

Lead Employer

Toolkit for International Colleagues-in-Training



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Welcome to the UK

Congratulations on your appointment
to work in the UK.

Hello from Lead Employer! We would like to extend a warm welcome to you as you get ready to start your training in the UK.

We know that moving to a new country can at times be quite stressful, so we wanted to provide you with some useful information and resources to help you adjust and settle into life here in the UK.

This booklet will look to provide useful information on what you can expect from commencing your post and highlight all the ways we can support you. It is advisable that you use this toolkit alongside your **Lead Employer Welcome Booklet** to understand how we work.

We know that you will have a great experience here throughout your post and we hope you take the time to explore the UK's culture heritage sites and the bustling cities that the UK has to offer, and do not forget to try fish and chips!



Support for your move

There are many things to consider before moving to a new country, so we have collated some important information for you to review before your move to the UK.

Looking for accommodation

When looking for accommodation, whether you are buying or renting, we advise that you search for areas that are easy to commute to and from your placement. Websites such as, [RightMove](#) and [Zoopla](#) advertise a number of properties to rent or buy and could be a good place to start looking.

An alternative option to finding your own accommodation is a shared property where you rent a room in a shared accommodation. Take a look at [SpareRoom](#) website for more details.

To rent, you will need:

- a deposit (usually your first month's rent fee)
- other admin fees – ask your estate agent for a breakdown of these fees
- proof of identity, immigration status, and employment status.



Try to view the property physically and if unable to, then ask for a virtual tour.

You will also need to consider how you will travel to work. Consider looking for the nearest railway stations or bus stops within that area. RightMove also has a feature where it lists the closest railway station with all accommodation so you can consider your travel to work. You can also use google maps as a reference to the different facilities within that area such as a bus station or supermarkets.

However, the UK is a fairly small country and transport may be scarce in rural areas which can be difficult to rely on. So please bear in mind the distance between your accommodation and your work location. We suggest you plan out your journey ahead of time with the use of different apps. You can use google maps to get live updates or use apps that are ran by local operators.



Use the Trainline app to check for train times around the UK

[CLICK HERE](#)



You can find more information on Transport in the 'Settling into the UK' on page 12.

Support for your move

Register with a GP

Make sure to register with a GP in your area as this will be vital in case you have any health concerns, needs or if you become ill. You do not have to pay to register with a GP and once you have registered, there is no charge to see your GP. However, if you are prescribed any medication, then you may have to pay for this. You can also register temporarily if you expect to be in an area for more than 24 hours but less than 3 months. If you have ID this can help make sure your name is spelled correctly in your NHS records.

Get in touch with your local GP and many of them will allow the registration to be completed online or via post as you may only need to provide your personal information to register. Please note that you must **not** work in the GP you are registered to.

Find your nearest GP by visiting the NHS website

CLICK HERE



Applying for Clinical Attachment

A clinical attachment will help you prepare for working in the NHS as they allow international medical graduates to observe a consultant in a relevant specialty without having the responsibility of patient care. Though it is not a requirement, you may find that the experience contributes usefully towards your career and what standards are expected of doctors.

After you have received your offer letter and have been informed of where you will be based, you can apply to do a clinical attachment and they usually last between two and four months with the cost of about £400.

For more information on requirements and how to apply visit the BMA website.

CLICK HERE



Support for your move

Opening a Bank Account

Upon your arrival within the UK, we urge you to open a UK bank account as soon as possible as this will be used to process your required checks for Lead Employer. You will also be able to set up direct debits for various fees and subscriptions as well as your GMC fee.

Here are some of the popular banks that international medical graduates often open their first bank account with. We advise checking the bank's website and visiting your nearest branch to get more information:

- NatWest
- Barclays
- HSBC
- Nationwide
- Lloyds

Please note that irrespective of which bank you choose to open your account with, you will need the following documents before applying for a bank account:

	Confirmation of Offer of Employment You can apply on our website here
	Original Passport
	Proof of Address
	Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) with National Insurance (NI) Number

Visas and Share codes

Your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) is your visa permit to stay and study in the country. Within your Offer Letter, you will receive details of how to apply for your Biometric Residence Permit.

Please take a look at Health Education England's guidance on this application process.

