

Application support for IMT: a bridge towards a future career

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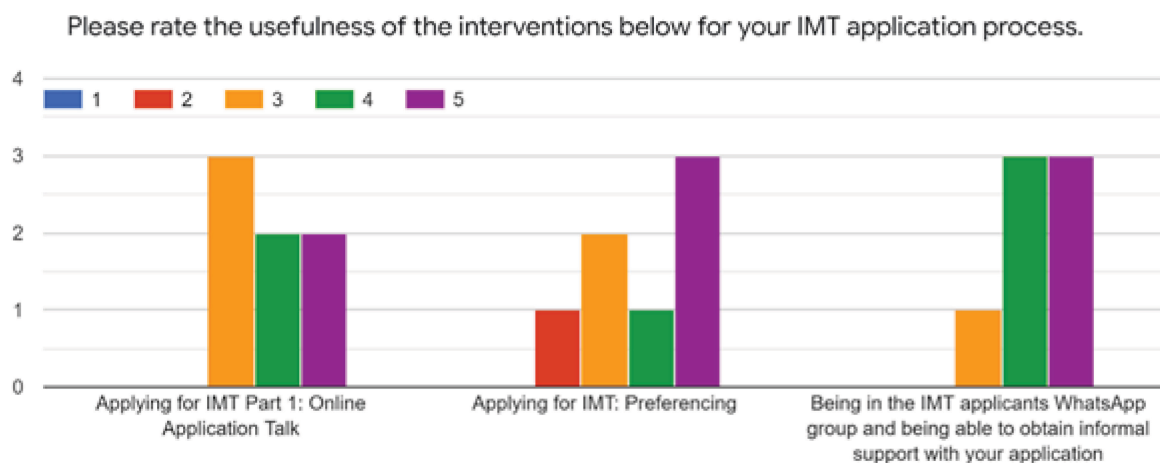


Fig 1. Feedback on the QIP.

Introduction

The Internal Medicine Training (IMT) programme acts as an important entry point for junior doctors wishing to pursue a career in a medical specialty in the UK. Applying for higher training programmes, such as IMT, is a process that is often long and challenging, and not always successful. With the changes in how exams are structured and conducted, it can be quite challenging for non-UK graduates.

This is especially true in a district hospital in the east of England, which hosts a significant proportion of international medical graduates who are not familiar with the application process. This is an ongoing second cycle of a quality improvement project (QIP) that has been successful last year (2021 intake) and is now being continued for the 2022 intake by two internal medical trainees, and supervised by a geriatric medical consultant. It is also very well supported by a good number of medical consultants at the trust, as well as the Medical Education department.

Methods and materials

A survey was sent to the participants prior to and after each intervention. The following sectors are involved in a cycle of the QIP:

- > part 1: applying for IMT – online application, focused on the Oriel application
- > part 2: interview preparation talk – focused on the new IMT interview structure format and predicted sample questions
- > part 3: mock interviews – conducted in settings to reflect the actual interview environment, with detailed formal feedback for each candidate, and allowing mock observers
- > part 4: preferencing talk.

A final survey will be sent after candidates have received their offers. All participants are part of a WhatsApp group and encouraged to raise any concerns or queries throughout the process.

Improvements for 2022 intake

- > Conducting mock interviews that actual interviews.
- > Widening the scope of the QIP by allowing non-local international medical graduates from different regions of UK to join the talk.

Results and discussions

As offers have not yet been made for the 2022 intake, we do not have final results for this year at the time of writing. However, we have excellent informal and formal feedback for our talks and mock interviews.

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Results from 2021 intake

A final survey was sent out to assess whether participants had received offers and how helpful the different stages of the project had been. The results revealed that seven of the eight applicants (87.5%) who used the project interventions were offered a place in the IMT programme. Among those, six applicants (85.7%) either received their top choice or are satisfied with the offer and four out of seven successful individuals received upgraded offers.

Conclusion

This project has clearly demonstrated the effectiveness of near-peer mentoring support in postgraduate training application, despite the small scale. We are aiming to carry over this QIP to next year, which will complete 3rd cycle of QIP. We are also planning to expand the scope up to regional and national level. ■