

Welcome to General Practice in Northern Ireland



Northern Ireland Medical
& Dental Training Agency
January 2018



Dear Doctor

I am delighted that you are considering coming to Northern Ireland to work within General Practice.

If you are joining us having never worked as a NHS GP, or coming back to general practice after a break, you are very welcome.

NIMDTA offers support to GPs who have previously been in practice and desire to return to practice in Northern Ireland. It is also active in the induction of GPs to the workforce in Northern Ireland.

Registering for the scheme means you will be joining, or coming back to one of the most rewarding, challenging, flexible and diverse careers in medicine.

Information on how to apply can be found on NIMDTA (Northern Ireland Medical Dental Training Agency) website: <http://www.nimdtg.gov.uk/general-practice/gp-career-development/gp-returner-scheme/>

Dr Claire Loughrey
Director of Postgraduate General Practice Education
NIMDTA

Contents

	Page
Welcome to NI	4
Working as a GP in NI	5
General Information	7
Travelling to NI	9
Immigration	10
Finances	11
Accommodation	12
Family Life	13
Leisure & Tourism	14
Safety	15
Healthcare	16

Welcome to Northern Ireland



Described as “a land of fantastical landscapes, warm welcomes, dramatic history and enduring legend”, Northern Ireland is renowned for its sports, people, food, film industry, history and scenery.

Our capital city (Belfast) was named the best UK City in the 2016 Guardian and Observer Travel Awards, and we have been named “the friendliest place in the UK” in a 2016 survey by The Telegraph. A recent ONS survey found that “people in Northern Ireland reported higher average ratings of life satisfaction, feeling that things they do in life are worthwhile, and more happiness when compared with the rest of the UK”.

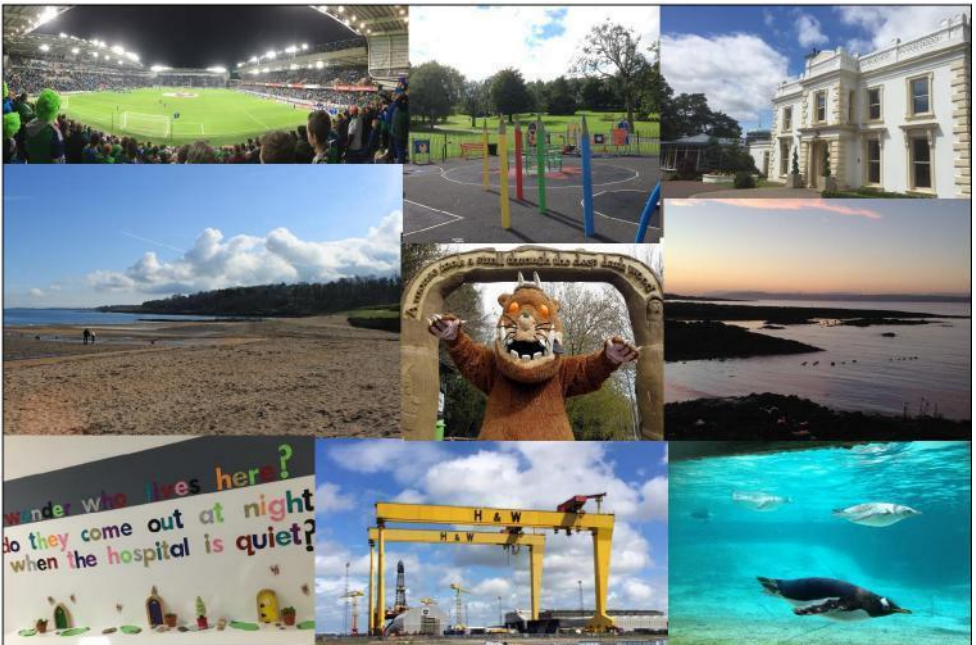
Further tourist information is available at:

www.discovernorthernireland.com

www.travelnorthernireland.co.uk [www.ireland.com/en-](http://www.ireland.com/en-gb/destinations/northern-ireland)

[gb/destinations/northern-ireland](http://www.ireland.com/en-gb/destinations/northern-ireland)

www.tripadvisor.co.uk



Healthcare in Northern Ireland

It is currently a very exciting time to be involved in healthcare in Northern Ireland.

