

**MOVEMENT OF SPECIALIST AND SPECIALTY TRAINEES (SpRs/StRs/GPStRs)  
BETWEEN DEANERIES  
AND INTER-DEANERY TRANSFERS OF NTN/CORE  
TRAINING NUMBERS**

1. It is possible for SpRs/StRs/GPStRs to be helped to move between Deaneries or within the UK. The arrangements for this apply to both full-time and less than full time (LTFT) trainees. Movement is at the discretion of the Postgraduate Dean/Director of Postgraduate General Practice Education and trainees will be expected to show that they have well-founded reasons for wishing to move from their current Deanery.
2. Section 14 of the *Orange Guide* gives a clear outline of the basic rules relating to trainees in SpR training posts. Section 6 of the *Gold Guide* gives a clear outline of the basic rules relating to trainees in StR training posts. What follows is drawn from this guidance but is expanded in the light of operational experience. Postgraduate Deans/Directors of Postgraduate General Practice Education and trainees need to be aware that an inter-deanery transfer (IDT) bypasses the normal appointment process for the receiving Deanery, and may delay the entry of other trainees, including LATs, aspiring to a StR post in that specialty in the region/Deanery concerned.
3. It is important that trainees give as much notice as possible when requesting an IDT as training vacancies in other Deaneries may not be readily available and arrangements therefore may take some time to set up. A detailed timeline for the process is attached. This timeline must be adhered to by both trainees requesting transfers and Deaneries managing the process. The windows to consider IDTs will operate twice a year during March and October. Deaneries will hold two panel meetings in each window – one to consider requests to transfer out and a further panel to consider requests to transfer in. March and October windows will allow trainees to give 3 months notice, if required, before transferring to posts commencing in August or February. Of course, posts may commence outside of these dates but start dates will need to be agreed between the transferring/receiving deanery and the trainee.

**Well-founded personal reasons (usually permanent transfers)**

4. These will often be related to family, such as the genuinely unavoidable move of a spouse or committed partner to another part of the country, or illness in a dependent family member, which could not have been foreseen when the appointment to the current SpR/StR/GPStR post was made. Trainees will be asked to confirm (by signing the appropriate “Inter-Deanery Transfer Application” form – GP IDT1 or ST IDT1) if and when their personal circumstances changed. Trainees should note that movement will not usually be supported within the first year of the programme. IDT within the first year after appointment would only be agreed under exceptional circumstances and on a specific case by case

basis. It should be noted that “exceptional circumstances” does not mean that applications which may have just missed a transfer window should be included. Any applications that miss a specific transfer window deadline will go forward to the following transfer window for consideration. Deaneries will accept transfer requests within the first year of appointment but the transfer itself would not be considered appropriate, unless in very exceptional circumstances, until after 12 months in the appointed post.

It should be recognised that transfers are “not an entitlement”, (*Orange Guide/Gold Guide*) and the decision will be influenced not only by the strength of the personal case but also the impact of the requested transfer on other trainees in the receiving Deanery; especially in specialties for which competition is intense. The final decision will rest with the receiving Deanery, who will be advised by the home Postgraduate Dean/Director of Postgraduate General Practice Education responsible for the current post, and by key trainers. Deaneries should agree the number of entry points available for open recruitment and the number of vacancies that could be set aside to accommodate IDT requests. This should be agreed before the transfer window opens so that decisions are not influenced by the perceived quality of applicants for transfer.

