Inter Deanery Transfers

National Policy and Guidance

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Inter Deanery Transfers (IDT)

Trainees may wish to move away from their current Deanery to another one for a variety of reasons.

These may be family related, such as the unavoidable relocation of a spouse or committed partner or an unforeseen illness in a dependent family member. If trainees are to be considered on these grounds (or similar) then they will be required to provide evidence of a change subsequent to their appointment. These transfers are not an "entitlement" and a 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 where there is high competition. The final decision will rest with the receiving Dean.

Trainees wishing to transfer because they would prefer training in another region or wishing to move into a different specialty or programme can only transfer by applying in open competition for a place on a training programme in another Deanery.

The following guidance applies equally to those in or seeking flexible training, subject to the normal working practice in the receiving Deanery with regard to flexible training numbers, organisation and funding.

If you wish to transfer into either the Oxford or Wessex Deanery you must contact your current Deanery to obtain the appropriate IDT Form and follow whatever process that they have established for the management of trainees moving out of their Deanery.

There is separate national guidance for Specialty trainees, Foundation trainees and GP trainees.

(Link here as currently etc)

You should be aware that there are just two opportunities for IDT for specialty trainees per year – in May and November.

Please note: The following guidance is national and after the general guidance you will find an advice sheet for trainees, an example of some helpful Frequently Asked Questions and the application forms you will require.
MOVEMENT OF SPECIALIST AND SPECIALTY TRAINEES (SpRs/StRs/GPStRs) 
BETWEEN DEANERIES

AND INTER-DEANERY TRANSFERS OF NTNs/CORE TRAINING NUMBERS

1. It is possible for SpRs/StRs to be helped to move between deaneries or within the UK. The arrangements for this apply to both full-time and part-time 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 moving.

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 expanded in the light of operational experience, including occasional inappropriate manipulation of the rules by a very small minority of trainees. Postgraduate Deans and trainees need to be aware that a “protected” transfer bypasses the normal appointment process for the receiving Deanery, and may delay the entry of other trainees, including LATs, aspiring to an StR post in that specialty in the region concerned.

3. It is important that trainees give as much notice as possible when requesting a transfer as training vacancies in other deaneries may not be readily available and arrangements therefore may take some time to set up.

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. Applicants will be asked to confirm (by signing the appropriate “Inter-Deanery Transfer Application” form – GP IDT1 or ST IDT1) when their personal circumstances changed. Applicants should note that movement will not usually be supported within the first year of the programme. Transfer within the first year after appointment would only be agreed under exceptional circumstances and on a specific case by case basis. 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.
5. 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, which will be advised by the home Postgraduate Dean/Director of Postgraduate General Practice Education responsible for the current post, and by key trainers.

6. If agreed in principle, a commitment 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 NTNs/training posts in the receiving deanery. Inter-deanery transfers cannot be made from one specialty to another. Also where there are differences in programmes offered with respect to run through or core between deaneries a transfer will not confer any advantage ie a trainee undertaking core training in England, Northern Ireland or Wales cannot transfer into a run through training programme in Scotland.

7. A recent review of the Interdeanery Transfer process accepted the following principles/criteria for consideration of transfer requests for well-founded personal reasons.

- Significant life events
- Caring responsibilities
- Committed relationship – particularly marriage, civil partnerships
- Other Relationships including the importance of support networks
- Length of rotation
- Impact on the well being of the individual
- 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. The following principle was rejected as it was agreed that this was more appropriately, and efficiently, covered by current OOPR and OOPE procedures.

- Research, education or leadership responsibilities of a national significance not able to be delivered within the deanery
Transfer Window

9. The review has recommended the introduction of a transfer window and it has been agreed that during these transfer windows, a deanery panel should meet to consider all requests from trainees wishing to transfer into the deanery. This panel should consist of representatives of the deanery together with a lay representative and a trainee representative. This trainee representative should ideally be from out with the deanery to ensure fairness. The BMA Junior Doctors Committee (JDC) would also be able to help with providing a trainee representative if required. This panel would rank each application for transfer received within the transfer window and offer places that were available based on ranked position. It was noted that it may not be possible to place all trainees however processing requests in this way would ensure that all requests could be considered against the seven principles/criteria and would also provide robust information in the event of any subsequent appeals from trainees.

10. It has been agreed that a trial transfer window should take place in May 2009 and then again in November 2009. This should allow any requests to be considered before any upcoming recruitment rounds. However Postgraduate Deans/Directors of Postgraduate General Practice Education could fast track requests in exceptional circumstances.

11. Transfer Window 1: To consider all requests submitted to the Deanery between November 2008 and April 2009 – panel meeting to review all requests received to be held in May

12. Transfer Window 2: To consider all requests submitted to the Deanery between May 2009 and October 2009 – panel meeting to review all request received to be held in November.

Appeals process

13. It should be emphasised that a decision to release a trainee is far simpler than to accept a trainee and that a distinction would need to be made between the two.

