

Royal College of Physicians Medical Training Initiative: making the difference

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Aims

The Medical Training Initiative (MTI) scheme supports international medical graduates (IMGs) seeking short-term training posts in the UK of up to 2 years in length through international partnerships, locating of well-qualified trainees and often linking with UK trust training posts. By facilitating General Medical Council (GMC) registration, sponsoring Tier 5 visas and providing additional benefits and pastoral support, the Royal College of Physicians' (RCP's) MTI scheme aims to bring the highest standards of UK medical training to a diverse global group and make a significant impact on the development of medical training, knowledge and skills in the partner countries that we engage with.

Methods

In order to deliver the highest standard of UK training posts to IMG applicants, the scheme facilitates two routes of application to acquire sponsorship from the RCP. A prospective candidate may find their own post in the UK for which we provide administrative support, or they may interview in their home countries. The interviews are conducted in collaboration with a growing number of institutional partners by the MTI team and associate international advisers throughout the year to place candidates in a suitable training post advertised to us by partnered NHS trusts, often within a 6-month timeframe. While our doctors are in the UK, we maintain a comprehensive pastoral support service including quarterly induction events held at the RCP, conducting trust visits, ensuring contact with supervising consultants and issuing progress and conclusion reports to assess the development of our MTI trainees, and consistently welcome feedback to identify areas for future improvement.

Results

Since the inception of the MTI scheme in 2009, the RCP has facilitated UK training programmes of up to 2 years for an average of 260 IMGs each year. Currently the programme is supporting 288 IMG trainees in UK training posts. A recently conducted impact assessment revealed that, of those who completed MTI

posts before 1 January 2016, 94.8% agree that their time in the UK has significantly enhanced their clinical skill set, 94.9% of returning IMG trainees would recommend the scheme to their colleagues and 91% state they have established long-term links for future collaborations in medicine. IMGs on returning to their home country have introduced many innovations and other developments, including the implementation of new specialty centres that will greatly influence the quality and delivery of teaching. In the last year, the MTI trainees have been able to acquire a postgraduate diploma in UK medical practice, awarded through association with the University of Liverpool.

Conclusions

Through word of mouth and an expanding network of partners, the MTI scheme has emerged with a global reputation for delivering medical excellence. The participating IMGs have mostly been placed from resource-poor countries and have been able to substantially enhance their skills and expertise in core medicine or at specialty level, while promoting exchange of knowledge with UK counterparts. By building new relationships with UK deaneries and trusts, we are establishing and regulating the standard of training opportunities nationwide and providing hospitals with a highly qualified and capable workforce, addressing a key area in NHS recruitment shortages. The variety of IMG medical experience illuminates the need for further strategy and pastoral decisions, providing for example a better understanding of training requirements in the southeast Asian medical climate particularly. RCP Global continues to cultivate its MTI connections and sites of empirical exchange with new participating countries such as Jamaica and Egypt to enhance the world's medical climate and to strive for innovation and development with the highest standards of clinical practice. ■

Conflict of interest statement

None declared.

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