



Five Year International Medical Graduates Recruitment Scheme (Five Year IMG Scheme)

Categories and time concessions

A system of graded incentives introduced in December 2004, means that International Medical Graduates (IMGs) on the Five Year IMG Scheme who agree to work in more difficult locations may have their contracted time in an *area of workforce shortage reduced by up to two years. The maximum reduction is from five to three years.

All towns eligible for the Five Year IMG Scheme are classified into three categories according to the difficulty of the location. **Twelve months** must be served in a Category A or B location before an IMG can qualify for a time concession. Thereafter, concessions will accrue in 6-monthly intervals.

Category A – Exceptionally difficult for GP recruitment and retention

This category covers locations which are predominantly small, very remote and may have a high Indigenous population. Every year in such a location, after the initial twelve month period, counts for 2 years on the scheme (the maximum reduction is from 5 to 3 years).

Category B – Very difficult for GP recruitment and retention

This category covers specific communities which are small and/or remote and may include a combination of the following :

- evidence of high turnover rate and/or length of vacancy for a location
- very difficult community attributes
- high indigenous status of community
- demonstrated requirement for advanced practice skills in community (eg obstetrics and anaesthetics)
- special services (eg Aboriginal Medical Services and some Royal Flying Doctor Services bases)
- extreme climate eg: exceptional rainfall/wet days status of community.

IMGs who work in these localities to be credited with 1 ½ years on the scheme for every year in such a community, after the initial twelve month qualifying period.

Category C – Difficult for GP retention and recruitment

This category covers other locations in RRMA 4-7 which may include locations which are not currently areas of workforce shortage but where there is a demonstrated requirement for advanced practice skills in community – for example, obstetrics and anaesthetics.

Doctor must serve five years in Category C locations, with no time concession.

A list of specific towns/communities in each category, as agreed by the WA Department of Health with the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing can be found on the [Rural Health West website](#).

Scheme requirements

In all categories, the IMG must achieve Fellowship of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (FRACGP) or equivalence, obtain permanent residency and complete the scheme requirements before being eligible for an unrestricted provider number as well as completing the five years, less any concessions.

Relocations

IMGs on the scheme may be permitted to move to another location already designated as an *area of workforce shortage under the scheme. Any such move requires the prior approval of the WA Department of Health and the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing. Such requests may be handled by Rural Health West and any time concessions available at the new location will apply from date of arrival (provided that twelve months has already been served in a Category A or B location).

In exceptional circumstances, relocation from Category A and B to serve out the remainder of the 5 years (less any concessions) may be to another location in RRMA 4-7 not approved under the scheme, with the agreement of both the WA Department of Health and the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing.

Commencement

The graded incentives system commenced in WA on 10 December, 2004. If a location is classified (or reclassified) as Category A or B, the time concessions will start from the date of Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing written approval of the location on the program.

Reclassification of a location

If a location already has a Five Year Scheme doctor placed there and is reclassified to Category A or B, the time concessions will start from the date of Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing approval of the location as proposed by the WA Department of Health. The concessions are not available retrospectively and the incumbent will need to serve 12 months from the date of reclassification to qualify for the time concession. Only service after the date of reclassification will count towards the new time concession.

A complete list of towns/communities eligible for the Five Year IMG Scheme is available on the [Rural Health West website](#).