

3-78

# THE IMPACT OF MEDICAL EDUCATION FELLOWSHIPS ON FUTURE CAREER PATHWAYS

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**Introduction:** There are different types of fellowships within postgraduate medical education and training, delivered in several regions across Health Education England (HEE).

A fellowship programme centred around medical education, primarily in secondary care, is currently operational in Health Education England North West (HEE NW) and Wessex regions, although programme structures are different.





The Medical Education Fellowship (MEF) programmes have been running for 8+ years, and require significant input and resources. Although the programmes have been consistently highly rated in local evaluations, there is limited published evidence as to the longitudinal impact of such fellowships on educational and career development.

**Aim:** To determine the educational and career development value of Medical Education Fellowships to trainees.


**Method:** MEF alumni (47 in total) from both regions were invited to participate in semi-structured interviews. Consent was secured to conduct, record and transcribe the interviews. Anonymous data were subsequently analysed using the thematic framework method<sup>1</sup>.

**Results:** 9 interviews were conducted across HEE (NW) and HEE Wessex. Qualitative analysis of the interview data highlighted a number of common themes outlined in Table 1.

Table 1

Identity as an Educator	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highlights interest in medical education thereby creating opportunities</li> <li>Peer-support group of 'like-minded people'</li> <li>Provides unique networking opportunities</li> </ul>
Career Development	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better understanding of educational roles and career landscape</li> <li>Increased opportunities at local, regional and national level</li> <li>Enhanced CV providing 'competitive advantage'</li> </ul>
Educational Leadership	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current plethora of educational roles including senior positions</li> <li>Educational roles prominent focus alongside clinical responsibilities</li> <li>MEF has enabled 'fast-track' into key roles</li> </ul>
Scholarly & Academic Development	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academic component highly valued</li> <li>Unique opportunities in educational research</li> <li>Support to present and publish project work</li> </ul>
Programme Enhancement	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The addition of HEE related practical interventions</li><li>• Additional exposure to HEE</li><li>• An overall positive experience that exceeded expectations</li></ul>
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**Conclusions:** The title of 'MEF' helps create unique opportunities not easily accessible within clinical training.

The ability to include the MEF on CVs and applications for consultant posts provides trainees with a 'competitive edge', and has impacted on the ability to 'fast-track' into key educational roles.

The programme is valued by trainees and provides them with the appropriate learning, skills and opportunities to become senior educators of the future.

**Next steps:** The findings from the research, aims to help contribute to the knowledge gap around the impact of postgraduate educational fellowships on career pathways. It will be shared across HEE to be used in the decision making process regarding the future of education fellowships.

### References

<sup>1</sup>Ritchie J, Spencer L, O'Connor W. Carrying out Qualitative Analysis. In: Ritchie J, Lewis J, editors. Qualitative Research Practice. London: SAGE Publications; 2011 p. 218-262