In October 2016, a 10 year approach to transforming health and social care was launched, “Health and Wellbeing 2026: Delivering Together”. This ambitious plan was the response to the report produced by an Expert Panel led by Professor Bengoa tasked with considering the best configuration of Health and Social Care Services in Northern Ireland

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/health/health-and-wellbeing-2026-delivering-together.pdf>



www.belfasttrust.hscni.net

www.northerntrust.hscni.net

www.westerntrust.hscni.net

www.setrust.hscni.net

www.southerntrust.hscni.net

www.publichealth.hscni.net

There are a total of 6 Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts in Northern Ireland. Five of these provide integrated health and social care services across Northern Ireland. They manage and administer hospitals, health centres, residential homes, day centres and other health and social care facilities and they provide a wide range of health and social care services to the community. The sixth Trust is the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service, which operates a single Northern Ireland wide service to people in need and aims to improve the health and well-being of the community through the delivery of high quality ambulance services. NHS prescriptions have been free to N. Ireland residents registered with a doctor from 2010.

General Practice in Northern Ireland

There are over 350 GP Practices throughout Northern Ireland.

Any doctor wishing to work as an independent and unsupervised GP in Northern Ireland is required to:

1. be on the GMC's GP Register
2. hold a GMC licence to practise
3. be on the Northern Ireland Primary Medical Performers List (NI PMPL).

To apply to the NI PMPL, an application form can be downloaded at the address below (or completed electronically). If you are submitting this application electronically with an imported signature, you will be required to sign a copy when you attend for identity check for an Enhanced Criminal Records check.

<http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/1813.htm>

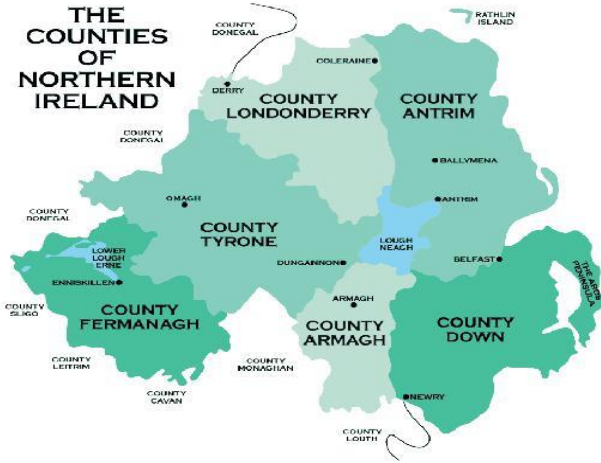
If you are registered as a GP on the Northern Ireland Primary Medical Performers List (PMPL) you can apply to work in one of the 5 GP Out of Hours provider organisations. The link below provides more information.

<http://www.gpoutofhours.hscni.net/working-in-gp-out-of-hours/>

Northern Ireland is the only part of the United Kingdom that has a unified model of Federations governed by a unified Members Agreement covering its entire population. It has been both led and funded by GPs themselves. Currently there are 17 Federations covering approximately 1.8 million patient population. An average GP Federation is circa 100,000 patients with 20 practices. Each has been established as a Community Interest Company Limited by Guarantee in the not for profit sector.

Training places in NI for those wanting to become GPs have risen significantly in the past two years. The majority of these training posts have been filled but there remains a GP shortage particularly in rural localities.

General Information



Location: Northern Ireland lies in the north-east part of Ireland, and is part of the United Kingdom.

What is the difference between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland?

The Republic of Ireland is now a completely separate country and has no longer any formal bond to the UK. Northern Ireland. On the other hand, it is still a part of the UK (the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), together with England, Scotland and Wales.

Population: 1.8 million

Currency: Great British Pound (£)

Language: English, Irish

Calling Code: 00 44 + area code

Weather: The weather in Northern Ireland is traditionally changeable. The temperature usually stays above freezing, so there is rarely snow or ice, but at any time of year it is advisable to be prepared for rain. Summer months sometimes see prolonged periods of sunshine. Detailed information is available at: http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/forecast/area/northern_ireland

Travelling to Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland is easy to get to, and also easy to get around. We have three airports with frequent, low-cost flights throughout the UK and beyond, excellent fast ferry links to England and Scotland, plus good roads, buses and trains take you where you want to go with minimum fuss.