[CLICK HERE](#)

You will only be able to retrieve your Visa once you are physically within the UK.

We advise that you contact Health Education England in order to find out where you will be placed on your initial placement so that you can request for your Visa to be delivered to a Post Office that is within your specific area.

Support for your move

Managing your Finances

Key Points

When moving to a new country, it is essential that you manage your finances to ensure you can support yourself and your family. This relates to any short-term money needs as well as long-term financial management. These are some questions and thoughts to think about when preparing or organising your finances before your move:

- Bank accounts** - Research your banking options before you arrive, including retail banks in the UK.
For more information, refer to the above or get more information on opening a bank account on [Citizens Advice](#) or [read this article](#) from Expatica.
- Pensions, tax, and investments** - Can your pension be transferred to the UK? How will your investments be affected? Find out more information before you move with Expatica's guide to the [UK's tax system](#) and their guide to the [UK pension system](#). You can also check out what your tax code means on the [GOV.UK website](#).
- Insurance** - Whatever your needs, make sure your family's belongings have the protection they need by sorting out insurance premiums before you leave. For more information, refer to the [government's website](#) or read Expatica's guide to [insurance in the UK](#).

Getting help with childcare costs



Tax Free Childcare is a government scheme offering up to £2,000 a year per child (the government will pay £2 for every £8 you pay in up to the £2K limit) to help with the costs of childcare. The money can go towards a whole range of regulated childcare, whether nurseries, child minders, after-school clubs or holiday clubs.

Find out more on the Childcare Choices website to check your childcare calculations, and how to apply.

[CLICK HERE](#)



The Healthcare Workers Foundation provide financial support for child-care related costs through grants of up to a total of £1,000 annually.

Use your NHS email to register for a free account and find out more about childcare grants.

[CLICK HERE](#)



Support for your move

NHS Discount

There are also a range of discounts available to NHS staff, whether it is at restaurants, cinemas, clothes shops or toy shops, you can often find there are offers available at both local shops and national chains.

NHS staff can sign up with the below providers to access the discounts:

Blue Light Card

[CLICK HERE](#)

NHS Discounts & Healthcare Staff Benefits

[CLICK HERE](#)

NHS Discount Offers

[CLICK HERE](#)

Health Staff Discount

[CLICK HERE](#)

There is also a **Company Shop** which offers surplus products from well-known brands at massively discounted prices, helping stretched budgets go further. You can find more information on [The Company Shop Group's website](#).

Vita Health Group Employee Assistance Programme

If you need somewhere to turn to help you get your finances in order, there are lots of organisations and advisory services out there to help you get started just like [Vita Health Group Employee Assistance Programme](#)

They offer money advisory services , such as helping you manage your pension and debt. They also have guides to ensure you are receiving the right benefits and financial support to help with debt, taxes, and long-term care arrangements.

Speak to an advisor for free below
Freephone from UK landline: 0800 111 6387
For Management support : 0800 111 6385

or visit their [website](#)
(Enter access code: STHKWELL)



Find more practical advice to help manage your finances with confidence, by accessing **The Wellbeing Hub's** guide to Financial Wellbeing.

[CLICK HERE](#)

Before starting your post

Your Pre-employment Process

Before you start your training, as your employer we will ask that you complete your pre-employment checks. It is essential for all colleagues-in-training to complete these checks to enable you to be cleared to work, therefore allowing you to start your training post on time.

We have included three of the main points you should concentrate on so there are no delays with you starting your post.

1. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is a criminal record clearance. You will apply for it online through a link that we will provide in your offer letter. This will be one of the first things to do once you arrive in the UK to enable you for clearance to start in post.

Once you have your DBS certificate, consider registering with the DBS online update service, this will save you time in the future when needing to apply for a new DBS certificate.

2. International Police Check/ Certificate of Good Standing

Your International Police Check/ Certificate of Good Standing, is a mandatory pre-employment check of which all International Colleagues are required to provide Lead Employer with these details.

You can apply for your required certificate [**via this link**](#) and access further guidance on this process.

3. Occupational Health Clearance

Your Occupational Health Clearance can only be completed once you are within the UK. It is essential that you contact Health, Work and Wellbeing to make them aware of your arrival in the country so that they are able to book your required appointment in a timely manner.

