

## Multi stakeholder approach to supporting refugee health professionals into employment - the case of the UK

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## Background Context

- The NHS has had a historical reliance on the international migration of labour despite the ambivalent attitude to refugee and overseas doctors coming to the UK.
- Approximately 45% of doctors working in the NHS qualified outside the UK. Competition for posts has meant that a number have taken non consultant career grade posts (nearly 70% of NCCG are overseas qualified) and locum posts.
- Recognition of the need to support refugee health professionals (RHPs) back into employment resulted in the Department of Health investing over £2million between 2001 and 2005 in individual initiatives

## Current Context

- Disinvestment and end of time limited projects in the UK - resources have been cut back nationally and regionally both within the refugee sector but also within the main health sector
- Reduced number of refugees (temporary?) and the shift in focus of the Home Office to supporting new arrivals and not established refugees
- Oversupply of medical graduates - growth of medical schools resulting in oversupply of UK graduates and closing door on IMGs with resultant backlash. All this compounded by introduction of Modernising Medical Careers and Foundation Training Posts

## Where are we now?

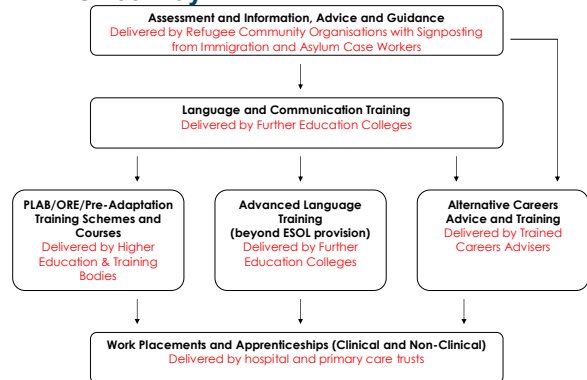
- A significant number of RHPs have been supported into employment in the NHS but, our job is far from over...
- Absence of national lead resulted in closer partnership working and collaboration on projects both nationally and regionally to achieve desired outcomes
- We have ensured that the baton has been passed from the Dept of Health to NHS Employers who are now the national strategic lead on refugee employment in the NHS
- The ARRIVE (National) and Building Bridges (London) initiatives have secured combined funds of £2million over 3 years to support refugees into employment in the NHS

## Building Bridges

Building Bridges is a multi-agency, multi-professional initiative that aims to co-ordinate and integrate London services for refugee healthcare professionals to ensure that employers have confidence in the ability of refugee healthcare professionals to deliver high quality patient care

Hosted by NHS Employers, Building Bridges is built on an agreed pathway for RHPs and the commitment of key stakeholders to work more collaboratively to achieve our key objectives.

## RHPs Pathway



### So, who are our Key Stakeholders?

- Employers (NHS Employers)
- Regional and National Government (GLA, Dept of Health, Home Office)
- Professional Bodies (eg BMA, RCN)
- Regulators (eg GMC, GDC, NMC)
- Educational and Training Bodies (eg Postgraduate Medical and Dental Deaneries, Foundation Training Office, Medical, Dental and Nursing Schools and Further Education Colleges)
- Statutory Organisations (eg Job Centres and Immigration)
- Voluntary Organisations delivering advice and guidance
- Refugee Health Professionals

### The way forward

In our work with RHPs we remain focused on:

- Meeting the needs of employers
- Working to tackle health inequalities
- Ensuring the provision of quality assured courses and training schemes
- Working across professional boundaries to strengthen the voice of the professional refugees (with teachers, engineers etc)
- Working collaboratively across a range of stakeholders to ensure stronger voice and lobbying power to secure long term and sustainable funding streams

**Thank you**

**Any questions?**

### Useful links and references

Building Bridges:

<http://www.nhsemployers.org/primary/workforce-3024.cfm>

Butler, C and Eversley, J (2007) Guiding their way: assisting refugee health professionals. *The Clinical Teacher* 4:146-152. Blackwell Publishing.

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