By Air

Belfast has 2 airports: George Best Belfast City airport www.belfastcityairport.com and Belfast International airport www.belfastairport.com.

These airports are serviced by:

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| ☐ Flybe | • Aer Lingus |
| ☐ British Airways | • City Wing |
| ☐ KLM | • Jet2 |
| ☐ Easyjet | • Ryanair |
| ☐ United Airlines | • Thomson |
| ☐ Thomas Cook | • Virgin Atlantic |

It may also be convenient to fly via Dublin Airport www.dublinairport.com, which is only 1 hour 40 minutes' drive from Belfast.

Londonderry/Derry is served by the City of Derry Airport from where there are flights to Glasgow, Liverpool and London Stansted.

By Boat

Northern Ireland has first-class ferry connections with Scotland, England and the Isle of Man. New, high-speed vessels, enhanced on-board amenities, entertainment and shopping make the ferry a very attractive way to go. Further information can be found at:

P&O Ferries: www.poferries.com/en/portal

Stenaline: www.stenaline.co.uk



Public Transport



Translink is Northern Ireland's integrated bus and rail public transport company. Transport routes and journey planners are available at: www.translink.co.uk

- ☒ The Metro service operates buses in and around Belfast
- ☒ The Ulsterbus service operates buses across Northern Ireland
- ☒ NI Railways provides rail services across Northern Ireland

Driving

Driving Licence - A licence is required to drive in Northern Ireland. A UK driving licence covers you for driving in NI, but if you are from outside the UK there may be different driving licence requirements. Full details are available at: www.nidirect.gov.uk

Insurance - You must have at least Third Party Insurance if you wish to drive in the UK.

MOT (Ministry of Transport test) - Vehicles must meet specific technical and safety requirements, and you will have to pay for UK registration. If the vehicle is more than four years old, you will need an M.O.T. certificate showing that the vehicle is roadworthy.



Moving to Northern Ireland: Immigration

Note: If you are a non-EU/EEA/Swiss national you should not travel to Belfast via the Republic of Ireland unless your visa permits travel in the Republic.



As there is no border control between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland you may not meet with any immigration officers and cannot activate your visa on entry to the UK. Failure to activate your visa may cause complications with your visa and potentially with your employment.

Non EU Doctors - Non EU doctors require a visa to live and work in the UK. UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) controls immigration to the UK from outside the EU. There are a range of visa types which permit work in the UK. To find out what type of visa you require visit www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration

EU Nationals - European Economic Area (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Romania, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, and Sweden) and Swiss nationals must provide documentary evidence of their right to live and work in the UK. Acceptable documents include: Passport, National identity card or Residence permit.

Moving to Northern Ireland: Finances



NIMDTA is not able to offer financial advice or guidance. It is recommended you seek your own independent Financial Advice. The following websites may be useful:

www.unbiased.co.uk; www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk

National Insurance Number

To work in the UK you will require a National Insurance Number (NI No). If you do not have a National Insurance Number you will need to request one as soon as possible from the Social Security Agency (SSA). Further information is available at www.nidirect.gov.uk or call **0345 600 0645**.

Bank Account

Setting up a new bank account can be challenging and it is recommended that doctors moving to work in Northern Ireland check with their existing bank, to see if they have a relationship with a bank that has a presence in Northern Ireland. The main Northern Ireland Banks include: Ulster Bank, Santander, Danske Bank and First Trust. www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/getting-current-account

