

Pillar four: Maximising personal and professional growth

The fourth pillar is about maximising personal and professional growth to ensure that all internationally recruited staff can fully realise their potential.

Research shows that a common driver for international nurses to migrate to the UK is career progression and professional development. However, analysis reveals that progression is slower and less frequent for international nurses than for domestic nurses at all bands. The WRES 2022 report also highlights that just 44.4 per cent of BME NHS staff (which may include internationally recruited staff) believe their trust provides equal opportunities for career progression or promotion.

Consider the skills and prior experience of your international staff. Once they have transitioned to working in the NHS, implement processes and opportunities to facilitate and accelerate their development.

Your retention strategy should focus on enabling all international staff to achieve their career aspirations. Their ongoing personal and professional development will also lead to job satisfaction and in-turn a feeling of being valued by their employer. International staff should have access to the same personal and professional development opportunities as your UK workforce and should be tailored to each

individual's preferences and career aspirations. As part of this process, they should be offered an annual personal development review, and a personal development plan should be agreed.

Maximising personal and professional growth of internationally-educated colleagues



NHS - Maximising Personal and Professional Growth of Internationally-Educated Colleagues

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How to maximise personal and professional growth



For international staff

Career conversations

Line managers should hold regular career conversations with international staff to understand future aspirations and how they can be supported through clear career pathways. Holding career clinics with groups of international staff can widen their understanding of available career pathways, where to find roles, how to access education and successfully applying and interviewing for roles in the NHS. Also consider how to use interview feedback to support future applications.

Many international colleagues move to the UK with their spouses and families. There are many career opportunities within the NHS which may be suitable for spouses/partners/ family members of internationally recruited colleagues, and you may wish to make them aware of career clinics.

Coaching

While managers play an important role in supporting the development of staff, professional coaching can be effective in providing the specialised training and expertise in career development, personal growth, and leadership that managers may not possess. Coaching can be tailored to the specific needs and goals of the individual and does not replace day-to-day managerial support but complements it with longer-term career planning and self-development. See the Leadership Academy for further information and support.

Leadership programmes

Some organisations run leadership programmes to support career progression for international staff and to increase the number of those moving into management positions.

In 2022, NHS England provided funding through its Accelerated Development Transformation Fund to support trusts to scope and develop innovation and transformation projects that focus on ways to recognise prior experience of internationally educated nurses and midwives; provide ethical opportunities to directly recruit into Band 6+ roles; and to accelerate the development of international nurse/midwife talent identified within the workforce. 22 trusts and systems across the country successfully bid for this funding and are delivering these projects.

Insights and case studies will be shared via [NHS England's Futures platform](#).

Financial wellbeing

Health and wellbeing includes financial wellbeing. After five years of living and working in the UK, international colleagues have the right to apply for indefinite leave to remain. This can be a costly process, particularly for colleagues with families. Having the right to stay can support feelings of belonging so it is important to support international colleagues through this process by directing them to where they can receive financial advice or support. Some organisations have developed a loan scheme for eligible staff applying for indefinite leave to remain, helping to ease the financial burden of this process. NHS Employers' [financial wellbeing web page](#) supports you to develop a robust approach to support your staff with financial wellbeing in the workplace.

Line manager supported career development

NHS Employers · Ruby Line Manager Supported Career Development

For leaders, managers and the wider workforce

Role models

Research shows that following successful career progression, senior international nurses use their positions to influence change and lead and inspire other international and domestic nurses to maximise their potential. Sharing these career success stories on a regular basis will inspire new staff, provide an opportunity to hear about their experience and challenges and showcase the career pathways available.

Mentors

A mentor can support your international staff to develop and take their next career steps, by providing access to their networks and championing on their behalf.

Watch the video of Jeni's story below to hear how, in her current role as international recruitment and ethnic minorities nurse adviser at NHS England, she has championed the ethnic minority workforce and been an inspirational figure for international recruitment.

Jeni's story

Good practice examples

Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust

The Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust's (RBFT) Aspiring Band 6 Development Programme is a six-month programme delivered using a blended approach of on-line and face to face training. The aim is to recognise talent within the existing workforce and to empower these individuals to perform to their full potential.

It offers a combination of facilitated self-reflection to gain insight into current leadership attributes and possible areas for growth, one-to-one coaching and action learning sets, leadership and management webinars and the opportunity to shadow senior members of the clinical team. For the duration of the programme, participants are allocated an experienced mentor who will provide support and guidance to enable them to gain strategic awareness and facilitate wider exposure to the leadership roles that internationally educated nurses and midwives aspire to.

From the pilot cohort of internationally educated nurses and midwives, between September 2022 to March 2023, 80 per cent of participants who completed the programme secured a Band 6 position within nine months.

