

Rethinking postgraduate medical education in today's India – a comparison with western systems

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Aims

To compare and contrast the medical postgraduate training programme of India with the UK and western universities.

Methods

We analysed the admission process, curriculum and training requirements during the postgraduate medicine programme. We compared the course requirements and examination process. We contrasted the strengths and weaknesses of the systems.

Resources: medical council prospectus, university and RCP websites, and discussion with interest groups.

Results

The number of applicants for postgraduate training in India makes admissions very competitive.

The training is often not as well structured and the examination process is old-fashioned in comparison to the UK. The strengths include the stress on clinical diagnosis, greater volumes for teaching and a more discussion-oriented approach.

However, the weaknesses include inadequate regular assessment, lack of identifying the weakness in various medical domains and a laborious examination system of *viva voce*, long cases which are often not time bound in contrast to the popular objectively structured exams (OSCEs) in the UK.

Conclusions

Although the Indian system of postgraduate medical education caters effectively to the numerous graduates that pass through its portals, there is much to improve on and learn from other systems. ■

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