

From Overseas to NHS: Development of a teaching programme for International Medical Graduates at King's College Hospital, London

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Background

International medical graduates (IMGs) represent a large proportion of the National Health Service (NHS) workforce with 41% of doctors currently practicing in the UK completing their medical training overseas¹. Despite their clinical competence, many IMGs experience difficulties adapting to NHS systems, workplace culture, communication styles, documentation standards, escalation pathways, and multidisciplinary team working.

Within our trust, anecdotal feedback from newly appointed IMGs suggested that the existing corporate induction did not adequately prepare them for day-to-day clinical practice in the NHS. We delivered a simulation day for IMGs and received feedback on certain areas that they felt they were lacking in confidence and training.

The problem

Baseline informal feedback from newly recruited IMGs and from those attending our IMG simulation day highlighted:

- Lack of understanding of NHS structure, hierarchy and inter-professional working
- Uncertainty regarding escalation procedures
- Limited familiarity with electronic documentation systems
- Anxiety regarding communication with seniors and patients
- Low confidence during initial weeks of employment

Existing trust induction programmes primarily focused on mandatory training and administrative processes rather than practical clinical orientation.

Aim:

This project aims to improve confidence of IMG doctors through simulation training and a one-day induction programme, specifically tailored to the needs of IMGs starting work in the NHS.

“Importance of documentation the conversation with the patient, Escalation to seniors, if in doubt, saying I don’t know as the answer (there is no shame)”

“Family communication and documentation. How to handle an aggressive patient. Confirming with them that escalation for silly things will not get them into trouble... IMGs should know this is not the case in NHS and escalation and discussion is welcomed here”

Methodology

Baseline Measurement: Following a simulation day for IMG doctors we gathered feedback on areas they would like to receive additional training on. Pre-intervention interviews were conducted with recruited IMGs (n = 7).

Key Findings:

None of those included said they had had an IMG induction when they joined the NHS. Statements were taken from IMGs and key themes identified (below) and direct quotes (above):



Intervention

Using the key themes identified in the scoping work we delivered a communication workshop within our simulation day. Specifically, these were **escalation, communication with patients and family, handover, documentation and palliative care.**

The below chart shows the improvement in confidence of IMGs attending the simulation.



We have planned a one-day IMG-focused induction programme that has been designed collaboratively with: Medical education department, Clinical leads, Clinical supervisors, Senior IMG doctors, Human resources team.

This day will run alongside IMG simulation and overseas doctor day teaching days in our trust, as part of a 3-day programme for IMGs. Participants will also receive: IMG handbook, Useful contact directory and a NHS terminology glossary

Discussion

The project demonstrated that a dedicated IMG induction programme is needed for improved preparedness and confidence among newly recruited doctors to the NHS. We have developed this one-day induction to be day one in a three-day series for IMG doctors. This includes a Human factors simulation day and an Overseas doctor day.