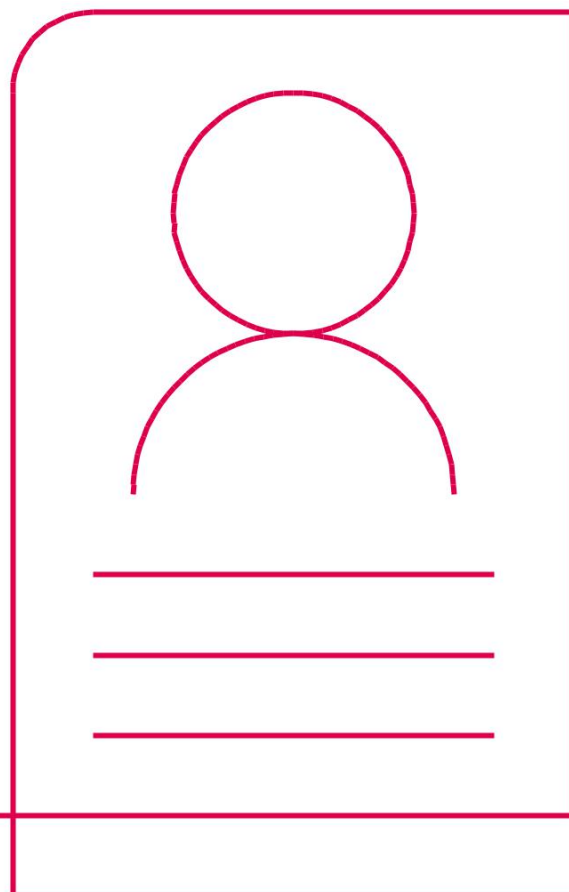


May 2018

Medical Training Initiative: Relocation Guide





Contents

Introduction

Check list

1 Accommodation

2 Banking

3 Healthcare

4 Family

5 Travel

6 Keeping in touch

7 Safety

8 Culture

9 Access to the best Training

Useful Links & Contacts

Abbreviations



Disclaimer

This guide was originally written in December 2015 and revised in May 2018. All the information derives from that period, and therefore, there may have been changes since that time. We do not assume liability for the contents. All contents are general in nature and cannot be binding in their cover of every individual case. They are neither necessarily exhaustive nor comprehensive, nor do they represent the status quo.

As information they are not legally binding and cannot substitute for experts' information on the respective topic. Please note that making arrangements for relocation to the UK is solely the responsibility of those appointed to an MTI programme.

Introduction

This guide has been produced to give international doctors participating in the Medical Training Initiative (MTI) scheme general advice about moving to the UK.

The guide is not exhaustive, but it does cover some of the key things that you will need to arrange and may find useful to know when you move to the UK. It contains generic information which aims to cover all of your needs and those of your family (if applicable).



Checklist

Before you arrive

- Arrange your UK accommodation (possibly via your Hospital Trust or Board)
- Make sure you have made suitable arrangements with your accommodation in your home country, i.e. ending tenancy agreements, cancelling utilities etc
- On 6 April 2015 an [immigration health surcharge](#) was introduced by the UK government. It is applied to all non-European Economic Area (EEA) nationals who come to the UK for more than six months. The surcharge is £200 per year (although UKVI have announced this will double at some point in 2018) and will be collected when you make your visa application. You will be required to pay the charge in full and upfront for the two-year period.
- Packing. As you will only be in the UK for two years, think about what you need to bring and what you will do with the belongings you don't bring with you. If you are bringing electrical goods you are likely to need a transformer and an adaptor plug. The electricity supply in the UK is 240 volts.
- Remember to send your change of address to relevant companies and organisations.

If you are bringing your family

- Find out about childcare/schools in the area you are moving to and register your child if necessary.

As well as your travel documents it might be a good idea to bring

- A photocopy of the main parts of your passport
 - A letter from your NHS Board or Trust confirming your offer of employment
- A certified police report from your home country to speed up pre-employment checks in the UK
- Degree certificates
- Reference letter from your bank in your own country to help you get a UK bank account
- Driving licence
- Backup photocopies of essential documents.

Once you get here

- Open a bank account
- Collect your Biometric Residence Permit*
- Apply for a national insurance number**
- Register with a local GP and Dentist
- Set up utility accounts in your property
- If you have a television, get a TV licence
- Arrange telephone and internet connection
- Arrange insurance for your belongings
- If you need to, apply for a provisional driving licence.

If you are bringing your family

- Enrol your child in school/childcare

* Biometric Residence Permit

MTI doctors entering the UK for more than six months will need to collect their [Biometric Residence Permit \(BRP\)](#) from the designated Post Office Branch within 10 days of arrival in the UK. [PostOffice](#) branches are located across the UK. A clear copy of your BRP should be submitted to the Academy along with a Starters Report, confirming your first day of work.

** National Insurance Number

As an employee in the UK you are required to pay National Insurance (NI). Your National Insurance contributions build up your entitlement to certain state benefits such as NHS healthcare and the State Pension. The exact amount you pay depends on your earnings.

To obtain an NI number you should telephone the Jobcentre Plus on 0345 600 0643. You should do so as soon as possible after your arrival in the UK as appointments can be booked up weeks in advance.

1.0

Accommodation





Accommodation

It is important for you to have a suitable place to stay while you are based in the UK. Make sure that you arrange some form of accommodation before you arrive in the UK, even if it is only temporary. There are many options when it comes to renting accommodation and finding somewhere suitable is not usually a problem.

Trust/Board or Hospital Accommodation

Your employing Trust or Board may have temporary hospital accommodation available. It is worth speaking directly with them before you arrive to see if this is available to you.

Most hospital accommodation will include utilities and council tax in one bill. You may require a letter confirming this if your bank requests evidence of accommodation.

Private renting

For longer-term accommodation, consider the different options available to you. There are various ways to rent a property in the UK. You can rent through an estate or letting agent or if you prefer, directly from a private landlord. Rental properties are advertised in local newspapers and on websites, such as [Zoopla](#), [Primelocation](#) and [Rightmove](#) among others, which bring many estate or letting agent listings together in one place. You may also find it useful to talk to your Trust or Board colleagues who live in the local area and may know of available places.