Cost of Living

The cost of living in Belfast compared to major cities in England, Scotland and Wales has been summarised below. Further information is available at:

www.Numbeo.com/cost-of-living

	Belfast	Cardiff	Glasgow	London
Rent per month (apartment 1 bedroom city centre)	£525.00	£614.80	£600.00	£1679.40
Rent per month (apartment 1 bedroom outside of city centre)	£394.64	£464.67	£427.59	£1179.02
Utilities (electric, heating, water) for 85m2 apartment	£74.74	£104.50	£125.91	£141.71
Childcare (preschool, private, monthly 1 child)	£625.00	£918.75	£700.00	£1036.27
1 min of prepaid mobile tariff	£0.13	£0.14	£0.15	£0.14
Internet (60 mbps, unlimited data, cable)	£21.36	£22.72	£24.12	£24.34
Fitness Club	£23.77	£25.39	£28.85	£46.06

Moving to Northern Ireland: Accommodation



There are many options for accommodation in Northern Ireland. It is worth remembering that many trainee job placements are only for 6 months in a certain area, so this is worth looking into before committing to any longer leases.

Accommodation options:

Air B&B:

www.AirBnB.co.uk

B&Bs:

www.ireland-bnb.co.uk

Property rentals/sales:

www.propertynews.com

www.propertypal.co.uk

www.rightmove.co.uk

Moving to Northern Ireland: Community



Northern Ireland has its own Department for Communities and a variety of community groups covering a range of areas such as cultural, religious, residents and advocacy groups.

<http://www.communityni.org/organisations>

<http://www.migrationni.org/support-organisations>

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/>

Moving to Northern Ireland:



Family Life

Education

In Northern Ireland education is compulsory for all children between five and sixteen years of age and is normally free of charge. If you are moving to Northern Ireland with children of school age it is recommended you make arrangements before arriving as it can be challenging to find a place in a school at short notice. A list of schools in the Belfast area is available on the Belfast Education and Library Board website at www.belb.org.uk. You can search for schools by name or by entering your postal code to find a school near your accommodation.

Help and advice for parents on a range of educational issues is available on the website of the Department of Education, Northern Ireland at www.education-ni.gov.uk. The Department for Education has developed a policy to support newcomer children whose first language is not English.

Childcare Facilities

(Nursery, Crèche, Child-minder)

Similar to Schools it is difficult to find places at short notice.

A list of day nurseries with full day care in Northern Ireland is available at: www.daynurseries.co.uk, while a list of child-minders is found at: www.nicma.org/cms/find-a-childminder. When you find a facility you would like your children to attend, telephone and make an appointment to discuss whether there are places available for your child/children and to confirm the details.



Moving to Northern Ireland: Leisure & Tourism

Northern Ireland is rich in activities and leisure opportunities, including sight-seeing, sports, adventure activities and markets. Below is a short guide to relevant websites:



Surfing: www.outdoorni.com/activities/surfing/events/

Golf: www.top100golfcourses.co.uk/golf-courses/britain-ireland/northern-ireland

Food events: www.nigoodfood.com/

Film: www.northernirelandscreen.co.uk/

Tours: www.northernirelandtours.co.uk

Things to do in NI: <https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/Attractions-g186469-Activities->

Children's activities: www.ni4kids.com/whatson



Moving to Northern Ireland: Safety

It is worthwhile taking some time to think about protecting your property, your family and your personal safety.

Support and advice is provided via:

Police Service of Northern Ireland's (PSNI) website at <https://www.psni.police.uk/>

Crimestoppers Website at www.crimestoppers-uk.org/in-your-area/northern-ireland/

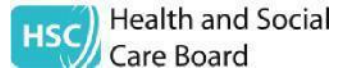
Hate Crime Unite Against Hate (UAH) is a local campaign which provides information on how to report hate crime and also provides support for victims. It also enables various stakeholders to report on projects relating to hate crime, as well as to share research, information and good practice. www.uniteagainsthate.org.uk/



Moving to Northern Ireland: Healthcare

On arrival to Northern Ireland you should register with a local GP Practice where you will be assigned to a doctor.

A geographical guide of local health centres is available at <http://servicefinder.hscni.net/>



Your doctor (also known as a General Practitioner (GP)) can treat most illnesses but may refer you to a hospital if you require tests or your medical condition is more serious. Our hospitals in Northern Ireland provide free healthcare. If you are involved in an accident or suddenly take ill, you may need to go to an Emergency Medicine Department.

The number to call for an ambulance is 999, and the ambulance will take you to the Emergency Department at the nearest hospital.



