



Antony

Antony from Sydney, Australia, now based in Earls Court, London.

I worked as a classical musician before deciding to train as a GP in Sydney, Australia. Coming to the UK had always been 'the plan' as there are excellent career opportunities for me and my partner, who is also a musician. I completed my GP training in Sydney and we moved over with our children in 2014.

When I first moved, I didn't know that I would need to go through the Induction and Refresher (I&R) scheme, and didn't find out for some time. By mid-February 2014, however, I was enrolled in the I&R scheme and, as the training and general practice in Australia is probably as close as possible to the British system, it was decided that my placement needn't be long.

I was placed at a practice in Greenford, which was fairly close to my home, three days a week for six months. The support during this placement was very good and one of the scheme's greatest strengths. My supervisor was very supportive from both a medical point of view and in showing me how I fitted in as a GP in the system. Without this support, I think I'd have a bit floundered to begin with and been more uncomfortable with my patients.

As I was on placement part-time, I was also able to work as a healthcare assessor for a private provider. This kept my medical hand in a little but also helped financially. I also attended the peer group meetings throughout my placement, which are certainly the scheme's other great strength.

I am absolutely glad I did the scheme; it was hard work but enjoyable. It could always be improved but much has already been done in the right direction since I went through the scheme – less assessments, more funding and the placements are more personal to each person's needs.

Moving to the UK has been very exciting, my children are loving life here and my partner's having a wonderful time at work. I am delighted to be working as a full-time salaried GP in a practice in Earls Court, London.

After being a locum, I'm enjoying being part of a team and it's rewarding being able to shape the practice and how it operates. Next year I will be taking on the supervision of F2 doctors too.

Part of the joy of being a GP is having continuity with your patients, being part of their lives and getting to know them and their families. The more people know about the I&R scheme, the better and the fact that you can start it before you move to England is excellent.

My advice to others would be: look on it as a positive experience and you'll find it very beneficial. I would advocate finding other work while undertaking the scheme.