Types of accommodation fall into several categories, all can be either furnished or unfurnished. The definitions below are generally the terms used in the UK.

Flat or house share

You rent a bedroom in a property but the other facilities (living room, kitchen, bathroom) are communal and shared with other people also renting rooms.

Bedsit

This is typically one room combining the bedroom and living room. Kitchen facilities are either in the room or in a separate shared area with other bedsits. Bathrooms are often shared in bedsits also.

Studio flat

This is typically one room combining the bedroom and living room. Your kitchen and bathroom are usually self-contained.

Flat/apartment

This is a self-contained property with at least one bedroom and separate living room. Flats are usually on one-level and part of a larger building of flats.

Maisonette

This is a flat split over two levels with internal stairs.

Bungalow

A house on one level without stairs.

Terraced house

A house attached to two other houses, usually on a street of similar properties.

Semi-detached house

A house that only shares one wall with another property.

Detached house

A house that stands alone with no adjoining neighbours.

Things to consider

The [GOV.UK](#) has useful information on private renting, including your rights and responsibilities as a tenant, information on tenancy agreements and your landlord's responsibilities.

The cost of accommodation will vary across the UK, so research the area you are moving to before arriving and make sure you have budgeted accordingly. Estate or letting agents/landlords will usually take advance rental payments every calendar month.

On top of the rent you pay, you are likely to incur additional expenses (some of these may be included in your rent but check with the estate or letting agent/landlord beforehand):

- Deposit: most landlords require at **least 1 month's deposit plus the first month's rent** in advance of moving into a property. There may also be additional administration & inventory fees
- Council Tax: a monthly tax which is payable by everyone who owns or rents a home in England, Scotland or Wales. The amount you will need to pay varies, depending on property type and council area. Visit the [GOV.UK](#) website for further details
- Contents Insurance: You should insure your belongings in your property. Comparison websites such as [www.moneysupermarket.com](#) and [www.comparethemarket.com](#) are good places to look to find a good deal for you

- Water rates: All properties in the UK need to pay water rates, these are either charged based on property size or paid via a meter reading. Water suppliers are regional across the country
- Utility Bills: Gas and electricity bills in the UK can be very high. You can often get discounts if you have both utilities provided by the same supplier, such as Good Energy. Comparison websites can be a good place to start to see the best deal for you
- As with utilities, there are many different Internet Service Providers [ISPs] in the UK which offer various packages at different prices. Most companies will offer landline phone services bundled with internet access. It's worth researching each ISP in your area to find which services suit you best.
- Television licence: In order to watch television live, catch up or streaming/on demand (on any device) in the UK you must purchase a [TV Licence](#). The current cost of a licence is £150.50 per year (as of April 2018) for watching live colour television.

Most UK rentals require you to sign a minimum six-month contract.

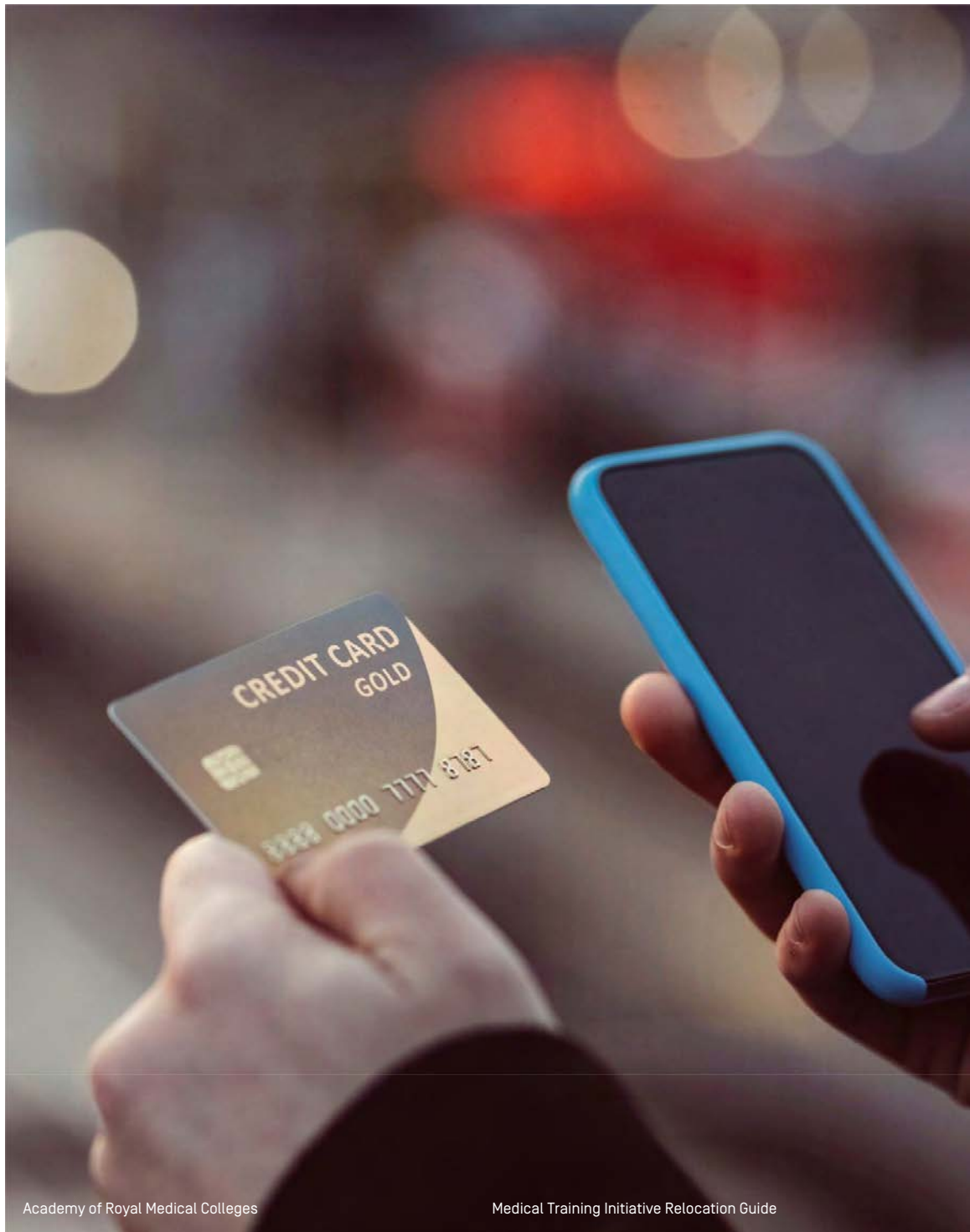
Research the local area for transport and other local amenities that you will need to get you to work. For example does local transport run 24 hours or only during certain times of day? It is also a good idea to familiarise yourself with living expenses in the UK. It is worth noting that prices for almost everything are higher in the Greater London area.