You can contact the team via email:

HWWB.Recruitment@sthk.nhs.uk



To understand the full process, please visit the pre-employment hub on our website and use this alongside the additional tips above to learn more about completing your required pre-employment checks.

CLICK HERE

Before starting your post

The British Medical Association (The BMA)

Consider becoming a member of the British Medical Association where you can have free access to many resources.

The British Medical Association (BMA) is a trade union with a collective voice of doctors and medical students. Being a member means that you will have free access to many resources.

- Employment and career advice**

The BMA's team of specialist employment advisers can help with any query about your working life including pay and working hours.

- Legal Advice**

The BMA works with a law firm that specialises in immigration to provide legal advice relevant to International doctors and medical students.

- Learning and Development resources**

As a member you will have access to several webinars and E-learning modules. They can also support on your exams to show you what you can expect and offer guidance on how to get a clinical attachment.

- Wellbeing support services**

The BMA have support services that doctors and medical students can confidentially contact, free of charge. You can call their helpline or have the choice to speak to a counsellor.

- Contract Checking Service**

The BMA offer a "contract checking" service. Whether you are starting a new job or changing roles, the BMA recommend you have your contract checked to ensure it is fair.



Take a look at their [leaflet](#) to see all the other ways they support their members or visit their main page for more information



Contact them by email on support@bma.org.uk or call them on 0300 123 1233

Before starting your post

Helpful Learning Resources

elfh - E-learning for Healthcare

This website has online training modules that you should complete before and during your training. We encourage you to complete the following modules:

[CLICK HERE](#)



Induction for international Doctors:

- Introduction to Working in the NHS
- Social Aspects to UK Clinical Practice
- Ethical and Legal Aspects to UK Clinical Practice
- Patient Safety Aspects to UK Clinical Practice
- Professional Aspects to UK Clinical Practice

Doctors in Training Induction:

- Safe Prescribing and VTE Scenario
- Blood Transfusion and Consent Scenario
- Mental Capacity Act and Death Certification Scenario

GMC: Welcome to the UK workshops

This is a free GMC workshop that is designed to help doctors new to the UK by offering practical guidance about ethical scenarios, and the chance to connect virtually with other colleagues coming from abroad.

[CLICK HERE](#)



British Medical Journal (BMJ) e-learning Online Courses

The BMJ has created a vast amount of learning materials and modules online that will help refresh your knowledge and provide essential information to ease your transition into the UK medical practice.

[CLICK HERE](#)



OpenAthens for NHS England

OpenAthens is a management system that provides access to the library's licensed online resources and resources commissioned by the NHS, including journals, databases and BMJ Best Practice. You can use this link to self-register for an OpenAthens accounts if you already have an nhs.net or nhs.uk email address

[CLICK HERE](#)



Before starting your post

Checklist

We have developed a useful checklist as a tool to help you think about what you should be considering prior to commencing your post.

- Read this handbook
- Obtain your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP)
- Open a bank account
- Keep in constant contact with Lead Employer to ensure you are on track with your pre-employment process such as your Occupational Health Check, Certificate of Good Standing and References
- Let Lead Employer know when your expected date of arrival is and inform us when you have arrived by emailing your [TRAC administrator](#)
- Stay updated with all Lead Employer communications which you will receive via email
- Consider applying for medical indemnity with organisations such as MDU, MDDUS. For GP trainees, a level of indemnity is already provided by HEE, so, please ensure that you check the level of cover you have.
- Consider joining the [British Medical Association](#)
- Consider reading and completing some online learning modules pertaining to common topics within your specialty or department. Online resources can be found at the end of the handbook
- Relax and go out and explore your surroundings. You should be proud of your accomplishments and achievements

Settling

in the UK



Moving to a new country and starting a brand-new role can be very exciting, but we understand it is never easy or straightforward. Lead Employer is here to help support you through this transition to settle in your new job and get the most out of living in the UK.

Travel and Transport



Airport

There are over 40 airports around the UK in some of the biggest cities in the country, like Manchester, Birmingham and Liverpool, as well as London which has six major airports. The majority will accommodate international flights so you might want to redirect your destination closer to your location.

To locate all the airports in the UK, please refer to this map.

