



Skilled Worker Visa Sponsorship fees for GPs: Guidance for reimbursement for Practices and employers in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire ICS

The number of International Medical Graduates (IMG) joining the UK workforce is growing from year to year. ⁱ

In Nottinghamshire, there are currently over 200 IMG GP trainees. Many of these doctors need a Skilled Worker Visa to continue to live and work in the UK on completion of training. Employers incur additional costs in the process of applying for the Skilled Worker Visa Sponsorship Licence which makes them eligible to employ IMG GPs. The costs depend on the length of sponsorship and the size of the organisation. Most GP practices are 'small or charitable sponsors' – see table 2 below.

The length of visa sponsorship required by GPs after qualification varies and depends on how long they have stayed in the UK on previous visas. Most IMG GPs need sponsorship for two years or less at the end of their training.

The Nottingham and Nottinghamshire ICS has approved funding to reimburse the Skilled Worker Visa sponsorship fees incurred by practices and employers for GPs. This funding provides financial support and eases the recruitment process for practices and employers; it eases the recruitment process for IMG GPs on completion of training; and creates capacity to retain local IMG GPs after qualification to enable them to stay and work locally.

Fees incurred through the application process:

1. The licence fee depends on the size of the organisation. It costs £536 for small organisations and £1,476 for medium/large organisations. Once approved, the Practice is eligible to start the process of employing a Skilled Worker (IMG GP). The licence is valid for four years and is renewable.
2. The Certificate of Sponsorship (COS) costs £199. This is a fixed cost per certificate, irrespective of the size of the sponsoring organisation and the length of sponsorship.
3. Immigration skills charge - the amount to pay is based on the size of the organisation and how long the worker will be sponsored, using the start and end dates on their Sponsorship certificate. Small or charitable sponsors pay £364 for the first 12 months

and £182 for each additional six months while medium or large sponsors pay £1000 for the first 12 months and £500 for each additional six months.

**COS cost and immigration skills charge are incurred when a skilled worker is employed.*

Eligibility

All practices in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire ICS are eligible for funding reimbursement as outlined below in table 1:

Table 1

Practices/employers who are not current Skilled Worker Visa Sponsors	New applications will be fully funded. Effective from 1 April 2023, all costs incurred by practices (including the licence fees, cost of certificate of sponsorship and immigration skills charge) will be reimbursed.
Practices/employers who are existing Skilled Worker Visa Sponsors	If you have applied for a Skilled Worker Visa licence within the past two years (1 April 2021 to date) you can be retrospectively reimbursed. New related costs including licence renewal, certificates of sponsorship and immigration skills charges can also be funded.

**COS cost and Immigration skills Charge are incurred only when a skilled worker is employed.*

Process for reimbursement

Contact the Phoenix programme by email on info@phoenixprogramme.co.uk. Provision of proof payment is essential for reimbursement.

Process for Sponsorship

A step-by-step guide for Skilled Worker Visa sponsorship is available on the Phoenix website <https://www.phoenixprogramme.co.uk/schemes/detail/skilled-worker-visas>. Additional administrative support is also available through the Phoenix Programme with the application process. The regional team are also offering a series of webinars to guide you through the process.

Table 2

How to tell if you are a small or charitable sponsor

You are usually a small sponsor if at least of two of the following criteria apply:

- Annual turnover is £10.2 million or less
- Total assets worth £5.1 million or less
- You have 50 employees or fewer

Further information can be found <https://www.gov.uk/uk-visa-sponsorship-employers>.

References

- i. [Workforce report 2022 - GMC \(gmc-uk.org\)](https://www.gmc-uk.org/workforce-report-2022)