You may not receive your first month's pay from your Trust for several weeks, have some money set aside to cover your costs during this period.



2.0

Banking





Banking

The UK currency is pound sterling (£, GBP). A pound is made up of 100 pence (p). Coin denominations are 1p, 2p, 5p, 10p, 20p, 50p, £1 and £2. Bank notes £5, £10, £20 and £50. It is worth familiarising yourself with this and against the exchange rates with your own country's currency. Some small stores are reluctant to accept £50 notes, and it's worth keeping this in mind if you plan to bring cash with you to the UK.

Having a UK bank account will be essential to enable you to live and work in the UK. Withdrawing money and making transfers between UK accounts is usually free and having one will make the payment of your wages easier.

The UK has banks and building societies, both of which offer current accounts, savings accounts and investments. The main difference is the latter are mutual organisations so account holders are seen as members and have the right to vote on matters affecting the society. Banks however, operate for their shareholders.

There are a number of different bank accounts available in the UK and it is important to find the right one for you. The [Money Advice Service](#) can tell you more about the different types of bank account that exist and give you help on deciding which is right for you.

It is usual practice to make an appointment at the local branch of your chosen bank to open your account. In the UK banks are usually open between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday, and all day Saturday as well. However, exact opening times are decided by each branch so may vary across the country. In some cases you may have to book your first appointment online before entering a bank branch. It's worth checking the website of your desired bank in advance.

Although most banks and building societies expect you to have a UK address before you can open a bank account, there are some specialist products that have been designed for foreign nationals. These could be an alternative if you are initially unable to meet the standard account criteria below.

All banks usually require two valid and original documents [one from each list below] confirming your identification (ID) and proof of your UK address.

Appropriate ID

- Biometric Residence Permit [BRP]
- Full and valid passport
- Photocard national identity card
-
- A full UK or foreign photocard driving licence

Appropriate proof of address*

- UK or foreign bank/credit card statement (less than three months old and not printed from the internet)
- Council Tax bill
- Jobcentre Plus letter confirming National Insurance number (less than three months old)
- Letter/bill from utility company

Some banks may also want to see proof of income and employment. Your MTI job offer letter should detail this and be an acceptable document, however it may be worth bringing a letter from your employer explaining your situation if you're housed in hospital accommodation.

It may also be useful to obtain and bring with you when you move a letter of introduction from your home bank stating your credit worthiness and financial track record.

* A letter from your UK Medical Royal College confirming your address may also be accepted at some banks as proof of address.



3.0

Healthcare





Healthcare

As an MTI doctor you will already be familiar with the UK's National Health Service (NHS). However, the following may be a useful overview for your personal healthcare.

Healthcare is provided in a number of locations across the country and you may require different services for different issues. Regardless of what service you require you should register with a local doctor (General Practitioner, GP) and a dentist.

Registering with a Doctor

When you move to the UK it is important to register with your local GP. This will allow you to make swift appointments should you or a member of your family become unwell, and will allow your medical records to be easily accessed in the event of an emergency, e.g. if you are taken to an Accident & Emergency department. The NHS is free at the point of delivery and it is unlikely that you will be charged for any treatment that you need. However, if you require a prescription in England it is likely you will pay a charge for that treatment (£8.80 per item, as at May 2018).

In the UK you are required to register with a GP in your local area based on your address. The [NHS Choices](#) website gives further information on registering with a GP, and can provide a list of GP Practices in your area.

Registering with a Dentist

Unlike GPs, dental practices are not bound to catchment areas, so you will be able to register with one that is convenient for you, whether it's near to where you live or work. Most dental practices take on a mixture of NHS and private patients, but we recommend that you check this with a practice before registering, as some will not have the capacity to accept new NHS patients.

When registering, you'll need to provide your NHS number, if you have one. The [NHS Choices](#) website gives further information on registering with a dentist.

* An appointment for emergency dental treatment with an NHS dentist will deal with the immediate problem. However, you may be advised to make another appointment for a separate course of non-urgent treatment. In this case, you will have to pay a second charge in the relevant treatment band.

NHS Dental Charges

If you are entitled to NHS treatment, you are still likely to have to make a contribution towards the cost of your dental treatment. If you are not entitled to NHS treatment, or the dental work you need is not available on the NHS you will have to pay for the full cost of your treatment. Current NHS charges are as follows:

- **Band 1 course of treatment – £21.60**
This covers an examination and diagnosis as well as emergency dental treatment*
- **Band 2 course of treatment – £59.10**
This covers fillings, endodontics removal of teeth but not more complex items covered by Band 3
- **Band 3 course of treatment – £256.50**
This covers more complex work such as a crown or bridges

Please note that after an examination, if complex work is required, a dentist may only offer to treat you as a private patient which will be more expensive than NHS costs.

Cosmetic procedures such as bleaching, implant treatment and adult orthodontics are not provided on the NHS.

