

## Scottish IMG Buddy Scheme Job Description

### Purpose of the role

International Medical Graduates are doctors who have completed their primary medical qualification out with UK. IMGs starting their first post in Scotland, often have very little knowledge of the systems, terminology, procedures, and work culture.

Moving to a new country and getting acclimatised to the new work culture can be a challenging and a daunting experience. Buddies are important in supporting our new colleagues and making them feel welcome in the Scottish NHS. All trainees have their usual formal support routes through their allocated Clinical Supervisors, Educational Supervisors and other senior colleagues who are there to support them as they would their UK graduate peers. Established in 2020, the IMG Buddy System is intended to support IMGs by providing a point of contact for informal support and to guide and mentor these doctors in the initial days of starting work, especially when faced with additional challenges at work and life challenges when settling in.

Buddies are typically assigned twice per year in February and August as this is when training programmes commence, however requests outside these times can be accommodated within the closest cohort.

### What does this role entail?

The role can be variable depending on the needs of the IMG. You would be expected to take the lead in establishing the initial contact with your allocated IMG Buddy – usually via email. This would lead to exchange of contact details and setting up of an initial meeting, which could either be face-to-face or virtual. The purpose of this meeting would be for both buddies to get to know each other and to identify your buddy's specific needs.

Thereafter, the frequency of contact will be determined collaboratively based on your buddy's needs and your availability.

The areas an IMG is likely to require help and guidance in can be found in the IMG section of Scotland Deanery's website [here](#).

The main issues brought up by trainees include:

- Work culture and systems in the NHS
- Cultural acclimatisation
- Practical guidance on life in the UK, including banking, renting/buying property, driving etc
- Childcare and family
- Professional exams

We don't expect buddies to have an answer to these questions but should be able to direct the new IMG to where they could find the answers and solutions.

## **Who can do it?**

Any doctor with an interest in helping IMGs integrate can become a Buddy. Being an IMG is not essential, but it is important to have good understanding of the specific issues faced by IMGs. Personal attributes such as effective listening, empathy, and communication skills, ability to motivate, inspire and empower others, along with being approachable are essential qualities. Experience of having supported IMGs in the past will be desirable. Doctors at any stage from FY1 to senior colleagues, e.g., SAS or consultants can be buddies. Some IMGs prefer to have a buddy of a similar age/stage of training, while others prefer more experienced buddies.

## **Time commitment**

This would vary depending upon the level of support required by the IMG and on the specific demands of your job. The expectation would be for you to be the friendly face that your buddy can come to on an informal basis for support and guidance.

You are not expected to deal with formal complaints or training issues, for which you should direct the IMGs to the usual routes within the NHS (employer) and/or Training scheme (TPD/APGD).

## **Remuneration**

The role is entirely voluntary with no remuneration.

## **Support**

You will be part of the IMG Support Network and will be able to receive guidance and support from Mo Al-Haddad, APGD for IMGs and also from other Buddies. Administrative support is provided by the Scottish Foundation School, who match IMGs with their prospective Buddies.

## **Who to contact for more information about the role**

Mo Al-Haddad

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