5. If an IDT is agreed in principle, a commitment to IDT will be made, but actual placement in the programme and provision of a new higher/core training post may not be possible immediately, or even for some time. That will depend on the availability of an appropriate slot in the training programme and the availability of NTN/training posts in the receiving Deanery. Deaneries can accept requests to transfer in even if these requests would extend beyond the initial time period being considered in the transfer window. For example, a March transfer window will mainly consider requests to transfer from the following August but requests to commence after August can also be taken into consideration. It should also be noted, however, that if no vacancies are predicted within that Deanery/specialty for the forthcoming 12 months, then the trainee would need to re-apply at an appropriate time for a future transfer window. IDTs cannot be made from one specialty to another specialty. A change in specialty requires the trainee to submit a new application for entry to that new specialty using the agreed recruitment processes. Also where there are differences in programmes offered with respect to run through or core between Deaneries an IDT will not confer any material advantage i.e. a trainee undertaking core training in England, Northern Ireland or Wales cannot transfer into a run through training programme in Scotland.
6. Transferring Deaneries should provide receiving Deaneries with up to date information on ARCP/RITA status. This is particularly important if the status of trainee changes between the request for an IDT being submitted and then agreed. IDTs may be subject to the transferring trainee receiving a satisfactory ARCP/RITA outcome. If an IDT is approved in principle but a subsequent ARCP outcome is not satisfactory (satisfactory normally meaning an outcome 1) this may require further discussion between the transferring and receiving Deaneries before the transfer is able to take

place. Where a transferring Deanery has made a decision on an ARCP outcome, this decision cannot be revised by the IDT panel, or any other mechanism within the receiving Deanery. The integrity of the ARCP outcome should be respected by the receiving Deanery.

### Criteria for Transfer

7. The accepted principles/criteria for consideration of IDT requests for well-founded personal reasons are:
  1. Significant life events
  2. Caring responsibilities
  3. Committed relationship – particularly marriage, civil partnerships
  4. Other Relationships including the importance of support networks

Requests for transfer should meet one or more of the criteria listed above but when considering requests deaneries should also consider the following

5. Length of rotation
6. Impact on the well being of the individual
7. Having to accept a change of location of a partner where the partner has no real choice in changing the length or location of their employment
8. Trainees should be aware that they are applying for an IDT to a Deanery, not a specific post or programme within that Deanery, and that rejection of an educationally suitable vacancy will lead to the application for IDT being rejected by the receiving Deanery.
9. Trainees requesting IDT while pregnant, on maternity leave or out of programme (OOP) should consider applying during the transfer window which is nearest to the date that they would be planning to return to work in their current Deanery.

### Transfer Windows and Panels

10. Following the success of the 2009 pilot it has been agreed to implement the process described in this document and to continue with two transfer windows per year which will be undertaken in March and October. It has been agreed that during these windows a Deanery panel should meet to consider all requests from trainees wishing to transfer out of the deanery and that a panel may also be held to consider requests to transfer into the deanery – see detailed timeline. In some cases, eligibility panels may be held more frequently, but the transfer window timetable will stand.
11. All initial assessment panels will be convened by the Postgraduate Dean however he/she will not be a member of the panel. The IDT panels should consist of representatives of the Deanery together with a lay representative and a trainee representative. The BMA Junior Doctor Committee (JDC) will be offered a place on each panel for trainee

representation, but Deaneries will have the option to appoint another trainee representative from a different source if they wish (e.g local deanery trainee committee) if a suitable JDC representative is not available for the designated time. The designated time would be open to local negotiation, but in any event should not be less than six weeks' notice to ensure the trainee representative can notify their employer and arrange cover if necessary. The role of the trainee representative is to provide an independent view to the panel.

12. The IDT panel to consider requests to transfer in should rank each application for transfer received within the transfer window and consider for offer places that are available based on ranked position. It should be noted that it may not be possible to place all trainees; however, processing requests in this way would ensure that all IDT requests can be considered against the four principles/criteria and would also provide robust information in the event of any subsequent appeals from trainees.
13. The IDT panel will make a recommendation to the Postgraduate Dean stating the reasons why acceptance or rejection was the recommendation.
14. The Postgraduate Dean will then consider the recommendation and normally support the decision of the panel. If the panel recommends rejection of a request to transfer, the Postgraduate Dean will consider the reasons and confirm or challenge the decision of the panel.

### Appeals process

15. If the Postgraduate Dean accepts the decision of the panel to reject the request, the trainee will have the right to appeal to the Postgraduate Dean, supplying additional information if appropriate. Based on a review of the evidence before the initial assessment panel, together with any additional evidence supplied, the Postgraduate Dean/ will make a final decision on the application
16. It should be emphasised that a decision to release a trainee from an existing Deanery is far simpler than to accept a trainee, and that a distinction would need to be made between the two.