If you require urgent treatment your dental practice may be able to see you or direct you to an urgent care dental service. If you have not registered with a dentist telephone NHS 111 for advice on where you can access urgent care.

Other ways to receive care

Pharmacists

Pharmacists are located across the country and on most high streets and in hospitals. They can advise on minor medical conditions. Some provide tests to monitor conditions such as high blood pressure and some can offer repeat prescriptions.

GP Practices

Your doctor, along with nurses, health visitors and midwife's practice make up the healthcare professional team in GP practices. This is usually your first point of entry for healthcare. Your doctor will refer you to a specialist or hospital if your problem requires treatment outside the treatment scope.

Opticians

Opticians carry out eye and sight examinations and like pharmacists can be found on most UK high streets.

NHS Walk-in Centres

Managed by nurses and located across the UK, Walk-in Centres provide care for minor injuries and complaints without an appointment. These run on a first come first served basis and are usually open outside of standard work/office hours every day of the week.



Telephone NHS 111

A free non-emergency telephone service when you need medical help or advice but it is not an emergency.

Emergency and urgent care

Telephone 999, a 24 hour, ambulance and accident and emergency services when there is a medical emergency.

Private medical care

The UK also has private medical care. These services are more expensive than NHS treatment, but in some cases allow for treatment to be obtained earlier than is possible via the NHS.



4.0

Family





Family

If you are planning on bringing your family with you while you work in the UK, it shouldn't be a problem. The [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) website has details of the process that you/they will need to go through to make it possible.

If you have children under the age of 18 then you will need to consider childcare and education arrangements.

Childcare

For children under the school age there are many types of childcare available in the UK, what you decide is right for you will depend on their age and your own needs. The price of childcare varies greatly across the country and between the type of care you chose.

Nannies

These are people who come to your home to care for your children.

Childminders

These are people who care for children at their own home, so you would take your children to the childminder.

Day Nursery

These are childcare centres that care for children between the ages of three months and five years. The numbers of children at a nursery can vary and children are usually grouped by age, so that activities will be suitable for their age. Nurseries are also often linked to pre-school education for three and four year olds.

There are also occasional and part-time childcare options for younger children.

Crèches

These provide safe, supervised, short periods of care. Usually charged at an hourly rate.

Playgroups

An organised group for children to learn and play together run by trained group leaders.

Kids' clubs

These usually run outside of school hours.

Babysitters

These offer occasional care usually in your home, for example if you want to go out in the evening.

Schools

Children over five in the UK (sometimes over four and a half in Scotland, depending on their birthday) attend full-time compulsory education until the age of 16. After this children can choose to go on to further education or into employment. State education in the UK is free. However, there are some schools that have their own entry and payment systems and also private independent schools that are not state funded.

There are numerous types of school in the UK. The [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) website can give you an overview of what these are and what entry requirements they may have.

Primary School

State primary schooling begins at age five (occasionally younger) up until children are 11 or 12 years old (Educational years 1-6) when they enter secondary education. During this time, if you are in England, your child will follow the first two stages of the National Curriculum, Key Stages 1 and 2.

Secondary School

UK schools teach students until they are 16 (Educational years 7-11 or S1 to S6 in Scotland) and prepare them for GCSE exams or equivalent following National Curriculum, Key Stages 3 and 4 in England or the Curriculum for Excellence in Scotland.

Post 16 Education

After completing compulsory education children can go on to study A-levels or equivalent qualifications at a sixth form college or further education college. (Educational years 12 and 13 or S5 and S6 in Scotland).

Higher Education

This is education that happens in Universities or institutions offering degrees or higher qualifications.

Before you arrive we advise that you contact the Local Council of the area you will be living to find out how to arrange a school place. If your child will not be joining at the start of the school year (August or September) you are likely to have to complete an 'in year' admissions process. The Council will be able to assist you in the process. Most Councils will have detailed school application information on their websites.



5.0

Travel





Travel

Public transport

Most cities and towns have an extensive public transport network in place. However, travel in the UK is expensive, and you should take into account the cost of travel in your budgeting.

Rail

The UK is connected by over 2,500 railway stations. There are a variety of different tickets available to buy for journeys. Prices vary depending on the class you travel (first or second) and the flexibility of the ticket you have purchased. Tickets are usually cheaper if brought in advance, but may only be valid on specific journeys and have limited flexibility.

If you are traveling a lot or commuting you might want to consider paying for your travel on a 'pay-as-you-go' basis, or purchase a weekly, monthly or yearly pass. For more information about rail journeys, prices and more, visit the [National Rail](#) website. It is worth noting that the price of rail services will vary between peak travel times (generally, 06.30-09.30 and 15.30-18.30) and off peak travel times.

If you are travelling across the UK it may also be worth comparing rail travel costs with flight fares, as it is sometimes cheaper to fly.

Coach and bus

The bus network across the UK is extensive and most cities, towns and rural areas have services that run for short to medium journeys. Seats on buses generally cannot be reserved and most have both seating and standing capacity. The price of bus tickets normally depends on how far you are traveling, but some services like the London bus network operate a fixed single fare price.

For longer journeys across the UK coach services operate. Tickets for these services can be bought in advance. Although travelling long distances by coach will usually be slower than rail, it can be more cost effective. Coach services in the UK are mainly operated by:

[National Express](#) – Nationwide coach travel

[Megabus](#) – a budget coach company

[EasyBus](#) – Low-cost airport transfers

[Scottish citylink](#) – Scotland's main coach travel company.

Trams and Metro light railways

Some of the larger cities and towns in the UK operate a tram or light railway service to travel around the local area.

London Underground

An underground railway network operates in London, also known as the tube. This can be a faster way to travel around the city than buses or the railway network. The price of tickets and additional information about traveling in London can be found on the [Transport for London](#) website.

Driving

If you are planning to drive a vehicle whilst in the UK you will need to confirm your eligibility with the [UK Driving and Vehicle Licencing Agency](#) (DVLA). Depending on your country of origin and your current driving status, restrictions may apply. Please check the [GOV.UK](#) website for further details.

