

HIPS/19/37 - Enhancing Recruitment and Retention of Rural Doctors in Scotland: A Mixed-Methods Study

Providing healthcare for people in remote and rural (R&R) areas is a priority for Scotland. Provision depends on being able to recruit and retain doctors in R&R areas: when a local GP retires, or a small hospital cannot attract enough doctors, this can affect community stability. There is evidence that people born and/or brought up in R&R areas are more likely to want to work there, but little evidence exists about how to attract new people from diverse backgrounds to R&R areas and how to keep them there. This research will use qualitative interviews to better understand the experiences and motivations of doctors with respect to R&R jobs in Scotland, and in doing so gather information on factors which influence career decision making in relation to R&R working. The interview findings will be used to develop a Discrete Choice Experiment (DCE) survey. This will provide insight into the value of different factors, and the degree to which respondents are prepared to trade off one factor against another. Hospitals and general practices cannot change where they are located, but this information will inform new ways to attract and retain doctors to R&R localities, which can be tested in a later study.