Scottish Trainees Enhanced Programme (STEP) for IMG doctors in GP training in NHS Education for Scotland (NES)

STEP is a programme aimed at giving international medical graduate (IMG) trainees an idea of the skills they will need as a GP trainee in the UK.

Through workshops and small group discussions, trainees can look at their own strengths and areas for development and gain insight into the factors that contribute to success.

Educational supervisors (ES) are encouraged to attend along with their trainee.

What is the problem?
NES identified that some groups of trainees are at higher risk of failing the RCGP exam which are associated with:

- primary Medical Qualification (PMQ) – those who qualified outside the UK
- the GP situational Judgement Test (SJT) – trainees who score 2 (a lower score)

What is the intervention?
It was identified that there are several interventions which may help IMG doctors such as:

- 1:2:1 mentoring
- language assistance
- video feedback.

NES designed STEP to support the additional needs of IMG trainees new to UK practice and increase their chance of passing the MRCGP exam without the need for an extension to training time.

STEP consists of two one-day workshops run in February and August each year to accommodate the two intake periods. The workshops consist of three formal sessions on:

- culture – introduction to the NHS
communication – introduction to communication skills on active listening
reflection - introduction to reflection skills

The workshop includes group discussion, linguistic exercises and shared experiences / success factors via video recordings.

What were the challenges?
In the first year UK graduates who had achieved a lower score on their SJT were invited to take part but were reluctant to do so as they felt singled out by the intervention. NES now only offers this course to IMGS as part of their induction.

What were the results?
NES are currently undertaking evaluation work with to assess the effectiveness of the programme.

Good feedback has been received from the attendees.

Feedback from trainees:
'I talked about things I have never spoken to anyone about before’

‘Felt my perceived disadvantage of being an IMG was resolved as the day went on’

‘Videos and tips from recently successful IMG’s made me realise the task ahead, increased my motivation’.

Feedback from educational supervisors:

‘[It’s] important for trainees to have the ES present and support them, understand the issues so we can support them better’

‘Good to attend with trainee- it strengthened our relationship and I understood the challenges faced by my trainee, everyone’s journey is different’.

Want to know more? Please contact Amjad Khan, Director of Postgraduate GP Education East on: amjad.khan@nes.scot.nhs.uk Or visit the website here: https://www.scotlanddeanery.nhs.scot/trainee-information/gp-specialty-training/scottish-trainee-enhanced-programme-step/