



**Voluntary Bonding Scheme  
Terms and Conditions  
for Doctors  
2014**

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. Participation on the Voluntary Bonding Scheme (the Scheme) involves four phases: Registration of Interest, Confirmation on the Scheme, Participation and Payment.
- 1.2. In order to be eligible for payment, you must have had your Registration of Interest for the Scheme confirmed and have met the Scheme's Terms and Conditions during the Participation phase.
- 1.3. The Scheme is a voluntary process and you, not the Ministry of Health (the Ministry), are responsible for any employment decisions you may make based on your intended participation in the Scheme, including decisions about working in hard-to-staff communities and specialties.
- 1.4. You will not be eligible for any payment from the Scheme if you do not complete at least three full years (36 months) on the Scheme, in accordance with these Terms and Conditions.
- 1.5. You are responsible for notifying the Ministry of Health (or its nominated agent) of any change of address, email address or other contact details on an annual basis.
- 1.6. To be eligible for the Scheme, you must:
  - be a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident at the time you register your interest in joining the Scheme
  - have completed your final year of study in 2013 (unless you are undertaking General Practice Vocational Training, see 4.10) for your base qualification for your profession at an accredited New Zealand Training Institution (see clauses 1.7 – 1.10 below)
  - be registered, or be eligible to be registered with the Medical Council of New Zealand
  - be working, or intending to work, in the profession for which you have trained, for three to five years
  - be working, or intending to work, in a hard-to-staff community or specialty as per the eligibility criteria for Medicine (see clauses 4.2 – 4.10 below)
  - comply with all other terms and conditions of the Scheme (see Participation clauses below).

## **Education Prerequisites**

1.7. You must:

- have completed, in 2013, the requirements of a training programme for Medicine from the list of accredited institutions below; and
- be eligible to be registered with the Medical Council of New Zealand.

1.8. Accredited training institutions for Medicine are:

- University of Auckland
- University of Otago.

1.9. New Zealand citizens and permanent residents who gained their base professional qualifications from an overseas training institution in 2013 and who meet the registration requirements of the relevant Authority may be considered for the Scheme on a case-by-case basis, if they meet all other eligibility criteria and other Terms and Conditions of the Scheme.

## **Definition of a Graduate**

1.10. Eligible graduates are those who completed their studies in 2013 and can provide evidence of having done so, irrespective of when their graduation ceremony occurred.

## **2. Registration of Interest**

2.1. In order to be a participant on the Scheme, you must successfully register your interest and be confirmed on the Scheme.

2.2. To register your interest you must complete the online Registration of Interest application form. This involves you providing information to show that you meet, or intend to meet, the eligibility criteria of the Scheme.

2.3. A registration of interest is not an application for a place on the Scheme. The purpose of the Registration of Interest process is to obtain contact details for potential places on the Scheme. See below for information on confirmation on to the Scheme.

## **3. Scheme Confirmation**

3.1. There are limited places on the Scheme. Successfully registering your interest for the Scheme does not guarantee you will be confirmed on the Scheme.

3.2. A separate process to formally confirm you on the Scheme will follow

your Registration of Interest. You will be advised in writing whether your Registration of Interest is confirmed.

#### **4. Participation**

4.1. Once you are confirmed on the Scheme, your participation is influenced by your Commencement Date on the Scheme, Minimum Employment Requirements, Movement Between Hard-to-Staff Communities and/or Specialties, Breaks and Pauses, Parental Leave and any work you may undertake Working as a Locum. In order to be eligible to receive payment from the Scheme you must comply with the requirements of these terms and conditions.

#### **Eligibility Criteria**

##### *Doctors*

4.2. To be eligible for the Scheme, you must:

- prior to entering vocational training, work as a doctor in one of the hard-to-staff communities for doctors (see exception for the post graduate opportunity for GP trainees, 4.10) for up to two (and no more than three) years; **then**
- be accepted on, and be completing, a vocational training programme for one of the hard-to-staff specialties for doctors (see clauses 4.8 and 4.9 for further information) for the remainder of the three to five year bonding period.

4.3. Once in vocational training for a hard-to-staff specialty, you may work in any community and participate in any work required by the vocational training programme.

4.4. You may have up to three years to complete the two year requirement in a hard-to-staff community. However, no more than two of those three years in a hard-to-staff community will count towards your bonding period. The purpose of this provision is to allow participants adequate time to gain necessary experience prior to entering vocational training for a hard-to-staff specialty. Participants using this provision must spend at least two years in a hard-to-staff community. You must have entered vocational training for a hard-to-staff specialty by **1 July 2018**.

