



Foundation Programme Annual Report 2009

Executive Summary

Report No. 1
December 2009

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The results from the first Foundation Programme Annual Report provide information never before available at a national level. This information will assist in policy development at all levels. Having the national picture may trigger more questions than the data answers, but the intention is that additional questions may be included in next year's report. The most meaningful results from the annual report will be evident when year on year comparisons can be made.

Foundation schools

There are 25 foundation schools across the UK. The number of Foundation Programmes under their auspices ranges from 73 to 812 at F1 and from 67 to 787 at F2.

Two foundation schools employ a full-time foundation school director (FSD), with the average being 0.5 FTE. The majority of FSDs continue with part-time clinical work. Thirteen foundation schools employ at least one full-time foundation school manager (FSM), with the average being 0.9 FTE. On average, there is 0.5 of a day per week of FSD time allocated to every 100 foundation doctors and 1.25 days per week of FSM time.

On average, 95% of F1 places and 91% of F2 places comprising two-year programmes were filled at the beginning of August 2009. An additional 3% of F1 and 6% of F2 places were filled by doctors in one-year posts. Just 2% of F1 and 3% of F2 places remained unfilled at the start of August.

Becoming a foundation doctor

Slightly more than half (55%) of the foundation schools who responded match applicants to full two-year rotations before the start of their Foundation Programme.

Nearly 40% of UK medical school graduates do not start foundation training in the foundation school associated with the medical school from which they graduated. Given that over 90% of applicants are allocated to their first choice foundation school, it can be deduced that almost a third of applicants select a non-local foundation school as their first preference. Just over 2% of F1 doctors starting the Foundation Programme in August 2009 after having been allocated through the national process graduated from a medical school outside the UK.

The national recruitment process accounted for 96% of F1 doctors starting the Foundation Programme in August 2009. The rest were recruited locally.

The majority (88%) of F2 doctors in August 2009 were starting the second year of a two-year programme in the same foundation school, with an additional 6% starting the second year having either transferred from a different foundation school or returned after approved time out of Foundation Programme.

There are 49 F1 and 83 F2 doctors training flexibly across 19 foundation schools. Supernumerary foundation doctors numbered 33 in F1 and 40 in F2 across 18 foundation schools. A foundation doctor may be both supernumerary and undertaking flexible training.

Previous analysis of national recruitment data has indicated that there are more women (62%) entering foundation training than men (38%). In contrast, there are 51% women and 49% men in academic Foundation Programmes.

The learning environment

All 25 foundation schools offer Foundation Programmes comprising the recommended 3 x 4 month placements, but there are other configurations used as well such as 2 x 6 months or 4 x 3 months.

Foundation doctors experience a range of specialties in the Foundation Programme; with the highest level of training opportunities being in general surgery (31%), general (internal) medicine (24%), and geriatric medicine (9%) during the F1 year. During the F2 year, the most common training opportunities were: emergency medicine (19%), general practice (16%) and general (internal) medicine (12%).

Foundation Programme Annual Report 2009

The percentages are calculated using the total number of training experiences available, which does not equate to the number of Foundation Programme placements since many placements cover more than one specialty.

Over half (58%) of foundation schools only allow specialty tasters, usually comprising a week in another specialty, to be undertaken during F2. 68% of schools indicated that tasters are instigated by a request from a foundation doctor and then organised by the local education provider.

Taster experiences were taken up primarily in anaesthetics and critical care during F1 and in medical specialties during F2.

Academic Foundation Programmes

There were a total of 389 two-year academic Foundation Programmes commencing in August 2009, with an additional 24 one-year posts at F1 level and 29 one-year posts at F2 level. Two-year programmes were offered in research (281), medical education (81) and management/ leadership (15). In addition, there were 12 programmes offered that did not fit into these categories.

The fill-rates for the two-year programmes were 91% for research, 93% for medical education, 93% for management/leadership and 100% for the other programmes.

Progression and outcomes

98% of F1 and 96% of F2 doctors successfully completed their respective foundation years in 2009 and were signed-off as having attained the appropriate level of competence.

The majority (89%) of F1 doctors signed-off in August 2009 started the second year of a two-year programme in the same foundation school. Of those signed off at the end of F1, fewer than 2% left the Foundation Programme.

The outcome was known for less than half (45%) of foundation doctors completing their Foundation Programme in 2009. The percentage entering specialty training was reported as 39% and the number working or training in medicine outside the UK by choice was 3%.

The career outcomes for foundation doctors completing an academic Foundation Programme in 2009 was known for 76%, with 53% reported as entering speciality training in the UK.

The number of foundation doctors not signed off at the end of their respective years was 159 F1s and 236 F2s. The reasons included having more than four weeks' absence, requiring remedial training, being dismissed and resigning.

One F1 and two F2 academic foundation doctors were not signed-off at the end of the respective year: two of which resigned and the other was taking statutory leave.

A total of 404 F1 and 291 F2 doctors required additional support across 18 foundation schools. 5% of the F1 doctors and 3% of the F2 doctors being monitored had been identified as having difficulties via the transfer of information form. The main area of concern for both F1 and F2 related to the doctor's personal health.

5% of F1 doctors from UK medical schools required additional support versus 41% of graduates from non-UK medical schools.

The outcome for foundation doctors requiring additional support was favourable for nearly 3 out of 4, with 56% being signed-off by the original end date of their foundation year at both F1 and F2 level, and a further 25% for F1 and 22% for F2 are expected to be signed-off by an agreed, extended end date.

Eight F1 doctors and nine F2 doctors were referred to the GMC for fitness to practice issues. The percentage of doctors being monitored that were reported to the GMC was 4% for F1s and 5% for F2s.