

NHS Education for Scotland

Rural Fellowships in General Practice – Local Job Information

Information for NHS Highland, West: Lochaber Rural Fellowship

Background

The Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross area is part of the North and West Operational Unit in NHS Highland. Lochaber is the natural geographical area in the West Highlands which is centred on the town of Fort William, which acts as the administrative and medical hub for a diverse group of remote and rural communities encompassing the communities of Fort William, Spean Bridge, Roy Bridge, Fort Augustus, Ballachulish, Glen Coe, Ardgour, Lochaline, Ardnamurchan peninsula, Mallaig and Arisaig, Knoydart and the islands of the Inner Hebrides. The local cultural identity is enhanced by the mountains, islands and musical tradition of the area. It is recognised as the 'Outdoor Capital of the UK' with access to the complete range of outdoor sports. Tourism, fish farming, forestry, crofting, fishing and aluminium smelting are the economic drivers in addition to good quality public services from the NHS, Education and local authority.

The Belford Hospital, Fort William is a Rural General Hospital with Consultant-led services in medicine, surgery and anaesthetics. The clinicians work within managed clinical networks with other specialists throughout Scotland. There are ten general practices in the Lochaber area which gives the Lochaber Rural Fellowship post unique access to the complete range of remote and rural general practices, from large health centre to rural dispensing practices and the remote practices of Lochaline, Ardnamurchan and Eigg. The primary role of the Lochaber Rural Fellow will be to support Ballachulish Medical Practice with GP cover whilst the Doctors are on annual leave, study leave or sick leave and the Acharacle Medical Practice in Ardnamurchan with cover for GP's annual leave and study leave, with an option to provide OOH care in Acharacle.

NHS Highland currently have a Rural Support Team which covers Lochaber, The Small Isles, Skye and Wester Ross. The team consists of a mix of healthcare professionals; GPs, Advanced Nurse Practitioners, Unscheduled Nurse Practitioners and Paramedic Practitioners, all these disciplines either work or will work together providing healthcare to the populations within the West Operational Unit.

Base/Host Practices

The host practice for the Rural Fellowship will be the Ballachulish Medical Practice, about 15 miles from Fort William, and/or Tweeddale practice in Fort William.

Tweeddale Medical Practice is a large health centre practice which is an accredited training practice for GPST's, FY2's and undergraduates. Tweeddale Medical Practice has achieved the RCGP Quality Practice Award and has a strong tradition of clinical excellence, education, information technology, research and rural innovation.

The Ballachulish Medical Practice is a two Doctor practice and is a small busy health centre with a geographically challenging practice population; it is also a dispensing undergraduate teaching practice. The commitment to these practices will be discussed with the Primary Care Manager, who will Line Manage the Rural Fellow, acknowledging the challenges of the geographical layout of the Operational Unit.

A unique education experience

The role of the Rural General Hospital continues to evolve and the NHS requires several levels of care provision in order to respond to the increasing elderly population and care needs in the community. The Lochaber area has a reputation for service development and innovation. The Lochaber Medical Society, Protected Learning Time events and GP Forum provide opportunities to meet enthusiastic and interested colleagues across the teams. The Ballachulish Medical Practice has two recently established intermediate care beds at the Abbeyfield Care Home. The rural fellow will have a unique insight into the Rural Support Team, an innovative model developed and evaluated on behalf of Scottish Government. Telehealth, team work and new ways of working relevant the whole of remote practice in Scotland will be under scrutiny. The 2018 Lochaber rural fellowship will be a unique opportunity to observe the process and contribute!

Opportunities for GPST group training and undergraduate teaching are available as an important skill in rural practice.

How the scheme works: **Service Commitment**

Rural Fellows are usually allocated to two or three practices, where they will provide the majority of their service commitment. These practices will be agreed as the beginning of the rural fellow year. One practice will usually be a more remote and rural dispensing practice to give the rural fellow the opportunity to experience all aspects of rural General Practice.

The service commitment practices can be in more than one area. If required to travel to an area away from their normal base practice, accommodation will be arranged.

13 weeks would be available for the Educational component working in a practice and would be arranged in agreement between the North and West Primary Care Manager, and NHS Education for Scotland. Alternatively the educational component could be in another part of Highland, and this would again be agreed.

Duties

Duties will include the full range of general practice duties during the Rural Fellows time in any General Practice, including working in the local RGH if appropriate. They will be expected to play a full part in all aspects of the practice and work alongside the members of the extended primary care team.

OOHs Element

While based in practices that have opted-out of OOHs there will be no requirement to do any OOHs sessions, however the rural fellows may wish to work in the local OOHs scheme in addition to their rural fellow role. This would be paid in addition to their rural fellow salary. However some work experience will be required in remote practices, when the Fellow will have to provide OOHs cover overnight and occasionally at weekends. Attendance at the BASICS course would be expected before covering OOHs in rural areas. Fellows are expected as part of their educational programme to gain experience in Out of Hours and Emergency Care.

Supervision in Practice

A principle in one of the above practices will be identified as a mentor/supervisor and will be available to the Fellow when working in other rural practices.

Education in Practice

Fellows will be expected to join in with the educational activities available within the practices that they are working.

During the Fellowship the successful candidate would be expected to complete the required courses and projects to achieve certification of successful completion. The development work above would be considered as part of the GP rural fellowship project work required for certification.

13 Weeks Protected Educational Time

This will be organised in conjunction with the service elements of the posts and with the Rural Fellowship Co-ordinator. Fellows will have the opportunity to negotiate additional experience in secondary care, remote practices and to undertake specific course activity as available. Fellows will also be expected to attend the regular meetings of the Scottish Rural Fellows. This Job Description is not definitive and may be subject to change in discussion with the Fellow, Primary Care manager and NES.

See also...

Dr Douglas (Tweedale Practice) is chair of the Dewar Group:
<http://www.ruralgp.com/wp/dewar2012>

For more information on the Rural Support team/Small Isles model, here's an example of the project newsletter:
<http://www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/Publications/Documents/Newsletters/Small%20Isles%20leaflet%20August%202016.pdf>

For more information on the area see <https://www.visitfortwilliam.co.uk>.

Further information on NHS Highland is available at: <http://www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk>.

For an informal discussion feel free to telephone:

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