4.5. If you complete your vocational training before the end of the bonding period, you must continue to work in your hard-to-staff specialty to be eligible for the remaining payments.

4.6. For doctors, the eligible hard-to-staff communities on the Scheme are:

- Northland DHB
- Lakes DHB

- Tairāwhiti DHB
- Whanganui DHB
- Wairarapa DHB
- West Coast DHB
- South Canterbury DHB
- Taranaki DHB
- Southland Region
- Wairau Hospital
- Whakatane Hospital
- Thames Hospital.

4.7. Where communities are defined by reference to a DHB, the area is that specified for that DHB under the New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000.

4.8. The hard-to-staff specialties on the Scheme are:

- General Practice
- General Surgery
- Internal Medicine
- Psychiatry
- Pathology
- Rural Hospital Medicine
- Obstetrics and Gynaecology
- Emergency Medicine

4.9. These specialties are as listed by the Medical Council of New Zealand in the table of Vocational Scopes of Practice and Associated Prescribed Qualifications documented in the New Zealand Gazette of February 2012.

### **Postgraduate Entry Opportunity for General Practice Vocational Training**

4.10 Doctors who choose to undertake general practice vocational training for three years in a hard-to-staff training community, upon completion of up to PGY6 are eligible to enter the Voluntary Bonding Scheme. This is regardless of where you worked in New Zealand in your earlier years of post-graduate training. GP trainees that commenced general practice vocational training in December 2013 will be eligible to apply for the Scheme during the Registration of Interest process in 2014.

4.11 The 2014 hard-to-staff training communities for GPs on the Scheme are:

- South Canterbury DHB
- Southern DHB excluding Dunedin, Mosgiel and Invercargill
- Wairarapa DHB
- Hawkes Bay DHB

- Tairāwhiti DHB
- Taranaki DHB
- Lakes DHB
- Wanganui DHB
- Midcentral DHB
- West Coast DHB
- BOP DHB (excluding Tauranga and Whakatane urban)
- Waikato DHB (excluding Hamilton and Cambridge)
- Canterbury (excluding Christchurch other than Banks Peninsula)
- Northland (excluding Whangarei urban)

4.12. Where communities are defined by reference to a DHB, the area is that specified for the DHB under the New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000.

### **Changes to Hard-to-Staff Communities, Specialties and Professions**

4.13. It is acknowledged that a number of other communities, specialties and professions may face difficulty in recruiting and retaining graduates now and in the future. The Ministry reserves the right to extend the eligibility criteria to other communities, specialties and/or professions as part of its periodic review of the Scheme.

### **Commencement Date**

4.14. Your time on the Scheme is calculated from your Commencement Date of employment. Your Commencement Date is the date you begin working in a hard-to-staff community following graduation.

4.15. If you have indicated in your registration of interest that you intend to shift into a hard-to-staff community or specialty, your Commencement Date is the date your employment in a hard-to-staff community or specialty begins.

4.16. If you have not commenced employment in accordance with these requirements by **30 June 2015**, you will no longer be eligible for the Scheme. If you have registered for the postgraduate entry opportunity for GPs, employment must have commenced in December 2013.

### **Minimum Employment Requirements**

4.17. To be eligible for the Scheme doctors must be employed on a minimum 0.6 FTE basis.

4.18. You will not be eligible for payment from the Scheme if you undertake substantive or continuous locum work (see clauses 4.30–4.33).

- 4.19. You are responsible for verifying that the FTE requirements have been met and will be required to make a declaration and provide a certificate of service from your employer(s) before each bonding payment is made (see Payment section below).

### **Moving Between Hard-to-Staff Communities and/or Specialties**

*Moving between communities when only community criteria apply:*

- 4.20. When fulfilling your hard-to-staff community requirements, you may move between communities, provided you move to a community that is on the hard-to-staff community list for the 2014 intake.

*Moving between communities when only specialty criteria apply:*

- 4.21. If you work in a hard-to-staff specialty you will not be restricted as to the community in which you work, provided you continue to work in a hard-to-staff specialty.

- 4.22. GPs who have entered the Scheme from the date of commencing vocational training and are training in a hard-to-staff training community may move between training communities, provided you move to a community that is on the hard-to-staff training community list for 2014.

*Moving between specialties:*

- 4.23. You may move between hard-to-staff specialties, provided you move to a specialty that is on the hard-to-staff specialty list for the 2014 intake.

