

RELOCATION & RETENTION STRATEGY

Task	What You Can Do	What Goes Wrong	Workarounds
Pre-arrival engagement	Engage early with the trainee before they arrive. Focus on maintaining direct contact instead of just HR communication, and understanding their needs such as housing, family, and travel. Provide them practical information about the region they are moving into.	The trainee may only receive formal administrative information, and no assistance or preparation for real-world conditions. They may also have anxiety and uncertainty before their arrival that remains unaddressed.	Assign a contact person for the trainee that can provide personal, tailored information. This allows for early relationship-building between the trainee and the contact, but also between the trainee and the community.
Practical relocation support	Help the trainee physically relocate by providing them with accommodation options and access to essential services. Keep travel logistics in mind, including costs and the stress of moving with family.	Accommodation may not be available in the area, or travel may be complex or too costly for the trainee. This may cause the trainee to arrive stressed and unstable before their placement.	Maintain a housing list or partnerships with local accommodation options, and provide guidance if you cannot provide accommodation directly. Ensure you address all barriers early.
Orientation and first impressions	Make the first weeks of placement smooth and supportive. Ensure there are early introductions to the systems and teams that the trainee will be working with, and all expectations are clearly outlined.	Trainees may find that the orientation they receive is overwhelming or irrelevant, which can lead to them feeling lost or unsupported - and hence having an overall poor early experience.	Keep orientation practical and relevant, and provide clear contacts for your trainees in case they have further queries. Check in with them early and frequently.
Early support (First 4-12 weeks)	Stabilise the trainee experience. Check-in regularly with all trainees, provide support in managing their workload, and ensure access to supervision.	The trainee may become overwhelmed if they do not receive appropriate support when needed, and may disengage early from their placement.	Be proactive with checking in on your trainees, and provide them flexible adjustments from the beginning. Encourage open communication.
Integration into workplace and community	Help the trainee feel like they belong. Check that they feel included in the team. Provide them information on community, social and professional connection opportunities.	The trainee may become isolated, especially in rural settings. They may have no connections outside of their placement, or their partners and family may be struggling to adjust.	Facilitate introductions between your trainees and those on their team. Include them in social and professional events, and provide local contacts for them to network.
Supporting career pathways	Show trainees a future in the system by highlighting opportunities beyond their current placement and career progression pathways. Link any current training experiences to future roles it may impact.	The trainee may have no clear pathway for beyond their placement, which can result in them leaving the region even if they've had a positive experience in other aspects.	Make sure to start conversations about their career early in their placement. Make pathway planning visible and clear, and connect them to future opportunities and employers.
Maintaining connection beyond placement	Keep trainees connected after they leave. Maintain ongoing contact after their placement ends, and invite them to return. Provide the opportunity to maintain professional relationships within the workplace and community.	The trainee may disengage after placement. If ongoing contact is not maintained, the trainee may also have no pathways for returning into the region or the organisation they completed placement in.	Maintain a simple contact list of all current and past trainees, and follow up with them periodically. Create opportunities for them for return placements, fellowships, or employment in the region.