You may need to apply for a provisional driving license while you are in the UK if you intend to drive. Application forms can be found in most post offices and on the [GOV.UK](#) website. This could also make a useful form of ID.

Details of the UK traffic law and pictures and explanations of all road signs and markings can be found in the [Highway Code](#).

If you are planning on driving while you are in the UK it is worth noting:

- Your vehicle must also be registered, covered by insurance and taxed.
- The high cost of petrol. Prices in the UK are amongst the highest in the world
- Traffic in built-up, urban areas can be very heavy at peak times of the day, and in London, congestion charges will apply. See the [Transport for London](#) website for more details on the congestion charge.
- There is usually a charge for parking your car on the street or in designated car parks.

Cycling

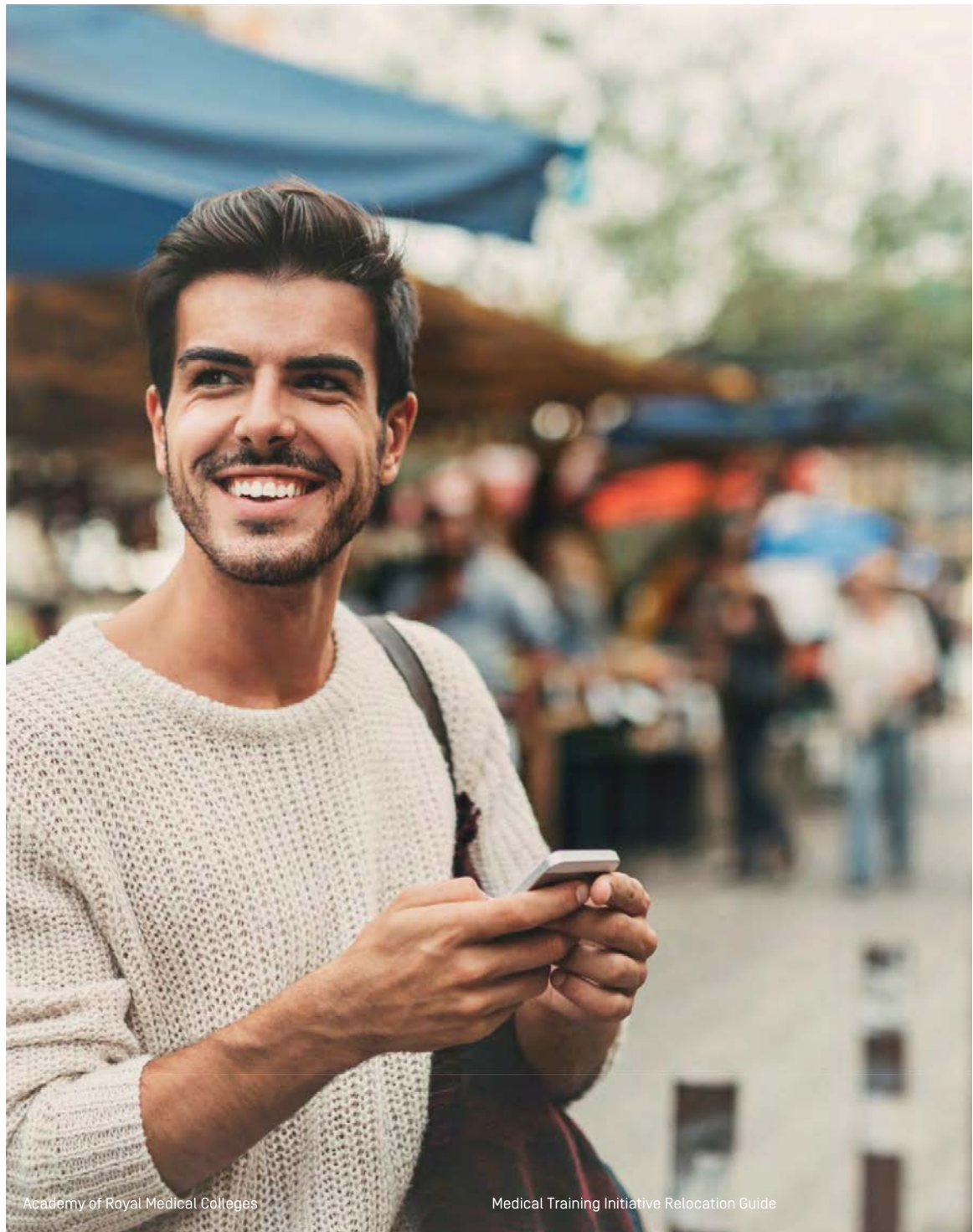
Bicycles are a common way of getting around. In larger towns and cities designated cycle lanes exist on the roads. If you are thinking of cycling it is worth checking with your employing Trust or Board to see if they operate a Cycle to Work Scheme, which can help with the cost of buying a bicycle. If you do choose to cycle you should also familiarise yourself with the [Highway Code](#). In London, a self-service bike-sharing scheme operates.

See the [Transport for London](#) website for more information hiring a bicycle.



6.0

Keeping in touch



Keeping in touch

Telephone

It is common for most UK households to have a landline telephone. There are a number of providers and ways that you can set this up. Many providers will do subscription packages with telephone, internet and television, the largest of which are [BT](#), [Sky](#) and [Virgin Media](#). It is worth looking into what services will be best for you when you arrive.

Calling abroad

It is likely you will want to call home. It can be expensive, but you can reduce the cost of calling abroad with:

An internet enabled device/computer

You can video or telephone call another device without additional cost, Skype and Facetime being the most popular.

International calling cards

Many newsagents and local shops sell international calling cards that come with a prepaid balance on them that you can use to call a specific country.

International call services

Most telephone providers give the option of a paid service to call abroad at a reduced rate.

Instant dial services

These also allow you to make cheap calls abroad by dialling an access code before the number you are calling. You can find details of these services on the internet.

Mobile Phones

The UK has a number of different mobile phone network providers so you are likely to find one that suits you. You can either use a phone that you already own and are bringing with you or purchase a new one in the UK.

