The evaluation of a period of extended shadowing for foundation year one doctors at induction and mentorship schemes at Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust

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Background

The 2020/21 cohort of foundation year-1 (FY1) doctors were offered interim foundation year-1 (FiY1) placements due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These FiY1 doctors started in June 2020 (2 months ahead of their initial scheduled start date) and a buddy scheme pairing FiY1s and current FY1 doctors was established. FY1 doctors were paired up with FiY1s in the same specialty in which they were due to start in August or a closely allied specialty. Feedback from the scheme was overwhelmingly positive1 so we wanted to apply those modifications to the 2021/22 cohort.

Results

Thirty-one of the 66 new FY1s replied to the initial survey, 85% of those felt that the shadowing period prepared them well for starting as FY1 doctors (Fig 1). 100% of those opting for the extended shadowing period were happy with their choice compared with 85% of those opting for compulsory shadowing only (Fig 2). At the beginning of the first placement in August, 75% of new FY1 doctors felt comfortable to contact one of their mentors as needed.

Key message

A shadowing placement for new FY1 doctors in the same trust and specialty in which they are due to start is effective in preparing and giving new FY1 doctors confidence ahead of starting their jobs in August. Optimising mentorship schemes is challenging. By assigning and offering a variety of mentors to the new FY1 doctors we encouraged them to utilise their mentors according to personal preference.

Reference