

Islay and Jura

Rural Fellowship Prospectus

2019 - 2020

We would love to welcome a Rural Fellow to join our team of GP's on the beautiful islands of Islay and Jura. We have been part of the Rural Fellowship programme since 2015 with 2 previous Rural Fellows, one of whom has since joined the permanent medical team so it can't have been that bad - come and see for yourself!



Where are we??



Islay and Jura are the most southerly of the Hebridean Islands. They are accessed by road and ferry from Kennacraig or Oban on the west coast of Argyll. The islands feel remote (in a good way!) but actually the journey by plane from Islay airport to Glasgow is only 25 minutes - flights run at least twice a day. There are also regular direct flights to Edinburgh

Islay - The Queen of the Hebrides

Islay, the ancient seat of the Lords of the Isles, is the larger island with a population of approximately 3500 people, increasing to 10000 in the busy summer months. It has beautiful low lying fertile farmland and woods and stunning west coast beaches. There are 9 world famous whisky distilleries to choose from if you enjoy a dram and amazing wildlife on show particularly in the 2 RSPB reserves - 90 % of the worlds population of Barnacle geese winter over on Islay - a spectacular sight! Bowmore is the main town right in the centre of the Island, shops, banks, pubs, takeaways and everything else you might need including a swimming pool and gym.



Jura - The Island of Deer

In contrast to the lush green fields of Islay, Jura is rugged and mountainous with a skyline dominated by the three Paps of Jura. The small population of 250 is vastly outnumbered by the red deer the island gets its name from. There is one road, one pub, one shop and one distillery but plenty of fun and a great community. Jura has a wild beauty and there are lots of opportunities to see eagles, seals, otters and other varied Scottish wildlife.



What is there to do on Islay and Jura?

In addition to the varied and contrasting experiences of remote and rural General Practice offered by the two islands, there is plenty to do outside the Surgery during a year on spent Islay and Jura. Outdoor pursuits include beautiful beach and lochside walks, climbing mountains, kayaking, cycling, rowing, sailing, bird watching and fishing. There are choirs, art galleries, exercise classes and pottery painting - something for everyone! There is even a visiting cinema.

There is plenty of history to explore from the beautiful and atmospheric Finlaggan (the ancient seat of the Lord of the Isles) to Barnhill at the north end of Jura where George Orwell famously wrote 1984.





Photo courtesy of Jura Music Festival Committee

There are lots of dates for the diary as well, island life is never dull! Don't miss the "Feis Ile" (the Islay Festival of Music and Whisky) or The Jura Music Festival. If you have sport or sports medicine interests there is the famously tough Jura Fell Race, Islay Marathon and Half Marathon and the Jura Half Marathon and 10k in addition to the Islay beach rugby regatta. Other events to experience are the Islay book festival, the Islay agricultural show, Jura Regatta and many more.

Medical Services on the Islands



GP services on Islay have successfully come together over the last few years to form Islay Medical Practice - with a full complement of enthusiastic and friendly GPs and first class support services. There are 3 GP practices on the island in Bowmore, Port Charlotte and Port Ellen. There is a small but essential 6 bedded Community Hospital and A+E department in Bowmore also run by the GPs. The OOH cover for the hospital and practices is run by the GPs on a rota with NHS 24 as the first contact.

Jura has its own medical practice and one GP providing daytime cover, with another GP working between Jura and Islay. OOH cover is provided by GPs and nurses/HCSWs. The small community are resourceful and practical and generally use the out of hours service appropriately.

The GPs are supported by a great team of community and hospital based nurses, Scottish Ambulance Service paramedics, a small team of midwives, a CPN and visiting psychiatric service, a health visitor, a school nurse, a Macmillan nurse, an occupational therapy team and physiotherapist and a team of social workers.

We are proud of our extended clinical team and the compassion, cooperation and teamwork that helps us to provide excellent care for the patients of Islay and Jura.

If teaching is an interest we have close links with the major teaching hospitals in Glasgow and regular students from the Universities of Glasgow and Dundee as well as elective students from all over the country.



The Role of the Rural Fellow

We would like our Rural Fellow to experience the variety, interest and satisfaction of remote General Practice! It is a great opportunity to gain experience and confidence in the provision of daytime GMS services, community hospital inpatient care and the management of patients in a remote Emergency department.

The details...

You will be mentored by Dr Angus MacTaggart throughout the year and initially work with him to tailor the programme to your own learning needs and experience.

You will be based on Islay and spend 7 sessions per week working in the 3 Practices, with 3 sessions set aside for admin, personal development and teaching.

The rural fellowship programme is an excellent opportunity to access lots of quality off-island training which is easily accessible as you are in a supernumerary role.