If you are bringing an existing mobile with you to use, you will need to make sure that the handset is unlocked so it can operate on any network and you will require a sim-only contact or pay-as-you-go sim. Many UK networks offer free pay-as-you-go sim cards.

Pay-as-you-go

This is where you purchase credit in advance of service use. The credit is spent at the time of service use. It allows you to make calls, and use data, without a contract so you are not tied in for any specific period of time. You can top up credit at any time by a variety of methods (such as credit/debit card, at an ATM, buying a top up card etc).

Pay monthly/contact

This is where you pay for the service after you have used it. You are tied into a contract for a period of time, usually at least 12 months. Some are for a minimum of 24 months. It is worth considering the length of contract you sign up to as breaking some contracts before their end date can be very costly. Pay monthly agreements usually have additional free, or small payment services you can add to make cheap calls abroad.

Postal Service

If you want to send letters or packages you can choose between Royal Mail or a number of independent courier services. Post is delivered Monday to Saturday in the UK, although some independent services will deliver on a Sunday.

For Royal Mail there are a number of different services you can send post by depending on when you want your post to arrive.

First Class

This should usually arrive the next day (to a UK address) unless it is posted on a Saturday.

Second Class

Mail is cheaper to send and will usually arrive on the third day after posting. Posting costs vary depending on the weight and size of the letter or package and whether it is sent to an address in the UK or abroad. More information can be found on the [Royal Mail](#) website.

Sending mail abroad

There are two options to send letters and packages abroad, airmail and surface mail. Airmail usually arrives within three days to western Europe and four to five days to the rest of the world. Surface mail is cheaper than airmail but takes a lot longer to arrive at its destination, around two weeks to western Europe, four weeks to eastern Europe and eight weeks to the rest of the world.

Urgent and valuable mail

If you are sending valuable items or urgent mail the Post Office has a range of special delivery and signed-for services. If you go into a Post Office branch they will be able to advise you on the most appropriate service for your package. You can send post from Post Offices found locally throughout the UK.



7.0

Safety





Safety

* In coastal areas this can also connect you to the Coastguard

The UK is generally a safe country to live, with low rates of violence and street crime. However, as with anywhere there may be times when there are risks to you, your family and belongings, but there are things you can do to reduce these risks.

The UK's [Crime Stoppers](#) and [Neighbourhood Watch](#) websites provide practical guidance and advice for keeping safe in all sorts of situations such as, your personal safety, on the streets and public transport and looking after your belongings, as well as safety at home, theft and identity fraud.

You can also refer to [GOV.UK](#) for information on the UK law, reporting crimes and keeping safe.

Emergencies

If you witness or are involved in an emergency situation there is one number to call that can connect you to the three* emergency services – the Police Service, the Fire Service and the Ambulance/Medical Service. All three Services can be contacted by dialling 999.

You can dial 999 from any phone free of charge. If you need to call from a mobile you can do so without the need to enter the pin or password. Dialling 999 for any of the three emergency services should only be done in serious circumstances.

When you call 999 you will be asked which of the three services you would like to be connected to.

The Police Service

Take a look at the [Police](#) website for information on when it is appropriate to dial 999, and what situations should be dealt with by using the non-emergency number (dial 101 for non emergency situations) and which situations should be reported to your local council.

The Fire Service

You should call 999 for the Fire Service in the event of being caught in, or witnessing a fire. The [Fire Service](#) website provides information on contacting the fire service in the event of an emergency as well as general fire safety advice.

The Ambulance/Medical Service

You should call 999 and request the Ambulance/medical service when you are or you witness someone who is seriously ill, injured or their life is at risk.

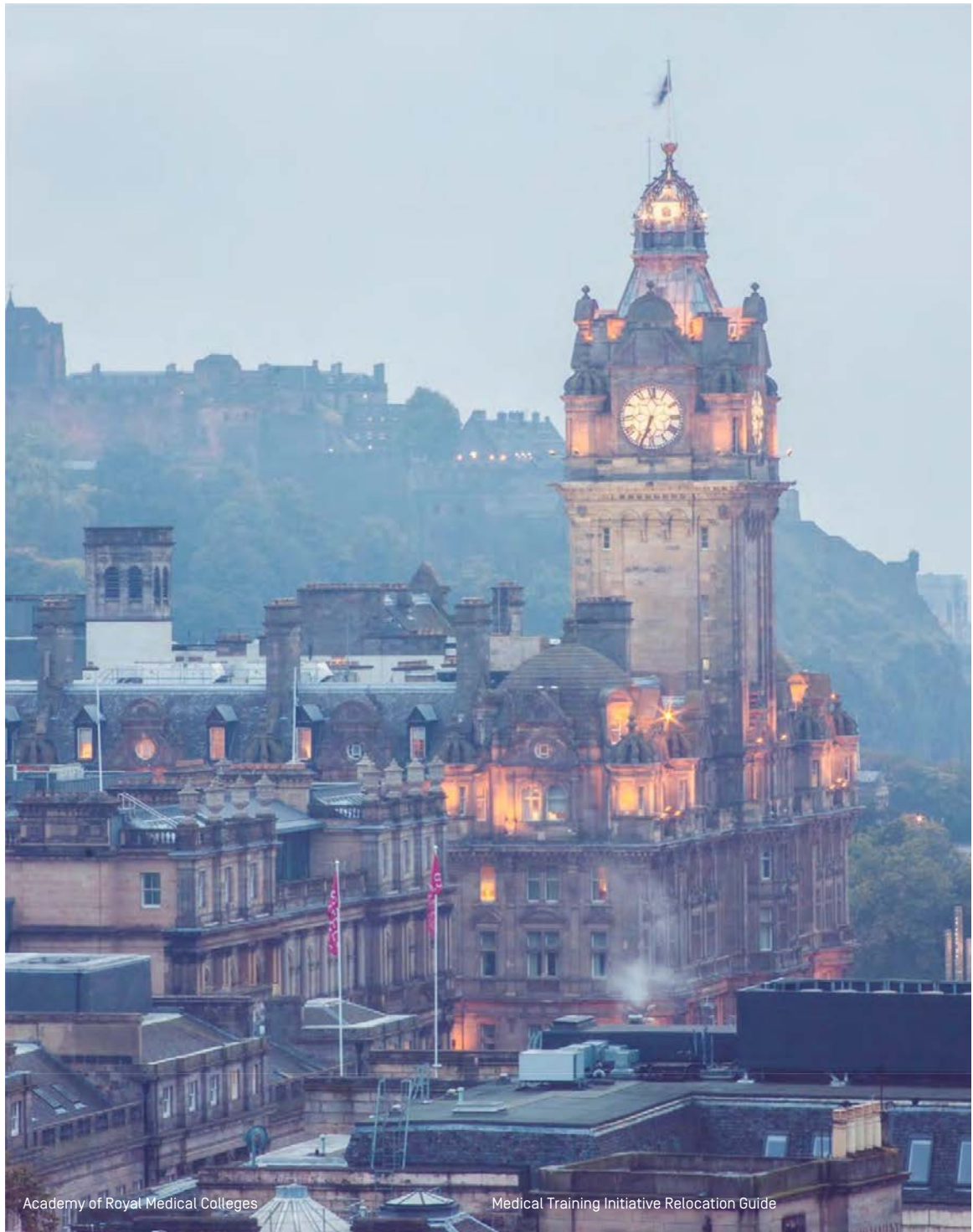
The [NHS](#) website (England only) details this, as well as other healthcare services which should be used in non-emergency situations, such as going to an NHS Walk-in centre or making your own way to a local A&E department. The [NHS24](#) website provides this information if you are in Scotland, and [NHS Direct](#) in Wales.

