

addition, overseas graduates are much more likely to be working in peripheral hospitals than UK graduates. So the differences between trainees' views of Approval visits may be explained by the fact that UK graduates tend to be more critical, and to have less anxiety about expressing the criticisms of the centres of excellence in which they work; whereas overseas trainees working in peripheral hospitals appear to be more accepting of the situation in which they find themselves. It is possible that many of them are demoralized, confronted with inertia from administrators and lack of interest from their colleagues and consultants; they are left feeling isolated and powerless to express their dissatisfaction to the one body that has the power to improve their lot.

How might some of these problems be overcome? For the trainee it is important to facilitate the expression of his discontent in a non-threatening manner. Only 55 per cent of Midland trainees reported that there had actually been a trainee member of the team present, and of greater importance is the observation of an almost significant trend for trainees from peripheral hospitals to state that the presence of a trainee member on the team would have made it much easier for them to express their feelings. It is now College policy to include a senior trainee as a member of an Approval team, and these results provide support for the full implementation of this.

It should not be assumed that apparent satisfaction with the Approval visit is entirely the product of anomie experienced by overseas trainees. The dissatisfaction expressed by many trainees in the larger centres is a representation of the problems experienced by them in their work; low morale is not the prerogative of trainees in peripheral hospitals.

Trainees were asked how much notice they received of the visit, because awareness of a visit should be a powerful stimulus for peer group discussion within the hospital.

Trainees should have as much opportunity beforehand to discuss their training, both between themselves and with their consultants. The clear relationship between amount of notice given and opportunity to discuss the visit with peers has an importance beyond the immediate fact of a team's visit, in terms of the stimulus it provides trainees to consider critically their situation. Trainees who had had the purpose of the visit explained to them by either their clinical tutor or consultant, were more likely to be satisfied with the outcome of the visit. However, this does not appear to be related to any differences between peripheral or teaching hospitals, but emphasizes the importance of liaison between trainee and clinical tutor before the visit.

Conclusions

Four main issues arise from this survey. Trainees should be given as much notice as possible of an impending Approval visit. The clinical tutor should play a crucial role in explaining the purpose of the visit, and in addition the College might consider sending a letter of introduction, for circulation amongst trainees, as a visit is being planned.

A senior trainee should be present as a member of every Approval team. He or she could meet the trainees separately if necessary, as well as with the full team. This could greatly facilitate the frank expression of trainees' views.

Particular attention should be paid to the problems of overseas graduates in peripheral hospitals, a passive silence should not be accepted as an indication that all is well.

Although a follow-up visit is mandatory where provisional categories of approval are granted, some form of follow-up should be considered even where the outcome is full approval. Indeed the College may wish to consider some form of prospective follow-up whereby after any Approval visit trainees' views are sought as to what, if any, effects the visit had upon their training.

Peter Scott Memorial Trust Scholarship

The Trustees of the Peter Scott Memorial Trust Scholarship are pleased to announce that they have awarded a scholarship of £500 each to Mr Martin J. Burton, a medical student at St Edmund Hall, Oxford, to further a research

project in the United States of America, and to Mr A. J. Mander, a medical student at the Welsh National School of Medicine, Cardiff, to help finance a research project.

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