### **Breaks and Pauses in the Term of Service**

- 4.24. You can take up to 14 weeks' absence in a 12 month period from your position in a hard-to-staff community and/or specialty without affecting your eligibility for bonding payments. Such an absence is known as a "break".

- 4.25. A "pause" is any time beyond the 14 weeks break allowance that you spend away from the hard-to-staff community and/or specialty. Time taken as pauses must be added to the term necessary to complete the bond, and no more than ten weeks may be added during the course of one year. This means that no more than 50 weeks can be added to the five-year bonding term.

- 4.26. Breaks and pauses are to include any leave from employment, with or without pay, including normal employment leave entitlements, such as annual leave.



## **Parental Leave**

- 4.27. You may take up to 52 weeks' parental leave, in accordance with the Parental Leave and Employment Act 1987 and remain on the Scheme.
- 4.28. Time spent on parental leave does not accrue towards your bonding period and must be made up. The bonding period will automatically restart as soon as you return to work in an eligible position.
- 4.29. Time spent on parental leave is separate to the break and pause provisions (see clauses 4.24 – 4.26 above).

## **Working as a Medical Locum**

- 4.30. If you undertake substantive or continuous locum work you will not be eligible for payment from the Scheme.
- 4.31. The Ministry defines “substantive” locum work as being a period of six weeks or more, but does not include:
- undertaking “additional duties” for your employer
  - undertaking locum work as a necessary part of a medical vocational training programme for a hard-to-staff specialty.
- 4.32. For the purposes of the Scheme, a locum is considered to be someone who:
- provides the services in place of another practitioner registered within the same scope of practice during that health professional's normal working hours.
- 4.33. When you apply for payments from the Scheme, you will be asked to confirm that you have not engaged in “substantive” locum work.

## **5. Payment**

- 5.1. You are responsible for initiating the first claim for payment after three full years (36 months) have been completed on the Scheme in accordance with these Terms and Conditions.
- 5.2. If you stay on the Scheme for a fourth and fifth year, you are responsible for initiating the second and third claims for payment.
- 5.3. You must apply for payment within nine months of becoming eligible to apply.
- 5.4. You will only be eligible for payments if:
- you have been employed for three full years in accordance with

these Terms and Conditions

- you have met the minimum full time equivalent (FTE) employment requirements (see clauses 4.15 - 4.17)
- you have complied with the rules governing breaks and pauses, Parental Leave, and locum work for the Scheme (see clauses 4.22 – 4.31).

5.5. No payments will be made until you have:

- Applied for payment in accordance with the application for payment process, including submitting a declaration confirming that you have met the terms and conditions of the Scheme.
- Provided a certificate of service from your employer(s) confirming that your employment has complied with the Terms and Conditions of the Scheme during the bonding period.

5.6. Further information will be required from you in order to confirm that you have met the Terms and Conditions of the Scheme and to enable payment to be made (e.g. proof of identity). The required information is outlined in the application for payment documentation.

5.7. If you have a student loan, the full Scheme payment will be made against your student loan. If the balance of your student loan is less than the Scheme payment, you will need to contact Inland Revenue once the payment has been made to enable the difference to be paid to you.

5.8. If you do not have a student loan, the Scheme payment will be paid directly to you.

5.9. Payment for each period of 12 months completed on the Scheme (after tax):

Doctors **\$10,000** net.

5.10. If you are an independent contractor, a gross payment will be made and the net amount you receive will depend upon your personal tax situation.

5.11. Scheme payments are subject to income tax and may affect your tax situation, for example, in relation to provisional tax, Working for Families and child support payments .

5.12. The Ministry recommends that you seek independent advice on how the payment will affect your tax position. For further tax information, contact Inland Revenue.

## **6. Privacy Statement**

- 6.1. All of the information you provide in the Registration of Interest form will be treated as personal information and will be used, stored and disclosed in accordance with the provisions of the Privacy Act 1993.
- 6.2. By submitting the Registration of Interest form, you are authorising the Ministry of Health to collect personal information about you. This information will be stored and used by the Ministry for purposes associated with the Scheme, in accordance with the provisions of the Privacy Act 1993.
- 6.3. The information will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed to any person except in connection with the purposes for which it is obtained, or by operation of law.
- 6.4. You have the right to contact the Ministry of Health to request access to and correction of any personal information held about you.
- 6.5. We suggest you print a copy of this statement for your records.