Hampshire and Isle of Wight ICS

The Hampshire and Isle of Wight (HIOW) ICS has developed a fellowship programme for internationally educated nurses and midwives. The programme began in March 2023 with six successful candidates from acute and community NHS trusts. It offers 22.5 hours per month to undertake the fellowship and mentorship from a senior nurse, midwife, and/or AHP. The fellows work with stakeholders across the system to focus on the recruitment and retention agenda, sharing their experiences at local and regional forums, and lead a quality improvement project. In addition, HIOW ICS, in partnership with the Florence Nightingale Foundation and SimComm Academy, has developed an accelerated development programme for internationally educated nurses and midwives. The programme aims to enhance the leadership opportunities

for internationally educated nurses and midwives within the system, recognising the experience and skills of the registrants to support progression into Band 6 and 7 roles.

The Florence Nightingale Foundation conducted a five-day leadership programme that focused on personality preferences and performance in teams, personal presence and impact by the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts and stepping into authority and influencing change. The programme concluded with an award ceremony where participants shared their reflections and learning.

SimComm Academy conducted a standalone workshop that was co-designed with the content developed by an internationally educated nursing fellow. The workshop was intended for recruiting managers supporting the recruitment of internationally educated nurses and midwives. The focus of the sessions was to raise awareness of the experiences including cultural barriers and biases within the recruitment process through simulation.

Herts and West Essex Integrated Care System

Herts and West Essex ICS identified that across the system, some international nurses were not progressing into higher banded roles or were unprepared for NHS recruitment processes despite having the necessary qualifications, skills, and experience.

Supported by NHS England funding, the ICS created a Band 6 development coach role to support the career advancement of international nurses. The purpose of this role was to ensure a holistic approach to the development of the international nurses' experience, to help them to achieve their full potential, wherever that may be.

The success of this role has led to the appointment of three further development coaches in Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes ICS, Suffolk and North East Essex ICS, and Norfolk and Waveney ICS. The coaches are all qualified domestic or international nurses or midwives who have worked in the NHS, and they provide coaching and mentoring support for international nurses at any stage of their career, including induction. They discuss career development and help to unblock career progression barriers such as a lack of confidence, writing job applications or interview technique, to support their career aspirations.

In June 2023, following the success of the career development coach work to support the career advancement of international nurses, a mobile phone app – InterN – was created. The purpose of the app is to increase access to not just career development support but pastoral care for internationally educated staff by providing digitally driven information and resources all in one place.

The content for the app grew from discussions with international recruits about their challenges and experiences of living and working in the UK. The app is available to all recruits to support them with adapting to their new role and residence and provides information on housing, health and wellbeing, finances, transport, with an FAQ section covering topics such as uniform, driving and pregnancy, along with other resources. Following the successful launch of the app, other regions in the country have also begun creating a local version of the app.

The app has been launched across the East of England region and is available for any international recruit to download before they arrive in the UK or once they arrive and is also available on the [Stay and Thrive FutureNHS platform](#).

Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust

Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust offers tailored career progression support for its international nurses. The trust listened to feedback from international nurses who were already working in the trust to understand why some were not progressing in their careers. For new international nurses joining the trust, it was important to understand their motivations and how the trust could support them to achieve their goals. Using this feedback, the team identified three areas of focus: skills, knowledge and showcasing capabilities to support career progression. Some activities include:

- promoting the update of CPD to build knowledge
- developing leadership skills through the trust's BME leadership programme, which is open to all staff groups across banding
- delivering career progression workshops to discuss what roles are available in the NHS and share lived experience and career stories from existing international nurses.

Hull University Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

Hull University Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust developed a 'grow your own' programme for international nurses in late 2020. The aim is to reduce workforce vacancies, promote the trust as a great place to work and develop career pathways for existing international healthcare support workers. The programme is supported from board to ward and helps the international healthcare support workers to qualify as registered nurses in the organisation. Six have now received their registered nurse status with more planned for in 2023.

Nurse pathways

NHS Employers · Ruby Nurse Pathways

Tools and further reading

- NHS England's Health Careers [web page](#) includes links to resources and support to help international staff to plan their next career steps. Hear from six internationally recruited nurses at different stages of their career about how the NHS has supported them to achieve their ambitions.

- Resources are available on the campaign resource centre for NHS and local authorities to help support the retention of internationally recruited nurses.
- The Medical Workforce Race Equality Standard (MWRES) report 2021 identified that BME doctors have a poorer experience of medicine than their white colleagues, feeling less supported, less included and less able to prosper. NHS England has announced a First Five programme of priority domains intended to help tackle these racial disparities.
- Direct your international nurses to the CNO Nursing Professional Development Programme, which is a central repository and signposting platform for information on national and regional nursing professional development programmes for all nurses.
- The RCN offers members a careers service with information and resources to support professional development.
- The BMA offers overseas doctors a range of webinars, coaching courses, workshops and e-learning modules for professional development.
- UNISON offers members a range of courses and workshops to support professional development.
- Take a look at the Professional Development Guidebook produced by the CapitalNurse international recruitment consortium. You might find it a helpful resource to support the professional development of your international nurses.
- NHS England's report The expectations of line managers in relation to people management creates a clear view on the expectations of line managers in the service in relation to people management and the implications for provision of people services.

Mayumi's story

How will you play your part?

Reflect on what you have read and consider how you or your team will play your part.

I/we will...