Differential attainment (DA) case study

How the RCPsych are supporting doctors from overseas and empowering trainers to have difficult conversations

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The Royal College of Psychiatry (RCPsych) have developed a range of support materials for doctors entering UK practice and training from overseas including through Medical Training Initiative (MTI).

They have developed a multi-pronged approach:

- empowering trainers to have difficult conversations
- supporting trainees to settle in within practice
- promote awareness of MRCPsych

In addition, the college have promoted greater accountability and visibility of the challenges faced by overseas doctors entering UK practice and training, speaking at national educational conferences and running their own international medical graduates (IMG) conference for several years.

What support is provided for trainers?

The College run experiential workshops with the Forum Theatre to encourage trainers to initiate conversations with IMGs. These focus on helping trainer and trainee to identify the strengths and needs of doctors entering UK practice and training from overseas.

They have developed a mentoring programme for trainers helping doctors on the MTI scheme settle into UK clinical practice using a sustainable, collaborative model supported by employing trusts.

In addition the college provide online resources targeting:

- feedback and supervision skills – Dealing with trainees who may lack insight and appraising strengths as well as weaknesses
- trainers’ knowledge of the MRCPsych exams
Impact

Over 100 mentors have now been trained to support doctors entering UK training from overseas.

Over 150 trainers have attended the experiential workshop with Forum Theatre. Feedback received at these workshops show:

- 92% of delegates had increased awareness of IMG needs
- 100% of delegates found the interactive learning activities effective

What support is provided for trainees?

IMGs bring knowledge and experience to the NHS and the RCPsych support them to flourish. A range of support is available to doctors from overseas including those on the MTI scheme:

- early needs analysis identification between tutors and those new to UK practice focusing on areas of strength and learning needs to develop an individualised learning plan
- induction to working in the NHS is provided by the RCPsych and a range of reference materials including clinical placement guide
- mentoring from someone who is not their line manager and who has received specific training in supporting IMGs.

Impact

Every MTI doctor has their own mentor and the programme has received widespread support from this group of doctors.

What were the challenges?

Support works best when offered early in training but some may perceive such support to imply that they are inferior to UK graduates and may not engage. Moreover, failing to identify IMGs’ specific learning needs early may set them up to fail high stakes exams which drives the differential attainment in IMGs compared to UK graduates.

A sensitive induction that takes into account IMGs’ strengths as well as needs has been well received at the RCPsych. Mentoring support has enabled trainees to focus on their personal and professional growth without the inhibitions that they may experience in discussions with their clinical or educational supervisor.

Want to know more?

Online resources can be found on the RCPsych website

www.gmc-uk.org
- https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/training/international-medical-graduates
- https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/training
- https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/training/MTI
- https://www.youtube.com/user/RCofPsychiatrists

Or you can contact the clinical lead for the MTI support programme:

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