

30 November 2010

To: See distribution list attached

*Room 531B,
Skipton House
80 London Road
London
SE1 6LH*

Dear colleague,

SPECIALTY RECRUITMENT 2011 – ACTION REQUIRED AMENDMENT TO PROCESS FOR ISSUING ROUND 1 OFFERS

I am writing to inform you of an important amendment to the plan for the method of issuing Round 1 offers in England for specialty recruitment in 2011, and to ask if you would take relevant action to cascade this information within your organisations, networks and in your communications with potential applicants. Appendix A contains a general message that you may find useful for adaptation for your websites, newsletters and email distributions.

Applicants will see a welcome improvement in Round 1 of the recruitment process this year. All Round 1 offers in GP and specialty training will be issued UK-wide to an agreed timetable, with all Round 1 first offers issued by 11 March 2011. Applicants will be able hold a Round 1 offer from any specialty while waiting for other offers.

The amendment to the plan concerns the method of issuing Round 1 offers. Colleges and deaneries have been working with the UK health departments to develop a single online system to deliver Round 1 offers to applicants in the forthcoming 2011 specialty recruitment. However, it has been decided more time should be allowed for system testing with full implementation deferred to 2012. Colleges and deaneries will therefore issue Round 1 offers individually in 2011.

The decision to defer was taken by the Medical Education England, Medical Programme Board as it was considered the benefits of the single online system would be best achieved when all specialties and deaneries are in a position to proceed. Unfortunately, this decision has been taken after the earlier plan had been publicised to applicants and others.

The deferral should have minimal impact on applicants. In practice, applicants will still have coordinated offers as explained in the Quick Guide to Recruitment 2011.

What will happen as indicated in the published Quick Guide for applicants:

- Applicants will still receive notice of a Round 1 offer by email (or by text, if this option is available).
- Applicants will still be able to expect that all first offers in Round 1 GP and specialty recruitment will be issued UK wide by 11 March 2011.
- Applicants will be asked to accept, hold or reject each Round 1 offer within 48 hours (this includes weekends and bank holidays).
- Applicants will be able to hold one Round 1 offer (and only one) while waiting for other Round 1 offers.

What is different from the information presented in the published Quick Guide and also from that reported in a recent issue of BMJ Careers:

We will not be proceeding this year with the *UK Offers for Medical Specialty Training* website in Round 1 of recruitment in 2011. This means that applicants will not receive an email asking them to log in and check their contact details; and they will not be checking their Round 1 offers or their interview ranking on the *UK Offers for Medical Specialty Training* website.

We are confident of achieving the benefits of the single online system, which was developed by NHS Education for Scotland (NES) and has already proven to be successful in Scotland. The Medical Programme Board has agreed that work will continue to test the single online system for use in 2012 recruitment.

Yours sincerely



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Medical Education and Training Programme (England)
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Initial distribution

Action note: We would be very grateful if recipients of this letter would forward it as appropriate within their organisations and/or use the general message attached in appendix A in their communications with colleagues and potential applicants to medical specialty recruitment in 2011.

Distributed to:

Royal College recruitment leads

Postgraduate Deans and deanery business managers

Strategic Health Authority Workforce Directors

National Director of UK Foundation Programme

National Recruitment Office for General Practice

Chief Medical Officers UK Scrutiny Group

Medical Education England Medical Programme Board

UK Offers Project Board

Medical Recruitment Task and Finish Group (part of English Medical Education and Training Programme)

Appendix A – Communications for applicants and recruiters

The Department of Health Medical Education and Training Programme team has already published a Quick Guide for specialty recruitment. Information as presented in the Quick Guide has also been published via BMJ Careers and on the Specialty Training website www.mmc.nhs.uk

The change of plan with the single online system for coordinated offers does require some amendment to information for applicants. The following outlines how this information is being made available to applicants:

- Messages are included on the Specialty Training website www.mmc.nhs.uk and relevant pages describing the offers system have been amended
- The full Applicant Guide, available from the Specialty Training website, has been updated
- A bulletin is to be distributed this week giving the latest information on specialty recruitment.

Recruitment offices should be aware of these communications and should use them where appropriate.

The following general message is offered for cutting and pasting or adapting for websites, emails, newsletters and other communications.

General message to applicants to Round 1 Specialty Recruitment (England) in 2011

Please note that proposals to implement a single online system for issuing Round 1 offers in 2011 has been deferred until 2012.

In practice, this decision will have minimal impact for you, except that you need to note there is a change in the method for receiving Round 1 offers from that described in the *Quick Guide to recruitment in 2011* and also featured in the 6 November issue of *BMJ Careers*.

The Quick Guide, published on 22 October 2010, explained about a single online system to be used for issuing first offers in Round 1 of GP and specialty recruitment 2011 - the *UK Offers for Medical Specialty Training* website. The Quick Guide included a note to expect an email from this single online system requesting that you log in and verify your contact details immediately following your application submission.

This “log in and verification” process will no longer be required as you will receive Round 1 offers direct from the recruitment offices you apply to.

All first offers in Round 1 GP and specialty recruitment will be issued UK wide by 11 March 2011. When you receive a Round 1 offer, you will be asked to accept, hold or reject within 48 hours (including weekends and bank holidays). You will be

able to hold one Round 1 offer (and only one) while waiting for other Round 1 offers.

For up to date information on the application and selection process for Specialty Training (England) in 2011, please see the Applicant Guide and helpful guidance on www.mmc.nhs.uk