If you urgently need medical help or advice but it's not a life-threatening situation, you can call 111 the NHS non-emergency number.



8.0

Culture





Culture

The UK is classed politically as a liberal democracy. Whilst there is still a prominent monarchy, the concentration of political power is found in Parliament where elected MPs vote on legislation and policies. The UK is made up of four countries: England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. These countries all have very different characters and identities.

The UK is diverse and multi-cultural where people of all backgrounds are welcome and their involvement in society and communities is embraced. Employers, businesses and service providers are required by law not to discriminate against anyone based on their age, sex, sexual orientation, race, colour, ethnic/national origin, gender (including those undergoing gender reassignment or identifying as non-binary), disability, marital or civil partner status or religious beliefs (or lack of). See the [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) website for more details on this.

Religion

Everyone in the UK has the right to religious freedom and there are many different faiths practised within the UK. Although Christianity is the major religion of the UK, all world religions are represented and Mosques, Sikh Temples, Synagogues, Hindu and Buddhist places of worship can be seen alongside Christian churches from Anglican to Roman Catholic as well as Non-Conformist and Orthodox.

It is more common to find a greater mix of religions and places of worship in the larger UK cities, because of their diverse nature. If you are moving further out from the cities then you may need to travel further to visit your chosen place of worship.

Language

Many languages can also be heard spoken in the UK alongside English. Around 140,000 UK residents don't have English as their first language. The most widely spoken are Polish, Punjabi, Urdu, Bengali and Gujarati. Cantonese and Mandarin are the main Chinese dialects spoken. Again it is more common to hear a variety of languages in the larger cities.

Courses in English for Medical Professionals run across the country by numerous providers and English language schools. They are aimed specifically at improving doctor's language

using terminology you are likely to come across in your professional life.

The [British Council](https://www.britishcouncil.org) and the [British Broadcasting Corporation](https://www.bbc.com/learningenglish) (BBC) also have free online English language courses that could help you improve your language skills. You may also find it helpful to listen to local radio stations to aid your understanding of local phrases or colloquialisms.

Social customs

Although stereotypically viewed as polite, shy and restrained, British people can be very warm and friendly, if you start a conversation you will usually find people are happy to speak to you.

Greeting

People shake hands when they are first introduced or at formal occasions. The British tend not to greet with a kiss or a hug except with relatives or close friends. When addressing people, it is common practice to call young people and friends by their first name, otherwise Mr or Mrs (or another title e.g. Dr) followed by the person's family name (until they invite you to use their first name).

Tipping

It's customary to tip 10% (known as service charge) at a restaurant. This would typically be detailed on the menu or bill, and is not expected at pubs, cars or cafes.

Etiquette

Some basic things to be aware of:

– Punctuality

The British tend to be punctual, and being on time is important to them.

– Queuing

Queuing is customary, people wait their turn in a line, and "queue jumping" is considered bad manners.

– Tipping

It's customary to tip 10% (known as service charge) at a restaurant. This is not expected at pubs, bars or cafes.



Useful dates

The UK has a number of public holidays and celebrations.

English Public Holidays

(where these fall on a weekend, the first following Monday is substituted as the holiday day)

New Year's day	[1 January]
Good Friday	[March/April, varies from year to year]
Easter Monday	[March/April, varies from year to year]
May Day bank holiday	[first Monday in May]
Spring bank holiday	[last Monday in May]
Summer bank holiday	[last Monday in August]
Christmas Day	[25 December]
Boxing Day	[26 December]

Other dates generally acknowledged

12th night	[5 January]
Valentine's day	[14 February]
St David's Day	[1 March, Wales]
Mother's day	[a Sunday in March, varies each year]
St Patrick's Day	[17 March, Ireland]
April Fool's day	[1 April]
Father's day	[a Sunday in June, varies each year]
Halloween	[31 October]
Bonfire Night	[5 November]
Remembrance day	[11 November]
St Andrews Day	[30 November, Scotland]



9.0

Access to the Best Training



Access to the Best Training

The MTI scheme is a valuable training opportunity and we expect all MTI Doctors to have access to the same training services available to UK trainees. There are several things that you can do to ensure that you have the best chance of accessing opportunities and the resources available to you. Remember to approach these discussions with a clear idea of what your development ideas are.