Appeals against an IDT panel decision not to release a trainee: An appeal against this decision will be conducted by the Postgraduate Dean as described above.

Appeals against an IDT panel decision to accept a trainee: An appeal against this decision will be conducted by the Postgraduate Dean as described above. Trainees would be able to contest the reasons for the IDT decision. However, they would not be able to appeal the fact that the reason their IDT request has been refused is that there is no available post for them in the Deanery they wish to transfer into.

## Inter-Deanery Transfer Request Form

17. It was agreed that when the “home” Deanery supported the release of a trainee from the Deanery, an “Inter-Deanery Transfer Application Form”(GP IDT1 or ST IDT1) should be completed confirming that the trainee fulfilled one or more of the four principles/criteria for IDT and was currently progressing satisfactorily in training and not subject to any disciplinary procedures within their existing Deanery area. It should be acknowledged, however, that in exceptional circumstances a trainee whose educational progression is not deemed satisfactory may be transferred if it was deemed the correct educational decision and had been agreed by both Postgraduate Deans/Directors of Postgraduate General Practice Education.
  
18. Trainees should confirm their circumstances for IDT by signing a declaration on the “Inter-Deanery Transfer Form” and this is considered more appropriate than requesting personal information from the trainee eg formal occupational health assessments. If this information is subsequently found to be untrue, this will be considered a professional probity issue and may be referred to the GMC.

## FAQs

Attached at Appendix A are some FAQs, which may assist trainees and others in understanding how the new process is expected to work.

**Formal advice to trainees: a model “statement”**

*If you wish to be considered for an inter-deanery transfer (IDT), you should:*

- *Ask your own postgraduate Deanery for a copy of the guidance document on ‘Movement of Specialist and Specialty Trainees ( SpRs/StRs/GPStRs) between Deaneries, and inter-deanery transfers of NTN/core training numbers’, and read section 14 of the 1998 Orange Guide(SpRs) or section 6 of the 2010 Gold Guide (StRs/GPStRs)*
- *Approach your own Postgraduate Dean/Director of Postgraduate General Practice Education or equivalent to explain why you are seeking an inter-deanery transfer. If you are doing this for personal reasons, you should be able to show a material change in your personal circumstances which accounts for this request. You will need the agreement of your current Postgraduate Dean/Director of Postgraduate General Practice Education to initiate the process.*
- *Complete the “Inter-Deanery Transfer Application Form” (GP IDT1 or ST IDT1) requesting an inter-deanery transfer and submit it to your current Postgraduate Dean/Director of Postgraduate General Practice Education together with an up-to-date CV. Please do not contact Training Programme Directors in other Deaneries directly. Your Postgraduate Dean/Director of Postgraduate General Practice Education should then contact the Postgraduate Dean/Director of Postgraduate General Practice Education in the region in which you are seeking to transfer.*
- *You may subsequently be contacted by that Postgraduate Dean/Director of Postgraduate General Practice Education or his/her representative in order to discuss the process further.*
- *Please note that all requests for IDTs will be considered by a Deanery panel within your current Deanery. There will be 2 transfer windows in each year – **March** and **October** (See detailed timeline for dates/timings) Postgraduate Deans/Directors of Postgraduate General Practice Education may consider and approve requests outside of these windows if it is felt that there are exceptional circumstances in any particular case*
- *Trainees will have the right to appeal decisions taken by the panel. All requests for appeal would need to be received within 10 working days of the decision regarding a request to transfer being communicated*

## Inter Deanery Transfers (IDT) – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### **Can I apply for an IDT?**

All cases will be considered on an individual basis. However, the following non-exhaustive principles have been agreed as circumstances which normally represent a reasonable reason for a trainee to request an IDT:

1. Significant life event
2. Caring responsibilities
3. Committed relationship – particularly marriage/civil partnership
4. Other relationships including the importance of support networks

Deaneries when considering IDT requests will also take the following into account if one or more of the above criteria met

- a) Length of rotation
- b) Impact on the well being of the individual
- c) Forced change of location of a partner for employment

### **How do I apply for an IDT?**

It is advisable to discuss your wish for an IDT with your educational supervisor in the first instance. Once you have done this, you will need to contact your current Deanery for an inter-deanery transfer form. In order to request an IDT you will need to fill in all the details of your situation and verify that this information is the truth. Please ensure that all information is correct, as this may be a professional probity issue if it is later discovered to be false in any way.