You will be supported to provide some OOH care as this is an essential and exciting part of the job of a remote and rural GP. This will be with full clinical backup and will be paid additionally to the salary - you won't be thrown in the deep end or left to work alone unless you are confident to do so!

There are opportunities to experience work in a more remote setting as the GP on Jura, but again only with appropriate clinical support and a full induction in the Surgery.

There are opportunities to take part in on island training exercises through the year with our colleagues in the ambulance service, the lifeboat and the coastguard.



If you are interested in the Islay and Jura Rural Fellowship role or would like more information or to arrange a visit please contact:

Alan Beresford:

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We would love to hear from you!

Don't just take our word for it....

Dr Jess Cooper, GP Rural Fellow Islay and Jura 2016-17:

"Having never really heard of Islay until looking through these very adverts this time last year, I have to say, I have totally landed on my feet. I chose to apply for the rural fellowship for a little bit of an adventure, a way to build a wider skill base and get to spend time at the beach, these were my main criteria in choosing a place for the fellowship. I have to say that each of these criteria have been fulfilled. There are beaches, so many beaches. And I have discovered that beaches are best tackled wearing wellies, always. In fact, most places on Islay are best in wellies.

Workwise, I am definitely learning lots, and building skill in a number of areas. In the last week alone I did a ring block for the first time for a lady with a crush injury to her hand, sutured a couple of heads, dealt with a potential pre-eclampsia and got involved with 2 different child protection cases. Never a dull moment. On Islay I am getting a real variety of day-to-day General Practice, and also out of hours, community hospital and A&E experience. The team and the workload are well integrated so I feel the balance of these different aspects of practice is good. As much as I am learning new things and increasing in confidence in managing acute problems, I feel I am getting stuck into daily practice and gaining in experience there too. My average week is generally 7 sessions but varies as needed to find study leave in, and that is usually made up of maybe 5-6 sessions of surgeries at my base practice and one other practice, and then 1-2 sessions covering the community hospital and A&E and then on average one overnight on call.

I have been very well supported starting out doing oncalls here, with the GPs taking their turn to be a second oncall for me if needed to help as I built confidence especially with the acute care aspect and as I learnt to think through decisions around transfer off the island. I had initially been concerned about working in the three practices across the island, that I would feel like I was filling in or a locum, but I was pleased to find that I don't feel this way at all, the GPs and wider staff team have made a real effort to help me feel fully included and Islay Medical Services are trying hard to make the three practices essentially function as one, with staff and computer systems in the process of integrating. Watching as the team looks to service planning and seeing their creativity thinking forward to the future of medical services here is really pretty inspiring, and makes me sure that I am working

alongside a team that really care for their community and are really striving to see change and improvement.

Someone once told me to always surround yourself with people you respect and this is easily achieved with the Islay Medical Services team. It has always been straightforward to organize time for off island training/courses etc, which means I have been able to take up of all the opportunities afforded by the fellowship, and never felt that I am causing inconvenience or won't be able to get the time needed to do these things. My education is valued and encouraged here which is great. I would really highly recommend the Islay and Jura fellowship if you are looking to work hard, learn lots, be challenged and inspired to become a better clinician, in a supportive and educational environment. And most importantly, if you want to go to the beach.”

Dr Sarah Boulter, GP Rural Fellow Islay and Jura 2015-16:

“Why being a GP Remote & Rural Fellow was the right choice for me... With my trainee years and exams a couple of years behind me, I felt ready for a new challenge. I have always liked the idea of working somewhere different, somewhere unusual, somewhere unique.

Islay is an island of some 3300 people probably most famous for its whisky. As well as the 8 distilleries, there are miles of stunning coastline, RSPB reserves, beautiful walks and great places to eat out. I have seen dolphins from my surgery window, seals en-route to home visits and sea otters on a weekend stroll. Stepping away from the single-handed practices of the past, Islay has federated its GP services, sharing GPs, nursing staff and admin, whilst each surgery still retains its own patients and identity. When initially applying to the scheme, I was concerned about being constantly used to fill leave gaps and struggling to find my feet. However I need not have worried. I have found all of the Practices very supportive, and the same admin and referral structures exist in each.

On paper I know that a proportion of my time is classed as service commitment. But in practice I feel like a valued member of a dynamic and enthusiastic team working together to serve a friendly island community.

As a rural fellow, I have appreciated having more time to give to my patients and felt welcomed by the community. I have enjoyed the challenges of remote practice, arranging helicopter ambulance transfers or liaising with consultants long-distance to achieve the best results for the patient. I have become more competent at practical procedures, whether draining an abscess under local or stitching a head injury.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my time here and am only sad that it is flying by so quickly. In coming to Islay and Jura, I have truly landed on my feet and am very grateful for the friendship and support I've been given. I would have no hesitation in recommending the fellowship to other GPs who feel ready for a new adventure.”