

International Experienced Paramedic Recruitment Pathways Development – Pilot Programme

International Experienced Paramedic Development – Pilot Programme

Health Education England (HEE) are committing monies from this year's Comprehensive Spending Review settlement to address identified workforce shortages in the Paramedic profession. HEE are looking build pathways for experienced international Paramedics to be directly recruited by Ambulance Service Trusts into the NHS. The Directorate of Global Health Partnerships (DGHP) have significant experience of health professional recruitment programmes, most notably developing a highly successful model for the international recruitment of Registered Nurses which saw over 2,000 nurses joining the English NHS.

This paper outlines the proposed project, its rationale and the steps required by NHS Ambulance Trusts should they wish to partner with HEE for this work.

Scope

The monies allocated from the Comprehensive Spending Review have to be utilised within the current financial year (2021/22). As such, the pilot we are proposing needs to be rapidly developed and implemented, with job offers being issued to successful candidates before 31st March 2022.

Through the DGHP, HEE have run ethical, sustainable education based, international recruitment programmes for several years, including [Nurses](#), [Doctors](#) and [Radiographers](#) and are able to build on their knowledge and expertise to develop a paramedic pathway. In seeking a target market for the recruitment of experienced Paramedics from overseas we have sought to identify a country or region where:

- Paramedics are trained to a similar standard to UK-educated Paramedics and can meet HCPC registration requirements
- Paramedics from the country or region generally have the ability to meet the English Language requirements (IELTS or TOEFL) of the HCPC and UK Visa & Immigration Service
- There is an oversupply of Paramedics (that is, the country/region trains more Paramedics than their domestic services require)
- There is a history of migration from the identified country or region to the UK, preferably of Paramedics

Our analysis of potential countries resulted in **Finland and Poland** being identified as the countries most closely aligned to the outlined criteria and as such we will focus the initial development of recruitment pathways on these countries. The rationale for selecting these countries as the focus for this work is:

- There is a strong track record of successful HCPC registration for Paramedics from Finland and Poland
- English is commonly spoken to a high standard in both countries and there is a reasonable assumption that many Paramedics, with the benefit of some additional training, will pass an IELTS/TOEFL exam as required by the HCPC and UK Home Office
- There is an oversupply of Paramedics in Finland and Poland
- There is a strong history of migration from Finland and Poland to the UK in many professions, including Paramedicine.

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Proposed Project

The project will build relationships with identified, relevant overseas partners and build pathways to allow the NHS to recruit experienced Paramedics through those partnerships.

Once the relationships are built and the pathways developed, HEE will produce a 'toolkit' which will guide Ambulance Services through the recruitment of experienced Paramedics from those countries – initially Finland and Poland.

This toolkit will then be shared with the pilot partners for them to deliver the actual recruitment. At the end of the recruitment phase the project will be evaluated, the pathways/toolkit revised as necessary and then circulated to all 10 NHS Ambulance Service Trusts. Future development may see the process repeated with other countries who meet the criteria set out on page 1.

The pilot will run as a national programme, co-ordinated by Health Education England's DGHP with common processes and financial packages offered regardless of which Trust the candidates join.

The pilot will be marketed by HEE as a system offer as opposed to marketed separately by each Ambulance Trust. The marketing will include details of the Trusts engaged in the pilot and the broad geographic areas they are recruiting for. Applicants will apply directly to the Trust of their choice and the Trust will arrange to interview them.

Candidates will be supported through the HCPC and UK Visa application processes and be offered a comprehensive relocation and settling in package which will be fixed across all Trusts using the toolkit.

The pilot will be fully evaluated, and a report shared with stakeholders on completion. The evaluation report will include recommendations made for future recruitment practice and potential rollout.

The HCPC, Home Office (Visa & Immigration) and DVLA (for driving licence issues) are key to pilot and IR success. HEE/DGHP have established relationships with key stakeholders and will ensure engagement is at the required level for programme success. Initial conversations have already taken place with DVLA and an agreed process for ensuring applicants can receive a full UK driving licence with Cat C1 provisional status within around 4-6 weeks of their arrival in the country is now in place.

