WHAT EVERY INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL GRADUATE GP TRAINEE SHOULD KNOW NOW

1. International Medical Graduates or IMGs are an incredibly valuable element of the GP workforce. Over 40% of all GP Trainees are IMGs and that number is rising.

2. IMGs are over three times as likely to have left medical practice in the UK in the 5 years following first GMC registration, compared to UK graduates. IMGs are a globally mobile community of doctors and are less likely to continue working in a country with declining pay and conditions, compared to UK graduates.

3. IMG GP Trainees have been hit by over a decade of real-terms pay cuts and the loss of pay parity with hospital trainees, just as badly as UK graduates.

4. Many IMG GP Trainees will want to take industrial action to tackle this pay erosion and achieve Full Pay Restoration but will be worried about the effect that this may have on visas.

5. Visa sponsorship will be terminated if you are absent from work unpaid for 28 days or longer in a calendar year. However, unpaid leave taken to participate in legally organised industrial action is exempt from this rule.

6. If your salary is reduced for any period of time, your sponsor will be required to notify the Home Office. Although your sponsor is required to report a reduction in salary to the Home Office, if the cause of this salary reduction is legally organised industrial action, the sponsor cannot end their sponsorship of your visa.

7. There will be no impact on your eligibility for further leave to remain or ILR (indefinite leave to remain) in regard to salary reduction or excessive unpaid leave where the reason for either is legally organised industrial action.

8. If you are absent from work for 10 consecutive working days or more without permission, your employer may be required to notify the Home Office of this absence. However, the BMA have committed that we will not undertake any form of industrial action that will negatively impact the legal status of a worker’s visa – either future or present.

9. If you have particular circumstances that you wish to discuss or that do not fall within the guidance set out here, please contact the BMA’s Immigration Advisory Service:

   Phone: 0300 123 1233
   Email: support@bma.org.uk