Differential attainment (DA) case study

**HEE North East & North Cumbria’s (HEE NE & NC) innovative approaches to support doctors who graduated outside of the UK**

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Overseas trainees can be on a different trajectory to achieving success, having to overcome the additional barriers of learning and working within a different educational and consulting environment. In this case study, we learn from Dr Rutt how HEE NE & NC have responded to this issue.

**What did they do?**

The GP school developed a range of solutions. Most apply to all trainees, while some provide focused support to overseas graduates. These include:

- Randomly selecting trainee preferences for allocations, rather than using recruitment and selection scores to rank
- Mixing up trainees from different backgrounds in study and teaching groups
- GP trainers exploring with trainees the challenges of being an overseas graduate and work on shared objectives

The school also runs a number of workshops at educator conferences and also on a local level to help trainers consider trainee needs. Trainers are also able to get further support, if they need it, when supporting an overseas trainee who is struggling.

**How does the random allocation of placements initiative work?**

Trainees apply to GP training as normal. Newly appointed trainees are then not asked to express their preference from fixed rotations, but are taken through a series of questions about what is more important to them (location or specialty; and which locality; which specialties.) Trainees are selected at random and allocated specific placements based on their expressed preferences, rather than based on performance at recruitment and selection.
Read HEE NE & NC’s detailed options paper regarding allocations for COGPED [here](#).

**What were the results?**

As there are no fixed rotations in these regions, (with the exception of the Targeted Enhanced Recruitment Scheme rotations) the result of the random allocation system is that all trainees are allocated a mix of placements. Developing a broader and more diverse network of colleagues can help overseas doctors’ familiarisation with UK practice.

**Closing the gap**

Durham and Tees valley developed a course called *Closing the gap*. The course is offered specifically to overseas trainees however all trainees are welcome to attend. Other areas in the region also developed similar courses.

This course uses roleplay consultations to equip GP international medical graduates with knowledge of working in the NHS and in the UK as a GP. The course explores cultural differences that international graduates may encounter in the UK and includes video feedback to help improve consulting skills.

**What were the results?**

Trainee feedback is collected after the *Closing the gap* sessions using a questionnaire. This allows trainees to score various aspects of the session, the trainers themselves and also any other free text for comments.

Dr Rutt notes that the feedback has been consistently positive. In the March – May 2017 feedback, 19 out of the 20 attendees all strongly agreed that the content was appropriate to their needs.

Want to know more?

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