

# Reducing Differential Outcomes: Educational Support for International Medical Graduates in General Practice



## Case Study Four: **Reducing Differential Outcomes: Educational Support for International Medical Graduates in General Practice**

The Scottish Training Enhanced Programme (STEP) was established in response to recommendations from the Judicial Review which considered whether the Royal College of General Practitioners' Clinical Skills Assessment, which is part of the final examination at the conclusion of General Practice specialty training, was racially biased<sup>12</sup>. While the report found in favour of the examination as a fair assessment, it recommended that UK deaneries do more to address the differential attainment of International Medical Graduates (IMGs) and black and minority UK Graduates in the examination. STEP is one intervention which addresses these recommendations.

The programme includes early recognition of the special educational needs of IMGs and a one-day enhanced induction event to which newly appointed IMG first year GP Specialty Trainees<sup>13</sup> and their Educational Supervisors are invited and an ongoing programme of support offered by the Educational Supervisor and at regional level. The enhanced induction event includes an introduction to the evidence regarding differential attainment and factors which can influence success. Additional sessions include a focus on Culture, Communication and Reflection.

The STEP programme has been informed by qualitative research with IMGs who successfully passed the Clinical Skills Assessment on their first attempt, which identified a number of factors associated with success<sup>14</sup>. These factors are:

- Insight into challenges
- Proactive approach to learning
- Focus on refining consultation skills

- Learning with peers, particularly UK graduates
- Feedback is actively sought, valued and acted upon
- Supportive relationships

The induction event includes videos of IMGs who participated in the research telling their stories of success and sharing tips, which received positive feedback.

The STEP programme was established in September 2015 and has delivered two enhanced induction events for GP Trainees in September 2015 and November 2016. A further two enhanced induction events are planned for 2017 in recognition of the move to biannual recruitment of GP Trainees.

Participants who had been invited as first year GP Trainees were also offered an event during their second specialty training year. However, the responses indicated that the majority did not feel this was necessary as their needs were being met locally with support from their Educational Supervisor. The three second-year GP Speciality Trainees who responded with a request for additional support were supported by their local Training Programme Director.

Evaluation of the programme is still at an early stage since the GP Trainees who began in the programme in September 2015 are now only half way through their second year of training and most have not yet sat the first exam of the three-part summative examination (the Applied Knowledge Test). We expect the first group of trainees who participated in the STEP programme to complete their GP Specialty Training in August 2018. Evidence of their performance in the examination will demonstrate whether the STEP programme GP Specialty Trainees have performed better than trainees prior to the introduction of the programme or those who did not participate.

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In the interim, evaluation has been conducted for both STEP Enhanced Induction events. This suggests that participants have valued the programme for raising their awareness of the evidence, and providing them with additional support and resources. The central role of the Educational Supervisors has been emphasised and is supported by evidence from other UK deaneries and specialities.

Non-UK graduates and their supervisors provided particularly positive feedback about the STEP Enhanced Induction events, as reflected in the following quotations:




*“Positive and helpful atmosphere. I feel the Deanery is taking good care of its trainees.”*

non-UK graduate trainee, first cohort



*“It was very helpful to share stories about cultural differences with each other.”*

non-UK graduate trainee, second cohort



*“It's been a great learning experience, and after it I felt empowered, which makes a refreshing change from feeling less than UK graduates.”*

non-UK graduate trainee, second cohort



*“As an educational supervisor I liked this approach as it gave me insight into the difficulties my trainee and others had experienced during integration into UK society.”*

Educational Supervisor

<sup>12</sup>The MRCGP is the summative examination taken by trainees at the conclusion of their General Practice specialty training. It consists of three elements, an Applied Knowledge Test, a Clinical Skills Examination and a Work-Based Assessment. Trainees must pass this examination in order to practice as a GP in the United Kingdom. The Clinical Skills Assessment, which was the subject of the judicial review, is administered by the Royal College of General Practitioners.

<sup>13</sup>These are GP trainees in their first year of specialty training placement within a GP practice.

<sup>14</sup>Ele Ragg, Jeremiah O'Rourke and Ronald MacVicar, 2015. International medical graduates: a qualitative exploration of factors associated with success in the clinical skills assessment. *Education for Primary Care*. 26(6) 378-385.

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