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Indicative Timescales

	2021			2022						Post Pilot
	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	
Ambulance Services join Pilot programme	Yellow									
Identification of international partners / forming of partnerships	Yellow	Yellow								
Pathways developed		Yellow	Yellow							
Toolkit produced and shared with project partners			Yellow							
Paramedics apply directly to Trusts				Green						
Trusts arrange / undertake interviews				Blue	Blue					
Successful applicants issued with job offers					Blue					
Applicants supported through HCPC and UKVI application processes					Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	
Candidates arrive at Ambulance Trust (usually 5-6 months after interview), settling in package/NQP Programme offered									Green	Green
Evaluation of Pilot / future expansion										Yellow

HEE Input

Health Education England will:

- Act as national co-ordinator for the pilot Programme
- Provide a dedicated Project Manager (who is also a HCPC registered Paramedic) and Project Administrator to support the Pilot
- Manage the programme funding
- Ensure the Programme has a robust ethical and sustainable foundation
- Engage partners to the pilot, including NHS Ambulance Trusts, HCPC, UK Visa & Immigration Service, UK Association of Ambulance Chief Executives (AACE), the DVLA and relevant overseas partners
- Market the programme and act as first point of contact
- Provide support and guidance to partner Ambulance Trusts regarding international recruitment processes, pre-employment checks and pastoral support requirements
- Conduct an evaluation of the Programme and disseminate findings
- Ensure there is a clear reporting and Governance structure in place

Ambulance Trusts Input

The partner Ambulance Trusts will be required to:

- Formally sign-up to the Pilot programme, including agreeing to the Financial Framework
- Provide staff resource to process applications, arrange/conduct interviews, undertake pre-employment checks and HR processing
- Provide support and guidance to applicants regarding HCPC and UKVI applications
- Source and pay for accommodation for the Paramedics for 3 months upon arrival
- Provide an appropriate induction and Newly Qualified Paramedic Programme
- Provide ongoing pastoral and professional support
- Provide interval data for evaluation purposes

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Financial Framework

In line with other HEE-led recruitment Programmes, a defined Financial Framework has been established which sets out what costs each party are likely to face and what 'package' they are required to provide. Some of the costs below are variable (e.g. flights/accommodation costs) so an average cost is shown for budgeting purposes.

EXPECTED COSTS	Service	Paramedic	Notes
English Language Training	£ -	£ 500	Assumes average level of English Language Training required
English Language Exam Cost		£ 195	
HCPC Application Fee	£ 540	£ -	Initially paid by Paramedic. Refunded by employer upon arrival in UK
Certificate of Sponsorship	£ 199	£ -	Home Office document required to apply for Visa
Immigration Skills Charge payable to UK	£ 3,000	£ -	Home Office fee of £1,000 per year - assumes post for initial 3 years
Visa (3 year Visa, costs paid in year 1)	£ 232	£ -	Cost varies slightly due to fluctuating exchange rate
Flight to the UK	£ 550	£ -	Approx cost
Airport transfer on arrival	£ 50	£ -	Approx cost
Accommodation Support / settling package	£ 1,500	£ -	3 months paid accommodation on arrival - Approx cost
UK Driving Licence Application	£ -	£ 43	
UK Cat C1 Driving Test/CPC	£ 264	£ -	Cost of one UK Cat C1 (Ambulance) Driving Test and CPC exams
	£ -	£ -	Costs not included: - Paramedic's salary - Trust staff costs for recruitment and pastoral support activities and training costs
Total Cost	£ 6,335	£ 738	

The approx. total cost to the Ambulance Trust, excluding staff time, is **£6,335** per Paramedic recruited. Funding is available to off-set some of these costs and to provide infrastructure funding as detailed below.

Funding Available

For the pilot phase – that is for any overseas Paramedic made a job offer through this Programme before 31st March 2022, the Ambulance Trust will receive the following funding upon the Paramedic's arrival in the UK:

- £6,000 per person paid to the Trust to off-set recruitment costs
- £500 per person paid to the Trust ring-fenced for education
- £540 per person paid to the Trust to be reimburse to the candidates their HCPC application fees