When you meet with your supervising consultant, take this opportunity to find out:

- Who your educational supervisor is
- When your first meeting will be to discuss your academic objectives for this year
- Who your colleagues are
- If there is a mentoring scheme
- How often you will meet to discuss your progress and key development areas.

The following tips encourage you to take your training into your own hands. When workloads are high training may feel like a low priority, but there are ways to make sure your needs do not get forgotten and ensure you develop at every possible opportunity.

- When you see your supervising consultant, make sure you encourage two-way conversation to inform them of your recent achievements or challenges, and ask them for their advice and feedback. You must also provide direction to your consultant based on what your training needs are and how they develop
- When appropriate, explain your background and experiences to your supervisor, and have a constructive discussion about how they may differ from the prevailing culture in practice in the UK. Some sensitive patient cases are best discussed with the patient and your supervisor to ensure that the most appropriate outcome is pursued
- Care in the UK is patient-centred. The NHS expects doctors to make the patient's experience central to the overall delivery of care. Patient expectations of what makes a 'good-doctor' could mean including and

respecting them in decisions about their care, building rapport, maintaining a friendly presence and putting patients at ease. These are all essential skills in UK practice. Feel comfortable to ask your colleagues for suggestions and feedback on how to build on these skills. Sometimes it could be as simple as smiling more.

Understanding the Patient

You may sometimes feel unsure about family/social/work structures in the UK. You can ask your colleagues or local social services for guidance in dealing with patients with relationship/housing/social problems. As you will be aware, there are many social and economic impacts to health issues and it's important to discuss how the patient's work, family and daily routines could be impacted by illness.

Back to Basics

Good history taking skills are imperative. It may be useful to observe your colleagues for tips on communication techniques and new ways of informing and questioning the patient. Knowing the facts of an illness is crucial for life-saving medical practice, but being approachable enough for the patients to tell you their concerns can also be life-saving.

Know how to use your skills

You may have more experience than your colleagues, or less, but it is important that you know what your skills are and how best to apply them in your new environment. When writing up your objectives, make a list of all your competencies and qualities which you may pass on to your contemporaries.

Relationships with colleagues

In the UK there is a strong emphasis on equality in the workplace. It is important for all NHS staff to be treated equally – from the cleaner to the professor. Everyone brings their own particular area of expertise so teamwork is essential for the benefit of the patient. Everybody should be treated with respect. Simple gestures such as saying 'please' and 'thank you' will improve the quality of life at work and bring benefit to the patient.

Dialects & Colloquialisms

When speaking to patients and colleagues, it is important to sound confident. Learning local phrases or colloquialisms will help you to understand your patients and be able to respond in a way that puts them at ease. If you don't understand strong accents or some cultural references, it could be useful to ask a colleague to support you.



*Please note if your query is considered to predate your BMA membership, assistance may be limited to telephone and email advice only.

A practical book for overseas doctors, called *Manual of English for the Overseas Doctor* by Joy Parkinson (Churchill Livingstone, 1998) may help familiarise doctors with the colloquial English language spoken in their clinical work. The text includes case histories, phrasal verbs, sample letters with relevant issues such as audit and trust-hospital organisation, new social changes and the language implications for doctors.

General Medical Council (GMC)

Being a successful doctor in the UK is about more than clinical competence. Doctors working in the UK need to know and apply the principles and values set out in the GMC's core guidance *Good Medical Practice*. The General Medical Council have developed a [Promoting Professionalism: Welcome to the UK](#) tool in order to aid overseas Doctors' insight into their level of knowledge and understanding of how the standards apply in daily practice. It also contains useful self-assessment tools.

British Medical Association (BMA)

The [BMA](#) is a professional body for doctors in the UK. It works closely with the GMC and supports Doctors with employment related issues. For doctors who qualified overseas, the BMA provides immigration advice to those who are training or working in the UK while on a visa. All doctors, regardless of membership, can also sign up to a free personalised immigration alert service, keeping them up to date with changes that may affect their eligibility to work in the UK.

The BMA can advise Doctors on appropriate conduct, medical ethics and medical professionalism in the UK. It also provides a confidential [24 hours Counselling and Doctors Advice service](#), where Doctors can anonymously discuss issues such as stress, bullying, GMC concerns, depression, debt etc.

MTI Doctors are welcome to [join the BMA](#) to access their support and a membership package including access to the British Medical Journal (BMJ), expert guidance in difficult situations, CPD workshops and webinars.

Useful Links & Contacts

- [Academy of Medical Royal Colleges](#)
- [GMC](#)
- [Deaneries/Local Education Training Boards](#)
- [UK Visas and Immigration](#)
- [NHS \(England\)](#)
- [NHS \(Scotland\)](#)
- [NHS \(Wales\)](#)
- [HSC \(Northern Ireland\)](#)
- [British Medical Association](#)
- [BMA Counselling and Doctor Advisor Service](#)
- [BMA Immigration Advice Service](#)
- [Biometric Residence Permit](#)

Abbreviations

Below are list a of some useful acronyms and abbreviations that you might come across in during your settling in period in the UK.

AoMRC	Academy of Medical Royal Colleges
BMA	British Medical Association
BMJ	British Medical Journal
BRP	Biometric Residence Permit
DVLA	Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency
GDC	General Dental Council
GMC	General Medical Council
LEA	Local Education Authority
NACPDE	National Advice Centre for Postgraduate Dental Education
NHS	National Health Service
NIN	National Insurance Number
UKVI	United Kingdom Visa and Immigration

The NHS Confederation also has a web-based tool the [Acronym Buster](#) to help decipher over 700 commonly used NHS acronyms.

Academy of Medical Royal Colleges

10 Dallington Street
London
EC1V 0DB
United Kingdom

Telephone: +44 (0)20 7490 6810
Facsimile: +44 (0)20 7470 6811
Email: academy@aomrc.org.uk
Website: aomrc.org.uk

Registered Charity Number:
1056565

© The Academy of Royal Medical Colleges 2018
All rights reserved
