

UK Foundation Programme National F2 Career Destination Survey

1. The Medical Education and Training Programme at the Department of Health (England) commissioned the UK Foundation Programme Office (UKFPO) to undertake a survey of F2 doctors' career destinations on completion of the Foundation Programme in August 2010. Foundation doctors completing the Programme in August 2010 typically graduated from medical schools in 2008.
2. Earlier papers considered by the Medical Programme Board (Papers 32-5, 33-7) have highlighted the success of foundation applicants from English foundation schools in securing specialty training appointments but noted that a small number were not interviewed. The Medical Programme Board recommended the establishment of a project group to undertake a further analysis of applications from foundation doctors.
3. This paper provides additional information describing the proportion, type and locations of post-foundation appointments.

Method

4. The survey was conducted between March and September 2010 in partnership with Postgraduate Deaneries and their Foundation Schools. Foundation Schools used a variety of methods to gather the data including embedding the nationally agreed career destination questions in their existing surveys, using the UKFPO developed on-line survey or the UKFPO developed paper-based questionnaire.

Results

5. Twenty-three out of the 25 UK Foundation Schools responded. There were 7092 F2 doctors in these schools and of these, 6864 successfully completed the Foundation Programme in August 2010.
6. 5192 doctors, who satisfactorily completed the programme, provided data about their career destination. This response rate of 76% is a significant improvement compared to 2009 when data was available on less than 50%.
7. Table 1 provides details of the career destinations for the foundation doctors, who both completed the programme and responded. This includes 4958 foundation doctors on the standard Foundation Programme and 234 doctors in an Academic Foundation Programme.

Table 1

Outcomes for F2 doctors	Standard Foundation Programme	Academic Foundation Programme	All F2 doctors
Specialty training in UK - run-through training programme	43.6%	27.8%	42.9%
Specialty training in UK - core training programme	37.2%	41.5%	37.4%
Specialty training in UK - academic programme	0.5%	20.9%	1.4%
Specialty training in UK - FTSTA	0.7%	1.3%	0.8%
Specialty training in UK - deferred for higher degree	0.3%	1.3%	0.3%
Specialty training in UK - deferred for statutory reasons	0.3%	0.0%	0.3%
Sub-total for specialty training in UK	82.6%	92.7%	83.1%
Locum appointment for training (LAT) in UK	0.6%	0.0%	0.5%
Specialty training - outside UK	1.6%	1.7%	1.6%
Service appointment - in UK	2.2%	0.4%	2.1%
Service appointment - outside UK	4.1%	1.3%	4.0%
Still seeking employment as a doctor in the UK	3.4%	1.3%	3.4%
Not practising medicine - taking a career break	5.1%	2.6%	4.9%
Not practising medicine - permanently left profession	0.4%	0.0%	0.4%
Total signed-off, known outcomes	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

8. Among those who responded to the survey, 83.1% were appointed to specialty training in the UK.
9. As might be expected, medical graduates appointed to academic foundation programmes were more likely to secure a specialty training appointment and in particular were more likely to progress to a post-foundation academic training programme e.g. an Academic Clinical Fellowship.
10. Table 2 provides a breakdown of the response rate across the 25 UK Foundation Schools and career destinations among respondents.

Table 2

Foundation School	Number F2 doctors	% providing data	% appointed to ST in the UK	% other in the UK*	% appointed outside the UK	% taking a career break	% left the profession
Birmingham	196	94.8%	87.5%	5.4%	5.4%	1.6%	0.0%
Black Country	103	47.5%	91.7%	8.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Coventry & Warwick	96	92.6%	95.5%	0.0%	4.5%	0.0%	0.0%
East Anglia	303	100.0%	87.9%	6.7%	1.2%	3.9%	0.3%
Hereford & Worcester	67	56.7%	92.1%	2.6%	2.6%	2.6%	0.0%
LNR	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data
Mersey	357	78.0%	85.3%	6.8%	3.4%	4.5%	0.0%
N. Ireland	239	94.7%	94.4%	0.5%	3.8%	1.4%	0.0%
N.C.Thames	346	93.2%	87.3%	7.9%	0.6%	4.1%	0.0%
N.E.Thames	314	89.2%	76.1%	15.2%	0.4%	7.6%	0.8%
N.W.Thames	296	91.8%	81.8%	8.2%	3.9%	5.7%	0.4%
North Western	561	85.7%	92.0%	1.5%	0.0%	6.1%	0.4%
Northern	418	78.9%	93.5%	0.6%	5.2%	0.6%	0.0%
NYEC	149	65.2%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Oxford	231	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data
Peninsula	187	98.9%	62.5%	8.5%	14.8%	14.2%	0.0%
S.Thames	835	90.0%	79.6%	6.9%	5.9%	7.4%	0.1%
S.Yorkshire	188	30.1%	92.7%	1.8%	5.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Scotland	784	46.2%	80.6%	4.8%	11.8%	2.7%	0.0%
Severn	316	52.3%	74.5%	9.9%	11.2%	3.7%	0.6%
Staffordshire (Keele)	144	13.2%	55.6%	38.9%	0.0%	5.6%	0.0%
Trent	289	89.8%	83.7%	1.6%	10.6%	4.1%	0.0%
W.Yorkshire	296	90.6%	83.5%	1.9%	13.8%	0.8%	0.0%
Wales	318	84.2%	61.5%	14.5%	8.0%	11.1%	5.0%
Wessex	290	56.1%	74.4%	9.6%	7.7%	8.3%	0.0%
UK Total	7,323	75.3%	83.1%	6.1%	5.5%	4.9%	0.4%

* This category includes LAT appointments, service appointments and those still seeking appointment in the UK.

Discussion

11. This survey suggests that around 83% of those completing the Foundation Programme in 2010 immediately secured specialty training appointments in the UK. Around 5.6% of foundation doctors were appointed to either specialty training or service posts outside of the UK.
12. This pattern of appointment is not new. The UK Medical Careers Research Group (led by Professor Michael Goldacre, University of Oxford) have found that approximately 20% of medical graduates choose or do not enter specialty training immediately after PRHO posts or the Foundation Programme. Writing in BMJ Careers (20 Oct 2010), Professor Goldacre noted that “now, as in the past, doctors’ medical career trajectories do not

invariably take a straight and relentless course from qualification through specialist training to consultant or general practitioner principal posts.”

13. The UK Medical Careers Research Group’s recent survey of the cohort of UK medical graduates from 2005 found that almost a quarter were not in specialist (specialist registrar) training posts, and about one in 20 was in medicine overseas.
14. DH (England) has commissioned the UK Medical Careers Research Group to follow up and undertake detailed analysis of the career trajectories of the cohort who graduated in 2008.

Implications for 2011 UK Foundation Programme Annual Report

15. The UKFPO is working with Postgraduate Deaneries and their Foundation Schools to improve the response rate. Inevitably it takes time for all foundation schools to embed new surveys into their existing data gathering and quality management processes. *The Foundation Programme Reference Guide (2010)* clarifies the responsibility of foundation doctors to participate in quality management processes such as this survey.
16. While it is important that we do not to over-extend the length of the questionnaire, the UKFPO intends to include additional questions about GP and other community placements. This will inform the delivery of the recommendation from Professor John Collins’ Evaluation of the Foundation Programme as part of MEE’s integrated work programme, *Better Training, Better Care*.

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