14. Appeals against release: An appeal against this decision should be conducted by the Postgraduate Dean/Director of Postgraduate General Practice Education. Trainees appealing this decision may be supported by a trainee representative or a representative provided by the Junior Doctor Committee (JDC) if requested.
15. Appeals against panel decision to accept a trainee: The appeal would need to be conducted by a separate panel to that which conducted the transfer window panel. This panel would also need lay and trainee representation. Trainees would be able to contest the reasons for the decision; however they would not be able to appeal the fact that the reason their request has been refused is that there is no available post for them in the deanery they wish to transfer into.

16. Trainees should submit any requests for an appeal of the decision to the Deanery within 10 working days of the decision being communicated to them. A panel will then be convened within 10 working days of receiving the appeal.

Acceptability criteria

17. It was agreed that when the “home” deanery agreed to release 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 of the seven principles/criteria for transfer and was currently progressing satisfactorily in training and not undergoing any disciplinary procedures. It should be acknowledged, however, that in exceptional circumstances a failing trainee 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 transfer by signing a declaration on the “Inter-Deanery Transfer Form” and this is considered more appropriate than requesting personal information from the trainee e.g. occupational health assessments. If this information is subsequently found to be untrue, this will be considered a probity issue and may be referred to the GMC.

Review

19. It is important that the above process including introduction of transfer windows and an appeals process will initially be piloted for one year with a review taking place in December 2009 at the latest.

20. It has been agreed that this process will be followed by all deaneries and that this process would manage requests from GP trainees rather than these being
managed by the National Recruitment Office. Data will be collected at this time to
review movement in and out of deaneries and numbers of appeals held etc.

21. A data collection template will be provided to deaneries for this purpose.

FAQs

22. Attached at Appendix A are FAQs, which assist understanding of 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, 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 NTNs/core training numbers’, and read section 14 of the 1998 Orange Guide(SpRs) or section 6 of the 2008 Gold Guide (StRs/GPStRs)

- Approach your own Postgraduate Dean/Director of Postgraduate General Practice Education to explain why you are seeking an inter-deanery transfer. If doing this for personal reasons, you should be able to show a 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. 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 inter-deanery transfers will be considered by a deanery panel. There will be 2 transfer windows in each year – May to October with applications being considered in November - and November to April with applications being considered in May. 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
Appendix A

Inter Deanery Transfers (IDT) – Frequently Asked Questions

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 reasonable requests for transfer:

1. Significant life event
2. Caring responsibilities
3. Committed relationship – particularly marriage/civil partnership
4. Other relationships including the importance of support networks
5. Length of rotation
6. Impact on the well being of the individual
7. Forced change of location of a partner for employment

How do I apply for an IDT?
It is advisable to discuss your wish for Inter Deanery Transfer with your educational supervisor. Once you have done this, you will need to contact your deanery for an inter deanery transfer form. In order to request a transfer 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 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 deanery. If it is agreed that you can be released, the form will be forwarded to the receiving deanery. It has been agreed that all receiving deaneries will set up a panel to assess IDT requests. These panels will meet twice a year during what will be called the “transfer window” when the majority of agreed transfers will take place. Dates for the transfer window will be advertised widely.

What if my deanery refuses to release me?
If you are refused transfer by your current deanery, you are able to appeal by writing to the postgraduate dean 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?
It is envisaged that there will be two transfer windows per year. During this time all receiving deaneries will form a panel to assess incoming transfer requests. This panel will comprise of:
- Deanery representatives
- A JDC representative
- A lay person
Urgent requests for transfer can be considered between the transfer window periods, but these would be highly exceptional cases only.

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 their transfer. If a transfer has not been granted, the reason for this will be communicated in writing to the trainee within ten working days.

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 carried out by a panel including representatives from the deanery, a JDC representative and a lay person. This panel cannot include the same representatives as the transfer window panel. You will need to contact the deanery stating your reasons for appeal within ten working days.

I have been told that my application for inter deanery transfer 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 by the receiving deanery. Deaneries may have more transfer requests than posts available. If this is the case, the panel will assess each case and, depending on circumstance, some may be offered a transfer immediately, while others may have to go on a waiting list until a post becomes available.

Can I attend the appeal?
Yes. You may be asked to give oral or written evidence. If attending an appeal, you may wish to be accompanied / supported by a friend or BMA representative.

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
I have an elderly parent that has significant care requirements, can I transfer?
The care of a parent is considered a suitable reason for transfer. However, you will need to confirm that you are the primary care for your parent.

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 in order to discuss 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 e.g. there may be more training opportunities 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. In exceptional circumstances the transfer window may be able to be avoided and a transfer arranged as soon as possible.

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 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 education supervisor and illustrate how the move will improve your situation.

My partner has been on a rotation in the West Midlands 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, but was unsuccessful in open recruitment. I am now in the Northern Deanery, can I transfer to London?
Unfortunately, the IDT scheme cannot be used to apply for a specific post in another region. 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.

I wish to carry out research in another deanery as part of my training; can I apply for Inter Deanery Transfer?
There are already systems in place for those wishing to undertake out of programme experiences/research. 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 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 appraisal 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 dean.

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 is being piloted in England, Scotland and Wales. The pilot period runs until December 2009. Northern Ireland have decided not to participate in the pilot.