

Retention of clinical staff following handover to national health systems

Plain-language research summary

Study type	Cohort study
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The finding, in one sentence

Retention two years after handover was 79% where posts were nationally salaried from the outset, and 41% where they were not.

How the study was done

- Eleven handed-over programmes were followed for 24 months after transfer.
- Staff were tracked individually rather than by post, so a filled vacancy did not mask a departure.

What it showed

- How a post is funded during the programme predicts whether the person stays after it ends.
- Parallel salary scales produce a cliff at handover that no amount of transition planning removes.
- Retention is a better measure of handover success than clinic opening rates.

What it does not show

- Eleven programmes is a small sample and the confidence intervals are correspondingly wide.
- Two of the eleven transferred during a period of national health worker industrial action, which likely depressed their figures.

Independence

We do not commission our own evaluations and do not hold approval rights over findings. Where a study has shown our work to be ineffective, it is published alongside the rest.