recruits to register for their National Insurance number and NHS number promptly. This will enable them to see a GP and get their Covid vaccinations quicker.
- Support to register with a GP and dentist should be given.
- Financial support: A salary advance in cash should be made available in case there any delays in setting up a bank account. Some recruits might not need this but for example

candidates from the Philippines and India will often not have the same level of local earnings to settle them in the UK.

- Welcome pack: It is good practice to provide all new recruits with a Welcome Pack if required.

A Typical Welcome Pack Contents:

- Information about the local area including nearby facilities, doctors, dentists, emergency contacts etc.
- Mugs x 4
- Glass tumblers x 4
- 12 piece dinner set
- Plastic chopping board
- Tea towels x 3
- Duvet set and pillow cases
- Duvet and pillows
- Cotton hand towel
- Cotton bath towel
- Basic kitchen starter set (cutlery, pans, knives etc)
- Household essentials – milk, rice, bread, toilet roll, washing up liquid
- UK SIM card

- Greeting lunch/welcome dinner: Organising a welcome get together with previous international recruits and the new team members can encourage positive integration into teams. Some trusts have regular international recruit social events.
- Tour of the local town: Helping your overseas recruits find their way around the local community is a good way of familiarising them with local surroundings. This could include a local supermarket, place of worship, leisure centre, post office and public transport links.
- Peer support: One to one mentoring support can be a really useful way of helping international recruits to adapt to the cultural and working differences of the NHS. Try and link recruits with previous international recruits of the same nationality who can provide social support.

3 Professional Support

The welcoming service or team might need an opportunity to discuss any concerns or challenges they might see about welcoming an international recruit. Giving them time and a forum to discuss these openly is essential. We recognise that many AHP teams across the ICS have poor workforce ethnic diversity and it is essential that we recognise this. Bringing in international recruits is one way of improving diversity within our teams in a really positive way. NHSEI have a lot of support on their website and in addition all AHP teams are being encouraged to complete the ELFH Cultural Awareness Modules. All staff need to appreciate that an international recruit might need a longer induction period than a standard UK based recruit.

An induction for an international recruit will normally be longer than a standard induction. Whilst it will contain all the standard induction components such as the corporate induction, department and

team induction, preceptorship programme, the Care Certificate etc it will also need to contain some different elements such as an orientation to the NHS. The Kings Fund have a helpful video that explains this which can be found here:

<https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/audio-video/how-does-nhs-in-england-work>

In addition, they might need additional support around the use of specific professional language and terminology and specific equipment used. Their experiences of working as an AHP in their own country may have stark differences to the UK. It is useful to be open and learn from each other once the candidate is in post. See 'Common Phrases in the UK' handout.

Health Education England has launched 'Step to Work' on 'Elearning for healthcare' (elfh). This consists of 8 learning sessions to help the employee transition to work as an AHP in the UK and learn and reflect on their experiences and knowledge. It will also help when considering future roles.

<https://www.e-lfh.org.uk/programmes/step-to-work/>

Ensuring access to robust career planning with opportunities to develop and grow through access to education and training can all help to retain our international recruits.

4 Evaluation of AHP International Recruitment Across the ICS

Evaluation of AHP International Recruitment Across the ICS:

It is really important that we evaluate the recruitment of AHP international recruits across the ICS. We would be looking to evaluate areas such as recruitment process duration, attrition rates during the recruitment process, success of the induction process, attrition rates during the first 3 years and levels of promotions. In addition, we will look to survey the welcoming services and teams in addition to the recruits themselves to understand how we can continue to develop and improve all our processes.

Sustainability of international recruitment for AHPs will be evaluated using the NHS Sustainability tool. Recommendations and reporting will be made during and following the process to improve sustainability for future international recruitment projects.