### **When can I apply for an IDT?**

You can apply for an IDT as soon as your situation arises. However, in most instances a transfer will *not normally be considered* prior to the trainee having spent 6 months in post and *will not normally take place* until the trainee has been in post for 1 year. Transfers within the first year after appointment will only be agreed by the Postgraduate Dean in exceptional circumstances and on a specific case-by-case basis.

### **When will my transfer be considered?**

Once you have handed in your IDT form it will be considered by your releasing/current Deanery. It has been agreed that “transferring out” Deaneries will set up a panel to consider IDT requests received to transfer out. If it is agreed that you can be released from your current Deanery the IDT form will be forwarded to the stated receiving Deanery. It has been agreed that all receiving Deaneries will set up a panel to assess IDT requests to “transfer in”. These panels will meet at least twice a year during what will be called the “transfer window” when the majority of transfers will be considered. Dates for the transfer window will be advertised widely and should be available on all Deanery websites.

### **What if my Deanery refuses to release me?**

If you are refused transfer by your current Deanery, you will be able to appeal by writing to your current postgraduate Dean within ten working days of the decision and asking them to reconsider your case. If you are a BMA member, the BMA will be able to support you in your appeal. *It is important to establish the reason for refusal; you will need to ensure that you fulfil the criteria for transfer prior to appealing.*

### **What is the transfer window?**

There will be two transfer windows per year. During this time all Deaneries will form panels to assess outgoing and incoming transfer requests. These panels will comprise of:

- Deanery representatives
- A JDC or other trainee representative
- A lay person

Urgent requests for transfer can be considered between the transfer window periods, but these would be highly exceptional cases only. This does not include consideration of requests which may miss a transfer window closing date. Any requests received after the published deadline would go forward to the next transfer window.

### **How will I find out the outcome of the panel?**

At the end of the transfer window all applicants will be informed in writing of the outcome of their transfer request. If a transfer has not been granted, the reason for this will be communicated in writing to the trainee (see detailed timetable for response times)

### **What can I do if my transfer is refused by the receiving Deanery?**

Your transfer may be declined for several reasons, it is important to establish why you have been refused in this instance. If you wish to appeal the transfer window decision, the appeal will be conducted by the Postgraduate Dean. **You will need to contact the Deanery stating your reasons for appeal within ten working days of date of notification of outcome.**

*It is important to establish the reason for refusal; you may not have been refused a transfer per se, but may have to wait for a vacancy to arise in the deanery you have requested to transfer to. Such vacancies can take a long time to appear especially in smaller specialties. Transfers cannot normally be accommodated without such a vacancy arising.*

### **I have been told that my application for IDT was acceptable, but I have not been offered a new post. Why is this?**

There may be many reasons, it is important to gain clarification on why you have not been offered a transfer in by the receiving Deanery. Deaneries may have more transfer requests than posts available. If this is the case, the receiving Deanery panel will assess each case and, depending on circumstance, some trainees may be offered a transfer immediately, while others may have to go on a waiting list until a vacant post/programme becomes available.

### **Can I attend the appeal?**

Normally this will not be necessary. You will be asked to provide further written evidence to support your case; you need only provide this if you have added information which may be new (since your original application) and/or a clarification of previously submitted materials. However, a Postgraduate Dean may decide that a personal attendance is appropriate. If you are asked to attend an appeal in person, you may wish to be accompanied / supported by a friend or BMA representative (providing you are a member of the BMA). Please note that if you are supported by a BMA representative, this must not be someone who has been involved in the original IDT panel decision

### **What are my options if I cannot wait for a transfer, or if my application fails?**

You always have the option of applying in open competition to any vacancies that arise in your preferred Deanery. When applying for posts you must be aware of your current notice period.

