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CROSSING BOUNDARIES: BROAD BASED TRAINING DEVELOPS UNDERSTANDING OF DIFFERENT SPECIALTIES WHICH BENEFITS BOTH DOCTORS AND PATIENTS ~

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Introduction: Patient demographics and healthcare services are changing. In accord with a move towards broader based general training, the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges (AoMRC) introduced the two-year broad-based training (BBT) programme in 2013. The principal aim of our study was to evaluate whether the BBT programme better prepares trainees for the next step in their training compared with those following conventional pathways. This presentation focuses on one key finding, that BBT develops understanding of different specialties (GP, Core Medical, Paediatrics & Psychiatry) which benefits both trainees and patients.

Methods: We adopted a longitudinal, mixed-methods approach collecting data from annual questionnaire surveys (from BBT trainees and comparator groups), focus groups, semi-structured and one-to-one interviews (with former BBT trainees and educational supervisors).

Results: From questionnaire data, BBT trainees were *significantly* more confident than comparator trainees that their training would result in: wider perspectives, understanding how specialities complement one another and application of learning across specialties ($p < 0.000$ Mann-Whitney U).

From focus group data and interviews, it was apparent that experiencing the four specialties fostered greater tolerance and understanding of the pressures and limitations experienced by colleagues in different specialties. Trainees spoke confidently about how their wider perspective and cross-specialty skills equipped them to work with growing numbers of patients with complex health needs. They suggested that BBT experience enabled them to better understand referrals and to tailor discharges appropriately.

Conclusions: Our evaluation benefits from multiple data sources at regular points, following trainees over three years. We can demonstrate a consistent and detailed response which overwhelmingly shows that the BBT programme developed trainees who bring a wider perspective to health care and promote specialty integration. BBT was shown to foster deep understanding of the workings and limitations of different specialties. The generalist outlook is critical to the outcomes of patients with multiple chronic diseases that straddle the boundaries between traditional specialties. Now no longer recruiting in England, BBT may later be judged to have been ahead of its time.

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References

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