[CLICK HERE](#)



Bus

Whether you are in central London or in a rural village, the local bus is the most accessible mode of transport around the UK, here are some tips to remember when travelling by bus.



More and more buses are now accepting contactless payment in larger towns and cities – in London, you are only able to pay via contactless credit/debit card or an Oyster card (a local transport card).



In London the exit is a different door to the entrance, however, outside the capital it might be the same in and out, so check what your fellow passengers are doing when leaving the bus.



Be careful not to miss the last bus home! Check timetables online or at the bus stop ahead of time as some may stop running in the early evening.



Driving

Driving in the UK may seem a bit strange, as it is part of the 76 countries in the world to be driving on the left side of the road. But if you want to drive in the UK, you can use an international driving licence for up to 12 months. If you have a driving licence from the UAE, Ukraine, Taiwan or Republic of North Macedonia, you may exchange it with a British driving licence without taking a driving test.

Settling

in the UK



Otherwise, you should apply for a provisional driving licence through the [DVLA website](#), take a theory test about different road signs and crossings in the UK. As well as assign yourself to an instructor to help you pass the practical test.

Find out if you can drive in Great Britain with your non-GB driving licence here.

[CLICK HERE](#)



Coach

While buses run on local routes, coach travel in the UK operates on an intercity network that connects the country's largest towns and cities so here is a few points to remember if you are taking the coach.

Coach travel in the UK is not the quickest mode of transport. For example, London to Edinburgh takes over 11 hours on a coach, compared to 4.5 hours on a train. With that being said, you can make significant savings by traveling via coach. Some examples of coaches in the UK are [National Express](#), [Megabus](#), [FlixBus](#) or [BlaBlaBus](#)



Train

The UK train network is split into different companies within the UK so there are lots of ways to travel by train. Unfortunately train travel in the UK is expensive but here is some advice on how to save and make your travels convenient:

-  You can use an online mobile app called [Trainline](#) to see train times.
-  As a general rule, always buy your ticket before you board the train.
-  Try booking your tickets in advance as they might be cheaper than buying tickets on the day.
-  Take advantage of railcards which offer discounts on train travel as they can save you a lot of money and available to everyone.
-  If your train is cancelled or delayed, you are eligible for a refund. Simply visit the ticket office at the station and enquire about claiming your money back.

Settling

in the UK



School

You may be able to bring family members to join you permanently in the UK. If you do, you can look at the standard of schools for your children around your area. You can also see the feedback from the students' families on a website called [School Guide](#), or visit the [Government website](#).

We advise that you speak to the school managers if you are coming from abroad, as your children may be able to get additional support in the transitional phase to the new education system in a new country.

Communication

Getting a UK SIM Card

An important part of settling in the UK is getting your hands on a local SIM card. Not only will this give you a cheap and easy way to keep in touch with your friends back home, but it will also mean that you are more contactable in the UK. Having a local number is important if you are working in the UK and getting a UK SIM card can make a big difference to your life - and this is especially true if your existing mobile operator does not offer free roaming in the UK.

You have two options when it comes to a UK SIM card: a prepaid SIM or a cell phone contract. The right option for you will depend on your circumstances but here are a few network providers:

- EE
- Three
- Vodafone
- Sky
- O2
- Lebara
- Virgin
- VOXI

Faiths and Beliefs

This country is home to people of all different religious backgrounds with various places of worship for those who practice their beliefs. In larger towns and cities, it is easy to find somewhere to practice your faith as well as a community to welcome you, whether it be a church, mosque, temple, or synagogue.

Some trusts and practices provide a prayer room for all religions to use during working hours. Speak to your manager on how to access this.

Consider joining your host's multi-cultural network to meet other healthcare professionals to discuss Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

For example, if you are in the North West, join The Trainee Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Network who are a group of medical, dental and public health trainees in the North West region.

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Settling

in the UK



Culture and Lifestyle

Local Groceries

We have a range of supermarkets in the UK which vary in size and products. Most of the supermarkets offer international products Halal meats, gluten-free diets, sugar-free diets, and vegan-friendly options. Otherwise, there are various designated Asian and Halal shops within the country.

