

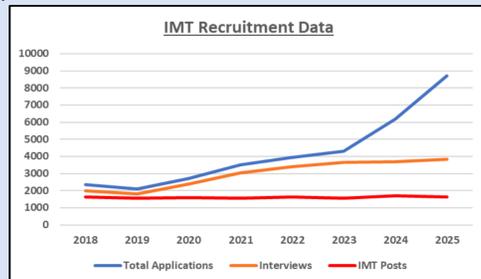
Equality at Work: Establishing a Novel International Medical Graduate Training Academy for Gloucester Hospitals NHSFT

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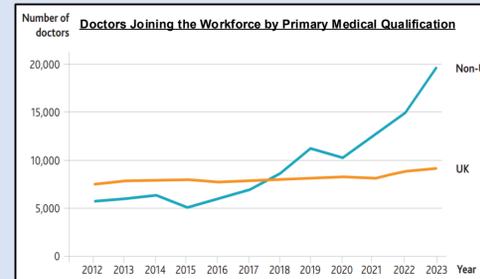
BACKGROUND AND AIMS:

Doctors joining from abroad have driven the total medical workforce headcount to grow at the fastest rate documented since records were published in 2013. This is the primary reason that ethnic minority doctors are now a larger component of the workforce than white doctors. In 2023, over two thirds of new starters (68%) to NHS Trusts were non-UK graduates, who attained their primary medical qualification abroad. This cohort has grown from under half (47%) of joiners in 2017. The high numbers of International Medical Graduates (IMGs) being recruited nationally means it is crucial that staff inductions and local training pathways are tailored to be inclusive for doctors from a broad variety of backgrounds. The GMC (2024) recommends that in addition to effectively integrating doctors joining from abroad, there must then be open and equitable career pathways available to aid retention and help to ensure a robust line of trainers and leaders for the future workforce.



AIMS:

- To create an *IMG/LED Gloucester Training Academy* that effectively and equitably integrates non-training doctors into the NHS and promotes high quality training opportunities
- To establish an *IMT equivalency training programme* at Gloucester Hospitals



Data from 2023 demonstrates, the proportion of IMGs in UK training programmes within Medicine is 32%. Therefore, the vast majority of this workforce are employed on local Trust contracts, out of formalised national training pathways, and require strong internal policies, standards and opportunities to thrive and progress. The number of locally employed doctors (LEDs) is likely to be higher in the current climate, as the competition for places at Internal Medical Trainee (IMT) level has grown significantly since 2021 and the latest competition ratios for 2025 are 5.33 with 8728 appointable applications submitted for 1636 posts. In addition, since 2021 IMGs with GMC registration have been invited to apply in round 1 and if unsuccessful will be exploring alternative training/employment routes. Consequently, individual Trusts need to reflect on this and consider how training and career development should be designed and organised for IMGs and LEDs to adequately recognise learning and skill development.

METHODS & RESULTS:

- An **IMG/LED Academy Steering Committee** was initially created to help guide and structure improvements to the Trust's current professional and pastoral pathways for non-training doctors.
- A **focus group** was established to engage and interview present IMGs/LEDs working in the Trust, and explore their insights on career progression, training quality and integration into UK life.
- This was complemented by a Trust wide **online survey** that all IMGs/LEDs were invited to complete.
- Using this qualitative data, we utilised stakeholder engagement, budgetary funding, educational resources and motivation to focus on four core pillars of professional and personal development;

- 1) INDUCTION
- 2) EDUCATION
- 3) WELFARE
- 4) TRAINING

1. INDUCTION

- “Networking + social groups”
- “On-call shadowing”
- “Mentoring scheme”
- “Advanced care planning”

- ✓ Full Trust induction over 2-days
- ✓ Clinical skills induction programme (LP, US cannula)
- ✓ Invite to Trust IMG WhatsApp group for every new-starter
- ✓ ‘Buddy’ on the rota for 4 weeks shadowing
- ✓ IMG/LED with at least 2 years experience in the Trust assigned as peer mentor
- ✓ Intranet link to ‘Essentials for Living in the UK’
- ✓ Advanced care planning and mental capacity sessions at induction

2. EDUCATION

- “Education on Trust clinical pathways”
- “PDPs and e-portfolio”
- “Research and QI”
- “Help with MRCP exams”
- “Access to IMT and SpR teaching”
- “Clinical skills and simulation”

- ✓ Twice yearly IMG Clinical Skills Day (CVC, pleural and ascitic drain, DCCV, LP, US cannula)
- ✓ Human Factors and Acute Care Simulation Day for IMGs/LEDs
- ✓ MRCP PACES teaching programme
- ✓ Access to Bronze QI training with project mentor assigned on starting
- ✓ Supervisors informed that IMGs/LEDs should attend formal IMT/SpR teaching programme
- ✓ Stroke, PPCI, PE thrombolysis simulation training

3. WELFARE

- “Difficulty obtaining educational supervisor”
- “No welfare groups”
- “Issues sourcing accommodation”
- Help with finding school/nursery
- “Safe areas to live”

- ✓ £30,000 procured to cover the cost of assigning a guaranteed educational supervisor to every new IMG/LED starter
- ✓ Newly created role of IMG Tutor to oversee professional and welfare support to all non-training grade IMGs
- ✓ Trust guarantor form to secure private accommodation prior to starting
- ✓ Social events arranged to explore the local area and good places to live
- ✓ Peer-to-peer welfare scheme established with senior IMG doctors to provide trouble-shooting and support to new starters

4. TRAINING

- “Poor access to outpatient clinics”
- “Need ITU rotation”
- “Alternative certificate pathway”
- “Taster days”

- ✓ IMT equivalency programme with funding for 6 posts starting August 2025
- ✓ Guaranteed ITU rotations for 4-6 non-training doctors each year
- ✓ A GP shadowing and mentorship programme has been established to help with specialty applications
- ✓ Rotations in all medical specialties secured for broad-based training
- ✓ Scheduled outpatient clinics every 2 weeks for IMG/LED doctors
- ✓ Rotations through SDEC for clinic experience and procedural exposure

DISCUSSION:

To ensure sustainability and continued development, we have conducted a progress review of the project to date and present the following notable findings:

- IMG Academy now well established with 100% of new starters successfully having an educational supervisor assigned at induction. These are fully funded and job planned.
- Enhanced training opportunities reported and higher achievement of training competencies being demonstrated, with particular note to the quality of simulation and practical procedural teaching
- Higher number of successful applications to specialty training for posts starting August 2025
- IMG GP taster and mentoring scheme led by the Clinical Chair of the Primary Care Training Hub

IMT EQUIVALENCY PROGRAMME



2050 Applicants!

- ✓ IMT1-3 structure with final-year on the SpR rota
- ✓ Fixed-term 3-year contract with annual progression review
- ✓ VCP completed and long-term funding secured
- ✓ 18 short-listed applications and 6 posts successfully filled
- ✓ Funded ICU rotation secured for CT-2 year
- ✓ Educational supervisors with experience in alternative certificate training

Next Steps

- Expand IMT equivalent posts to 8-12
- 1st IMG Academy conference
- Increase non-training IMG/LED study budget to £750/year to cover more courses and professional development