

The Rt Hon Wes Streeting MP
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care
House of Commons
Westminster
London
SW1A 0AA

Sir James Mackey
CEO
NHS England

30 June 2025

Ref: BAPIO response to calls to prioritise UK graduates for training posts

Dear Mr Streeting and Sir James,

We are writing to you following the recent calls from the BMA Resident Doctors Committee as well as others for UK trained medical graduates to be given priority for NHS training jobs. This is a very important issue and any decision taken by the UK government will have a significant impact on all doctors including international medical graduates (IMGs) who comprise approximately one-third of all doctors working in the UK, other medical staff and most importantly, patients. Consequently, it is vital that before any firm decision is taken, the UK Government must take into account the views of all stakeholders.

At the outset, it is essential to recognise that UK trained medical graduates have every right to expect to be employed in training posts in the NHS. Medicine is a long, demanding and expensive course and if there is no assurance that doctors will be able to complete their training in the UK, this will result in students and newly qualified doctors choosing to study / train elsewhere, which will have a significant detrimental impact on the NHS.

Concurrently, it is a fact that IMGs have made an immeasurable but often unrecognised contribution to the success of the NHS and have come to work in the UK believing that they would be treated on par with local graduates. IMGs also comprise the majority of doctors working in non-training posts as locally employed doctors (LEDs) and staff grade and associate specialist grade doctors (SAS) who perform similar roles to doctors in training posts without receiving the same recognition, pay, supervision or career growth opportunities. Additionally, it must not be forgotten that many IMGs have been working in the UK for many years or decades and are either British citizens or have Indefinite Leave to Remain in the UK.

BAPIO believes that any UK Government policy on this issue must be fair, not discriminate or disadvantage UK graduates or IMGs already working in the UK and not adversely impact patient care

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in any way. Therefore, we propose that the UK Government should consider revising existing policy to incorporate the following key points

- All posts should be considered training posts
- Doctors should be appointed to posts based on merit only
- All doctors currently working in the NHS should be eligible to apply for training posts, irrespective of their nationality or where they completed their medical degree
- The GMC should inform all candidates wishing to take the PLAB exam about the availability of jobs in the NHS so that candidates can make an informed decision about sitting the exam / coming to the UK

BAPIO has already raised some of the points in different forums, e.g. the ongoing Medical Training Review and in a letter to the GMC CEO earlier this year. However, given the complexity and multi-faceted nature of the issue, we believe that the UK Government must provide overall guidance to the GMC, NHS England and other relevant bodies.

We would be delighted to meet you or your team to discuss our proposals in further detail and answer any queries you have. We look forward to hearing back from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours Sincerely



Dr Ramesh Mehta CBE
President