Lower price range

- Aldi
- Lidl
- Asda

Medium price range

- Tesco
- Morrisons
- Sainsbury's

High price range

- Marks & Spencer
- Waitrose
- Co-operative

Most of the stores mentioned above will stock other necessities such as medicine and home products. However, you can access a wide range **local pharmacies** like Lloyds or Rowlands, as well as large retailers such as **Superdrug or Boots**.

Supermarket Brands



ASDA

M&S

Sainsbury's

**co
op**

TESCO

Morrisons

Waitrose

Settling

in the UK



Communicating at Work

Whilst living and working in the UK, it will become apparent that the country is culturally diverse, especially in the NHS. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusivity are core principles, and this should be reflected in your working practice. Here are some key things to bear in mind during your training.

Within the country, there are many phrases and expressions that are characteristics of the British English language, as well as the local regional dialects and accents. You also must remember that your colleagues' and patients' first language may not be English either.

Most common nationalities of NHS staff		
	British	1,112,659
	Indian	32,117
	Filipino	25,423
	Irish	14,151
	Polish	10,520
	Nigerian	10,494
	Portuguese	7,831
	Italian	6,660
	Spanish	5,405
	Romanian	5,251
	Pakistani	4,902
	Zimbabwean	4,780
	English	4,476
	Ghanaian	3,395
	Greek	3,348
	Egyptian	2,895
	Malaysian	2,581

To familiarise yourself with the accents and culture, we suggest staying updated with current affairs, through the news and television. There are also many British movies and shows that explore the lifestyle in the UK.

You may also know that the British have a known reputation for being polite and well-mannered, so they will say 'sorry' (even if something's not their fault) and 'please' and 'thank you' multiple times in a conversation.

You will be working alongside various professionals with different roles, fields of expertise and levels of responsibility so it is important to treat others how you would like to be treated. To find further advice on communicating with others in your workplace, you can access the [BMA's website](#).

With this in mind please remember that if you ever feel that you, your colleague, or a patient are being discriminated, bullied, harassed, or abused by other patients, colleagues, or superiors, you are encouraged to speak up against this and please do understand that these issues are taken very seriously! Should you want to raise any concerns you can find a guide on the [BMA's website](#), use the [GMC's raising and acting on concerns flowchart](#) or seek support from the [Freedom to Speak Up Guardians](#) to help you decide whether to raise a concern.

Wellbeing Support



Your mental wellbeing

Working in healthcare comes with challenges. It is therefore important that you make time for your own wellbeing and mental health to support your work/life balance. We understand the demanding work and training schedules you have, with frequent rotations and the additional pressures of life outside of work, so we want to remind you of all the wellbeing resources you can access.

Lead Employer, the NHS and many mental health charities have made various forms of support for different cases that are available to all our colleagues-in-training, you can find these different forms of support below.

As your **Lead Employer** we are your first point of contact for your wellbeing, so we have signposted a **Wellbeing Hub** on our website, where you can find a self-referral to Health, Work and Wellbeing, information on financial support and bereavement.

CLICK HERE An orange rounded rectangular button with the text "CLICK HERE" in white capital letters. To the right of the text is a white mouse cursor icon pointing towards the button.

The NHS also has several key programmes that are in place to develop a culture of wellbeing so you can feel supported and well at work. You can access that through their website.

CLICK HERE An orange rounded rectangular button with the text "CLICK HERE" in white capital letters. To the right of the text is a white mouse cursor icon pointing towards the button.

MindEd was created by a group of organisations and is funded by Health Education England Department of Health and Social Care and the Department for Education.

CLICK HERE An orange rounded rectangular button with the text "CLICK HERE" in white capital letters. To the right of the text is a white mouse cursor icon pointing towards the button.

Headspace is a science-backed app in mindfulness and meditation, providing unique tools and resources to help reduce stress, build resilience, and aid better sleep. They offer free access to all NHS staff with an NHS email address until 31 December 2022. Find out how to get access on the NHS website.

CLICK HERE An orange rounded rectangular button with the text "CLICK HERE" in white capital letters. To the right of the text is a white mouse cursor icon pointing towards the button.

Wellbeing support



Mind is a national mental health charity that offer advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem. You can access their wellbeing services by clicking on the link button.

CLICK HERE



Insight IAPT is a not-for-profit organisation providing free talking therapies across the UK on behalf of the NHS. You can access their support in their website and use the code access code: STHKWELL.

