

Shetland Acute Rural GP Fellowship

Amongst the greatest concerns of the prospective Rural General Practitioner is the potential for encountering acute emergencies or covering medical services without specialist support on-site.

As a fully trained General practitioner, each Fellowship applicant has the skills necessary to deliver generic rural general practice, but confidence with the challenges of acute pre-hospital medicine/trauma/surgery may be daunting and the ability to gain further experience in these extended roles may be quite limited in the current provision of medical training.

If you have an interest in working as a Rural Emergency Practitioner in a hospital setting the Acute Rural Fellowship twinned with the GMC-approved Credential in Rural and Remote Health Care can be an attractive option. The fellowship offers hands-on experience in managing critically ill patients in low-resource, high-stakes environments, which directly aligns with the demands of rural practice. The GMC-approved credential further enhances professional credibility, validating expertise in acute care and creating pathways to senior clinical, leadership, and teaching roles. This combination not only improves patient care in rural settings by equipping practitioners with the necessary skills to manage emergencies independently but also enhances career prospects by aligning with NHS workforce priorities. Ultimately, this structured progression strengthens both individual career growth and the overall resilience of rural healthcare services.

Shetland Life

Shetland offers a unique opportunity to practice medicine in a place where your skills truly make a difference. With a supportive healthcare network, fulfilling lifestyle, and the chance to develop meaningful connections with patients, working in Shetland is both professionally rewarding and personally enriching. You will find a welcoming and appreciative population, along with modern medical facilities that ensure high-quality care for all residents.

Beyond the workplace, Shetland is a paradise for outdoor lovers, boasting rugged coastlines, breathtaking landscapes, and abundant wildlife, including puffins, seals, and orcas. Enjoy a vibrant cultural scene with world-renowned music festivals, rich Norse heritage, and a strong sense of identity among locals. Whether you're into hiking, sailing, or simply soaking in the tranquillity of island life, Shetland offers a work-life balance. With excellent schools, safe communities, and a strong spirit of camaraderie, Shetland isn't just a place to work—it's a place to call home.

Gilbert Bain Hospital

The Shetland Acute Rural Fellow post is to be based in the Gilbert Bain Hospital. Lerwick, Shetland.

The Gilbert Bain Hospital is a modern, well-equipped Rural General Hospital with facilities including CT and MRI scanning. The hospital has thirty-four inpatient beds including a 2-bedded High Dependency Unit, Emergency Department, Surgical Theatres, a consultant-led Obstetric Unit, Outpatient Department, Dialysis Unit, Day Care Unit, Radiological and Laboratory services. The Emergency Department (ED) sees all emergency presentations, assesses GP referrals and provides a Same Day Emergency Care service. Teams work closely with the Emergency Medical Retrieval Service (EMRS) and Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, which is our Major Trauma Centre.

The hospital accepts a wide spectrum of patients for initial assessment. Admissions to Gilbert Bain are those appropriate for a wide range of clinical conditions. If a patient requires more specialist care or intensive care they are resuscitated and stabilised before being transferred to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, approximately 200 miles away.

There is currently an Out of Hours (OOH) primary care service covered by GPs and ANPs but the majority of patients out of hours patients are triaged to the Gilbert Bain Hospital, Accident and Emergency Department, which functions as the Primary Care Emergency Centre.

As an Acute Rural Fellow, you will work alongside the consultant team (Medical, Surgical, Emergency Medicine and Anaesthetise Consultants). This involves dealing with the full range of varied Emergency Department work for both adults and children, mental health assessments, medical and surgical inpatient care, OOH primary care centre work, and the occasional obstetric emergency. You will also work alongside the resident doctor team, which is comprised of Foundation doctors, Internal Medical Trainees, Acute Care Common Stem trainees, Core Surgical Trainees, Rural Tract GP trainees and Clinical Development Fellows. There are also Advance Nurse Practitioners based in the Emergency Department and Clinical Nurse Specialists who work across the Hospital and Community settings.

Duties

The hospital provides an excellent environment for anyone wishing to develop independent working skills in a supportive environment. The hospital post provides exposure to unselected acute patient attendances to offer greater experience within a relatively short period of time. Whilst working independently within the Emergency Department, you will always have senior support. You will work a combination of day and night shifts, and help support the OOH primary care as well as the Emergency Department overnight.

During the rural GP placement, duties will include the full range of general practice duties. Fellows will provide the majority of their service commitment in practices, which will be agreed at the beginning of the year. Some practices may be a single-handed dispensing practice to give the rural fellow the opportunity to experience all aspects of rural General Practice. They will be expected to play a full part in all aspects of the practice and work alongside the members of the extended primary care team.

Out of Hours (OOH) element

Fellows are expected as part of their educational programme to gain experience in OOHs and Emergency Care. This is a unique asset of the Dr Gray's EMP role as it includes more acute / emergency care experience from a full range of unselected emergency presentations, as well as the primary care OOH stream.

Supervision in Practice

A principal in one of the practices and a hospital-based consultant supervisor will be identified as your mentor/supervisor and will be available to the Fellow throughout the year.

Education in Practice

Fellows will be expected to join in with the educational activities available within the hospital and practices that they are working.

13 Weeks Protected Educational Time

This will be organised in conjunction with the service elements of the posts and with the Rural Fellowship Co-ordinator. Fellows will have the opportunity to negotiate additional experience in secondary care, remote practices and to undertake specific course activity as available. Fellows will also be expected to attend the regular meetings of the Scottish Rural Fellows

Educational Opportunities

For the acute rural fellow there are a multitude of possible educational opportunities available during your placement and the opportunity to develop the post around your own needs and interests. Hospital based education opportunities include: -

- Acute medicine
- Acute surgical presentations
- Paediatrics
- Psychiatry

- Pre-hospital care
- Fracture clinics
- Rehabilitation medicine
- Hospital at Home
- Medical, surgical and paediatric outpatient clinics
- Obstetrics
- Palliative Care - Oncology / chemotherapy
- Aeromedical evacuation/ transfers
- Airway management skills
- Minor surgery (weekly lists)
- Visiting clinics in a variety of specialties
-

To support you in your role you as an Acute Rural Fellow you will be given the opportunity to do 3 months of anaesthetic/advanced airway training. As a hospital based rural fellow, the frequent exposure to acute scenarios and managing the first few hours of acute illness in a supportive, yet isolated, environment allows for hands-on involvement and responsibility to allow skills and confidence in managing such cases to evolve at a rapid rate. Such a training opportunity should enable the rural fellow to be confident to work thereafter in hospital-based GP-led intermediate care posts, but also provides an excellent opportunity to gain acute skills that would be transferable to working in general practice in any isolated rural location within the UK or abroad.

Service Commitment

This fellowship is designed to meet the needs of the individual in addressing and achieving acute care competencies and confidence in the management of the acutely ill or injured patient to equip fellows with the skills required in those aspects of rural general practice. Although much of the post is hospital-based, there will also be General Practice and out-of-hours GP experience. Fellows will receive their appraisal through general practice, thus avoiding problems with revalidation in the future.

For an informal discussion please contact: Dr Pauline Wilson: pauline.wilson2@nhs.scot or Lisa Watt: lisa.watt@nhs.scot