### Non-exhaustive example scenarios in relation to IDTs :

#### **I have an elderly parent who has significant care requirements, can I transfer?**

The care of a parent is normally considered a suitable reason for transfer. However, you will need to confirm that you are the primary carer for your parent and that the circumstances have materially changed since you accepted the appointment in your current Deanery.

#### **I have recently got married / entered into a civil partnership and my partner works in another Deanery/area/country, am I eligible for transfer?**

Yes. As a transfer may take some time it is worth speaking to your educational supervisor in advance of any arrangement being formalised in order to discuss potential arrangements and a suitable point in your training to transfer. If you are both doctors, you may wish to consider who is the most appropriate candidate for transfer ; for example there may be more training opportunities in some specialties available in one Deanery than the other, or it may be easier for one partner to move at this point in their training.

#### **I have discovered that a close family member is terminally ill and would like to transfer to be near them, can I transfer?**

Yes. This may be considered as an exceptional circumstance and so you should speak to your educational supervisor and Postgraduate Dean immediately. Please note consideration in this instance would normally apply to first degree relatives, i.e. parents or children. In such exceptional circumstances the transfer window may be avoided and a transfer arranged as soon as possible. However, transfer remains dependent on the receiving Deanery having a suitable post/programme vacancy. Please note there are other options you can also consider such as taking time out of programme (OOP) for a short period.

**I (my partner) have(has) recently had a baby and now my childcare arrangements mean that I cannot work as far away from home as I previously could, can I request a transfer?**

Yes. The most appropriate transfer in this case may be an intra-deanery transfer. This is where you move to a different location within the same Deanery. You should contact your educational supervisor and Postgraduate Dean to discuss this further, if this is the case. If you have been working in a Deanery that is not near to your home, you may request an inter-deanery transfer. You may be able to do this prior to the birth, so speak to your educational supervisor and Postgraduate Dean as soon as possible.

**I have recently been diagnosed with a serious health condition and wish to move Deanery to be nearer family/treatment, can I transfer?**

Yes. You will need to discuss the transfer with your educational supervisor and illustrate how the move will improve your situation.

**My partner has been on a rotation in the West Midlands (for example) for a year, but recently I applied for training through national recruitment and have been forced to accept a post in the Peninsula Deanery or face unemployment, can either of us apply for a transfer?**

It is unlikely that you will be able to transfer to the West Midlands Deanery if you were unsuccessful in open competition, however, your partner may be able to request a transfer to the Peninsula Deanery. You both may wish to discuss your options with your educational supervisor and your Postgraduate Dean.

**I wanted a post in London (for example), but was unsuccessful in open recruitment. I am now in the Northern Deanery, can I transfer to London?**

The IDT scheme cannot be used to apply for a specific post in another region or Deanery. If you wish to transfer due to personal choice rather than because you fulfil one of the criteria listed above, you should continue to apply through open competition, whilst being mindful of the notice period in your current Deanery.

**I wish to carry out research in another Deanery as part of my training; can I apply for a transfer?**

There are already systems in place for those wishing to undertake out of programme experience/research. These are detailed in the Gold Guide. Please discuss the existing mechanisms for this with your educational supervisor.

**I have found a doctor in the Deanery to which I want to transfer who is willing to swap with me, can I transfer?**

It is important that the scheme is managed by Postgraduate Deans who have an overview of all the cases of trainees needing to transfer, and can prioritise all those cases according to need.

**I have failed my RITA/ARCP, can I transfer?**

In the majority of circumstances you will need to have passed your most recent assessment of competence progression (outcome 1) or equivalent (RITA C) in order for your transfer to be agreed. However, in exceptional circumstances your Postgraduate Dean may approve a transfer if they feel your training would be improved by your move to another Deanery. This would also have to be acceptable to the receiving Deanery.

**I am a GP Trainee. Should I apply through this system?**

Yes. The National Recruitment Office will no longer handle transfers for GP trainees and all trainees will be expected to follow the same procedure via their Deanery.

**I am a trainee in Scotland/Wales/Northern Ireland; does this system apply to me?**

This scheme was piloted in England, Scotland and Wales during 2009. Following the success of the pilot, Northern Ireland have now also agreed to adopt this approach