CLICK HERE



Unmind is a mental health platform that empowers staff to proactively improve their mental wellbeing. Using scientifically backed assessments, tools and training you can measure and manage your personal mental health needs, including digital programmes designed to help with stress, sleep, coping, connection, fulfilment and nutrition. They are offering free access to NHS staff until 31st December 2022. Find out how to get access on the NHS Website.

CLICK HERE



Practitioner Health is a free, primary care led mental health assessment and treatment service, established to care for doctors and dentists across England. This confidential service has been partnered with NHS England so NHS professionals can access the mental health care and support they need at this very difficult time. You can access their support on their website.

CLICK HERE



Wellbeing support



Physical health and wellbeing

Looking after your physical health is key to supporting your overall health and wellbeing, this can be in the form of improving your sleep patterns, to changing your diet, or even just introducing a small amount of light exercise.

There are numerous ways to improve your physical health so we have collated information, links and a few useful tools on how different ways to improve your physical health.

NHS England works with several organisations, like The Invictus Games Foundation (IGF) and Challenge the Wild, to offer physical health and wellbeing support to our NHS people

[CLICK HERE](#) An orange rounded rectangular button with the text "CLICK HERE" in white. A white mouse cursor icon is positioned over the button, pointing towards the text.

Better Health lots of free tools and support to kickstart your health. From how to get you started like **couch to 5K** or access introductory **offers on gyms and leisure centres**.

[CLICK HERE](#) An orange rounded rectangular button with the text "CLICK HERE" in white. A white mouse cursor icon is positioned over the button, pointing towards the text.

Get tips and services from **This Girl Can** on their collection of activities

[CLICK HERE](#) An orange rounded rectangular button with the text "CLICK HERE" in white. A white mouse cursor icon is positioned over the button, pointing towards the text.

Supporting you in the workplace

Neurodiversity in the Workplace

We recognise 'neurodiversity' as the way in which everyone's brains naturally work differently from one another. Most people are neurotypical or 'not neurodivergent', but around 1 in 7 people are neurodivergent, meaning that they behave, think, process, and interpret information in ways that differ from most other people.

Traditional working practices are often designed with a neurotypical society in mind, which can make it difficult for neurodivergent professionals to thrive at work.

There are different ways in which Lead Employer can provide support for neurodivergent colleagues in training, such as the below:

 **Access to Work** is an employment support programme which helps you to overcome barriers in work due to a disability or mental health condition. They can support you if:

- You have a neurodiverse condition
- You have a hearing or sight impairment
- You have an MSK condition or similar
- You are experiencing long covid
- You require support with your mental health

 **A reasonable adjustment** is a particular adjustment to your daily working life that will enable you to best fulfil the requirements of your training contract.

Potential reasonable adjustments that could be implemented depending on your needs:

- Adjustments to working hours
- Modification to duties
- Time to attend appointments
- Phased return to work if you are returning from time out of training
- Modified or specialist equipment (through Access to work process)
- Support when you rotate host organisations as part of your specialty training



If you feel that you require additional support during your training relating to reasonable adjustments, wellbeing support or advice around neurodiversity support, please contact the lead employer by email on lead.employer@sthk.nhs.uk or call us to discuss this privately on 0151 478 7777. Otherwise, visit [our dedicated webpage](#) for more information.

Useful Links

BMA : Life and work in the UK

[CLICK HERE](#)

NHS Employers: Working and training in the NHS – a guide for International Medical Graduates

[CLICK HERE](#)

International Medical Graduates (IMGs) who choose to follow a career in psychiatry in the UK.

[CLICK HERE](#)

Health Education England : Doctors in Training.

[CLICK HERE](#)

UK training & career development opportunities in surgery for international medical graduates (IMGs)

[CLICK HERE](#)

The King's Fund: How does the NHS in England Work?

[CLICK HERE](#)

RCGP Overseas Doctors Guide | Living and working in the UK as a GP: a guide for overseas doctors and doctors and their families

[CLICK HERE](#)

NHS Business Service Authority for information on how the NHS Pension Scheme works.

[CLICK HERE](#)

Working in Britain for non-UK doctors

[CLICK HERE](#)

GOV.UK for governmental services

[CLICK HERE](#)